

Column: Faith-based adoption helps children

Chad and Melissa Buck 12:05 a.m. EDT June 19, 2015



(Photo: Family photo)

Gov. Rick Snyder recently signed into law adoption legislation that hits close to home for us. Over the past five years we have been foster parents with a Catholic child placement agency in Lansing. In that time we have adopted four kids: Perry, Max, Liza and, most recently our youngest, Winnie. We currently have one foster placement.

We came to the faith-based agency in 2009 because we were ready to become parents. We had heard great things about the agency and after struggling with infertility for years, we were hopeful they could help us connect with kids we would be able to foster or adopt. Because we are not Catholic, we were nervous about what they would think of us, but we soon learned they held the same standards as us and were incredibly

supportive.

Not long after our license came through, we received our older kids. They came from a rough background; both of our sons had anxiety and our oldest had PTSD. We have seen kids go to residential treatment for less than what was happening. But the agency was there for us.

They listened when we called, upset, because we did not know what to do. Their therapists came to our home to help us with techniques. They gave us the strength to not give up and we are so glad we didn't because we could not imagine our lives without our kids. They have flourished. And we know it is not us who deserves all the credit; much of it goes to the agency that has always been there for us.

From time to time we have trainings with other foster parents from different agencies in our area and, after speaking with them, it is clear that the foster parents licensed through the faith-based agency are among the most satisfied, knowledgeable, and happiest. We feel the love and support of their staff and we see how much they care.

Our youngest daughter, Winnie, was born with a rare genetic condition that requires specialists in the Detroit area. Her caseworker drove to Winnie's appointments to learn everything she could about her condition and even went so far as to get trained by the endocrinologist so that she could teach the agency staff how to care for Winnie in case of an emergency while she was having visitation.

We could not imagine going through the foster and adoptive process without the support from our agency. To lose them would be devastating, which is why we support the religious liberty protections the governor recently signed into law. Without their presence, we would have to find a way to transfer our license to another agency and hope we don't lose placement of our little one.


To have these bills passed protects us, the agency, and the kids and families they serve. It keeps their doors open to serve our community. And it puts the best interest of kids ahead of the politics and personal opinions the adults have.

We have always said that foster care is about the kids, not the adults. Our agency believes that and puts it into practice every day. It is their mission to serve kids who have lost everything and to find them forever homes if needed. They are in the business of making families.

These children deserve to have a faith-based agency like ours around to care for and protect them. We could not be more proud to be a part of their work and the love they bring to so many people's lives.

Chad and Melissa Buck live in Lansing.

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