

I became a foster parent in Vermont in 2019. I had just had a child reunify with his biological mother when I received a call from DCF on March 25, 2021 asking if I would accept placement for an 11-year-old female. Unfortunately, I was unable to immediately accept this placement so DCF found a temporary foster home for the child. I was able to have the child move into my home on April 1, 2021. Parental rights were terminated and on February 9, 2022, I was able to adopt this child.

My daughter was removed from her biological family as a toddler due to neglect. After a couple of years in foster care she was adopted by her foster parents. My daughter was 11 years old when she was removed from her adoptive family due to abuse and neglect and was placed with the temporary foster home and then placed with me the following week.

Due to the trauma my daughter has endured my daughter has been diagnosed with PTSD and struggles with self-harm behaviors and chronic suicidality. As a result, our journey has had many ups and downs. Due to the severe safety concerns, my daughter was seen in the local Emergency Room and hospitalized at the Brattleboro Retreat numerous times since November 2022. In July 2023, my daughter was admitted to a residential facility to help address her mental health needs in a secure setting.

I have benefit from the Post Permanency Services provided by Lund in many ways. My family's Post Permanency Service Provider provides me a monthly meeting where I am able to talk about how my daughter is doing and the challenges of parenting a child with profound early trauma. My family's Post Permanency Service Provider also attends all meetings regarding my daughter. These meetings include, bi-weekly team meetings, educational meetings related to IEP, meetings with my daughter's residential placement and meetings related to secondary education placement once my daughter is discharged from the residential program. During these meetings my family's Post Permanency Service Provider helps to advocate for what is in the best interest of my daughter and my family. I also attend a monthly support group that Lund provides for adoptive and guardianship families that I have found very beneficial as it provides me with an opportunity to speak to parents who have created their families in similar ways and may be experiencing similar challenges. It has been vital to my family's success to have these services that are provided by Lund.

Please increase base funding for the Post Permanency Services Program by \$300,000 in order to allow the program to continue benefiting families such as mine.

Thank you,

Tamara N. Fleming

Adoptive Parent

Brattleboro Vermont