

“Love Can Be Messy”

Kimberly W. and Daemion



Inspired by her father who was adopted as an infant, Kimberly W. knew since she was a school-aged child that she would one day adopt.

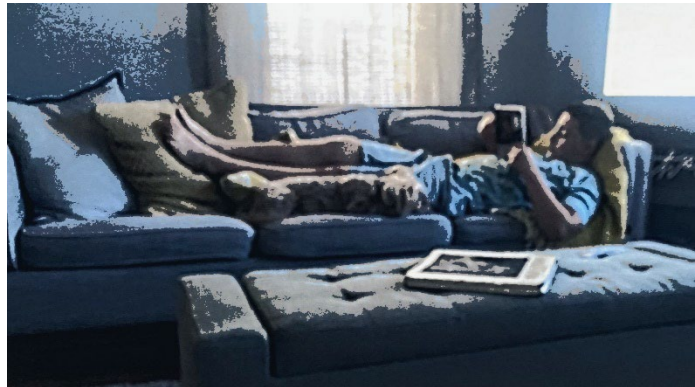
It was never a matter of “if”, it was just a matter of “when.”

Over two years ago, just one month before the Covid-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, that Kimberly was licensed by Children’s Community Programs of Connecticut (CCP) and ready to care for a child. Her intentions were always to adopt, knowing full well that any child who came through her door would be welcome to stay forever.

Kimberly planned to parent a child who was approximately 6 years old, that is until her heart became touched by the story of a 10 ½-year-old named Daemion. She recounts a telephone call from Brandon Warner, a CCP worker. He asked her to consider Daemion, a boy who had already been in multiple foster care placements. She explained that she was initially hesitant but after some thought, she said yes to the placement.

CCP’s Therapeutic Foster Care Program provides an intensive level of support to children ages three to eighteen in accordance with the Department of Children and Families’ regulations. The program recruits, screens, approves, and trains parents to become foster parents and provides children in placement with a comprehensive array of services including but not limited to individual therapy, support for the foster families, coordination with DCF regarding visitation and the permanency plan, and case management with schools and other service providers.

A newly licensed, and single foster parent, Kimberly welcomed Daemion into her home never realizing that within a month’s time the world would shut down and she and Daemion would be literally alone to navigate this life together.



With limited support and resources available to her because of the quarantine, Kimberly and Daemion spent the next several months getting to know one another.

Kimberly was teleworking while Daemion was attending school remotely. “We didn’t have much time to figure this all out, we learned as we went,” explained Kimberly. “It was really hard. It was challenging.”

Jessica Nordlund, Daemion's DCF Social Worker, agreed at how difficult this time was for both of them. "Covid-19 made for an intense adjustment period for both Daemion and Kimberly as they were still getting to know one another when they were suddenly required to be isolated with very limited access to outside supports," She stated. "Kimberly had the time and energy to focus on Daemion's needs and was able to make him her priority."

As the months and years passed by, Kimberly learned a lot about herself. She firmly believes in commitment, in sticking it out, explaining that Daemion had been through so much and it is up to her to make up for the lost time. To teach him how to eat well, bathe, brush his teeth properly and do laundry. She needed to be certain that her head and her heart were working in sync to offer Daemion all that he needed.

Kimberly believes that love is what Daemion needed to be healthy and successful. She explained that love can be ugly and messy and exhausting but that true love never gives up on someone and she never gave up on Daemion.

"Kimberly never let fear stop her," explained Brandon Warner. "From the first time I met her, I could feel how motivated and passionate she was about the idea of adopting a child and together we normalized her fears and ambivalence and helped her to believe in herself and her son."



When asked what she would say to someone who is thinking about fostering or adopting a teen, Kimberly explained, "Be ready to crawl in bed and hold that child while he is crying hysterically from a nightmare, be a fierce advocate – his first line of defense, be patient when they question your commitment over and over again, teach that child to be self-sufficient, don't lose patience when they don't know what they haven't been taught. Teach them. Love them even when it's messy."

Kimberly also recited information she received from her father. "Until you see him as your own child, you will never cross over to where you both need to be," she added.

Damion, who is now 13 years old, is a bright honors student, who is excelling in both swimming and tennis. He is adored by Kimberly and her extended family and is thriving in her care.

It was 2,169 days ago that Damion entered foster care and during a pivotal moment in his life he called Kimberly, "Mom" and he gave her permission to call him her son. Kimberly remembers this moment with a dramatic pause, sharing, "I cried like a baby. It was at that moment when I thought, OK, Kimberly, you are doing ok."

Soon after, Daemion told his therapist that he was ready to be adopted and when asked what made him feel safe to say this, he replied, "She is so fine with keeping me. She has always been there for me and has never let me down."

On November 18, 2022, he became Kimberly's boy. Never did she fully realize the impact that this one life would have on hers until she found her teen-aged son, Daemion.

Read more about the family here: [Hartford Courant- Daemion's story](#)