

# Family Reunification Overview Video Script

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Strong Families, Safe Children

Approximately 6,000 children are in foster care in Kansas.

Nearly 60 percent of them will be reunited with their families.

Meet four Kansas families that had their children removed from their care, and are now reunited.

Dad – Wichita: “WE WERE SAD WHEN THEY TOOK OUR SON AWAY, BUT WE KIND OF FIGURE THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE HIM AND IT WAS HARD, VERY HARD FOR ME AND HER, ME AND MY WIFE.”

THE GARZA’S TEEN WAS OUT-OF-CONTROL, NOT GOING TO SCHOOL AND NOT TAKING HIS MEDICATIONS.

Dad – KC: “THE LOW POINT FOR ME WAS PROBABLY LOSING MY FAMILY AND KNOWING THAT I WAS THE CAUSE OF THE SITUATION.”

THE DANIELS FAMILY LOST THEIR CHILDREN.

THE KANSAS CITY COUPLE WAS FACED WITH THE REALIZATION IT WAS TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE.

Nikki Bazan: “WE FOUGHT A LOT. WE WER REALLY PHYSICAL WITH EACH OTHER AND WE ARGUED A LOT. WE DID DRUGS AND HE LIKED TO GO OUT.”

SINGLE MOTHER NICKI BAZAN, OF NORTON, ALSO STRUGGLED.

PROBLEMS MADE WORSE BY SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

HER CHILDREN WERE PLACED IN FOSTER CARE.

Keri Strahler: “I WAS SO ANGRY AT FIRST, JUST BECAUSE THE MENTAL ILLNESS AND I WAS ANGRY, I WAS DEPRESSED, I WAS SAD.”

TOPEKA MOTHER KERI STRAHLER WAS FACED WITH MULTIPLE TRAUMATIC EVENTS IN HER LIFE.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES LEFT HER UNABLE TO COPE WITH FAMILY PROBLEMS.

HER CHILDREN WERE PLACED WITH A RELATIVE.

THESE FAMILIES HAVE THIS IN COMMON...  
THEIR CHILDREN WERE REMOVED FROM THEIR CARE.  
AND NOW THEY'RE BACK.  
THEY DID THE WORK NECESSARY TO PROVE THEY COULD PROVIDE A SAFE AND LOVING HOME FOR  
THEIR CHILDREN.

Dad: "DON'T GIVE UP. DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE YOU KNOW."

Dad: "THEY'RE YOUR CHILDREN, OF COURSE YOU LOVE THEM UNCONDITIONALLY, BUT YOU DON'T  
REALIZE HOW MUCH THEY MEAN UNTIL THEY'RE GONE. THAT WAS PROBABLY, THAT WAS THE  
ROUGHEST SIX MONTHS OF MY LIFE, BAR NONE. SO THE ADVICE I COULD GIVE SOMEONE THAT'S IN  
THAT JEOPARDY, JUST DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER THAT YOU CAN DO TO ASSURE THAT YOUR  
CHILDREN STAY WITH YOU."

Mom: "IF IT'S GETTING TO THE POINT WHERE YOU'RE AT RISK OF LOSING YOUR KIDS, THEN YOU NEED  
TO GET SOME KIND OF ASSISTANCE FROM SOMEBODY, WHETHER IT'S SAINT FRANCIS OR FROM A  
CHURCH OR JUST FROM ANYBODY, LIKE A PARENT OR A FRIEND. YOU NEED TO OPEN UP AND LET  
SOMEBODY HELP YOU HELP YOURSELF."

Keri Strahler: "IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO REALLY TRUST MY CASE MANAGERS, BUT JUST REALIZING THAT  
THEY WERE THERE TO REACH OUT FOR ME AND HELP ME, THAT'S WHAT GOT ME THROUGH IT. THEY  
SAVED MY LIFE."

THE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WORKS CLOSELY WITH ITS FAMILY PRESERVATION  
SERVICES PROVIDERS TO HELP FAMILIES IN CRISIS.  
SAINT FRANCIS SERVES PART OF THE STATE.  
K-V-C SERVES THE OTHER.

Kellie Hans-Reid of KVC : "I FEEL VERY LUCKY THAT I GET TO SEE ALL THE GREAT STORIES OF ALL THESE  
FAMILIES COMING BACK TOGETHER. AND LIVING TOGETHER IN THE SAME HOUSE, KIND OF PUTTING  
THE PAST BEHIND THEM AND MOVING FORWARD. THAT'S A GREAT OPPORTUNITY."

KELLIE HANS-REID SHARES A STORY OF HOPE.

Kellie Hans-Reid of KVC : “A MOTHER OF SIX CHILDREN, SHE WAS A SINGLE MOM. AND HER CHILDREN CAME INTO CUSTODY FOR A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT REASONS, BUT SOME OF THE CHILDREN WERE TAYING IN DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH DIFFERENT RELATIVES AND MOM HAD SOME SUBSTAQNCE ABUSE ISSUES AND SHE WAS IN A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATIONSHIP. WHEN THE CHILDREN CAME INTO CUSTODY, IT’S ONE OF THE WORST THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU, LOSING ALL YOUR CHILDREN. I THINK FOR A WHILE, SHE CONTINUED ON THE SAME PATH THAT SHE WAS ON. AT ONE POINT, IN THE CASE, AS THE CASE WAS GOING ON THINGS WEREN’T REALLY PROGRESSING, BUT SHE JUST MADE A DECISION TO GET CLEAN AND STAY CLEAN. AND THEN TO CHANGE SOME OF HER DECISIONS AND CHANGE THE WAY SHE LIVED HER LIFE. SO SHE WAS ABLE TO LEAVE THE ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP SHE WAS IN, SHE WAS ABLE TO GET INTO REHAB AND STAY CLEAN, SHE WAS ABLE TO MAINTAIN HOUSING. SHE GOT A JOB. SHE GOT INTO THERAPY AND WORKED ON HERSELF SO SHE COULD BE A BETTER PARENT. SHE TOOK EVERY OPPORTUNITY SHE COULD TO MAKE HERSELF BETTER. SHE WORKED REALLY, REALLY HARD. SHE WORKED TOGETHER WITH HER CHURCH. SHE REALLY REACHED OUT TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO HELP, SHE NEED TO HELP SUPPORT THE PARENTING OF HER SIX KIDS. SO THE CHILDREN CAME BACK TO HER AND SHE HAD ALL THE PEOPLE THAT HELPED HER OUT, SHE HAD THEM OVER TO DINNER TO THANK THEM....HER KIDS ARE DOING AWESOME AND SHE IS DOING AWESOME. IT’S A GREAT STORY BECAUSE BEING A SINGLE MOM OF SIX WOULD BE HARD NO MATTER WHAT, AND SHE HAD A LOT OF ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES AND SHE WAS ABLE TO OVERCOME THOSE.”

KELLIE WANTS FAMILIES TO KNOW WE’RE HERE TO HELP.

Kellie Hans-Reid of KVC : “CHILDREN GROW UP BEST IN FAMILIES AND WE TRULY BELIEVE THAT. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT PARENTS ARE THEIR CHILDREN’S BEST TEACHERS. SO WE WANT TO REUNITE FAMILIES. WE WANT FAMILIES TO BE TOGETHER. SO COOPERATE WITH PROFESSIONALS. GET THE SERVICES THAT YOU NEED TO INCREASE YOUR PARENTING SKILLS AND HELP YOU MAKE BETTER DECISIONS. DON’T’ FORGET TO ASK FOR HELP AND DON’T LOSE HOPE.”

Nikki Bazan: “HAVING A KID IN FOSTER CARE IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD. IT’S EMBARRASSING, BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE MORE EMBARRASSING TO NOT GET THEM BACK AND TO LEAVE THEM THERE. YOU CAN’T GIVE UP ON THEM. THEY’RE YOUR KIDS. THEY’RE NOT GOING TO GIVE UP ON YOU, SO JUST DON’T GIVE UP ON THEM.”

Keri Strahler: “TRUST YOUR CASE MANAGERS. YOU MAY BE ANGRY, YOU MAY BE SAD, YOU MAY BE UPSET WITH THE WHOLE SYSTEM. YOU MAY FEEL LOST AND DEPRESSED ABOUT LOSING YOUR KIDS, BUT TRUST YOUR CASE MANAGERS, BECAUSE THEY ARE YOUR NUMBER ONE ADVOCATE RIGHT THERE,

YOUR NUMBER ONE PERSON WHOSE GOING TO STAND UP FOR YOU AND GET YOU THE RESOURCES THAT YOU NEED.”

NOW THEY LOOK FORWARD TO A HAPPY HEALTHY FUTURE...  
TOGETHER.

Mom: “JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER PARENT, I HOPE THEY GO TO COLLEGE AND THEY FINISH THEIR EDUCATION, AND HAVE A FAMILY AND EVERYTHING LIKE THAT OF THEIR OWN, BUT FOR RIGHT NOW, WE JUST DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO STAY HAPPY AND HEALTHY AND TO STAY TOGETHER.”

Dad: “JUST RAISING HEALTHY, HAPPY CHILDREN. THAT’S MY HOPES AND GOALS FOR MYSELF AS WELL AS FOR THEM. I JUST WANT FOR THEM TO BE HAPPY IN WHATEVER IT IS THAT THEY’RE DOING.”

Mom: “I’M WITH YOU ON ALL THAT.”

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