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Ryland is a Holbrook!

CAC Family Advocate, Stephanie Holbrook, Talks About Ryland's Adoption

Written By: Stephanie Holbrook



Ryland, far left, with his new family on his adoption day!

December 4, 2014 changed our family's life forever. At the time, I worked with Children's Home Society and I had seen many children come and go over the years whether they were being temporarily removed and placed into foster care, reunifying with their parents or sadly aging out of the system. Taking home a child from work was the last thing that I ever thought I would be doing, but that day did come and I couldn't turn my back on Ryland. I knew this was going to be a large undertaking but thought to myself, "Yeah, we can do this." Little did I know the challenges that we would all be tackling in our family.



Ryland's first photo with Mikael and Stephanie in 2014

The first three months were the hardest. I was given little to no information about what he was exposed to or been through in his short 15 months of life. I found myself sleeping in every room of our home on the floor with him (come to find out, he was a co-sleeper) until he felt comfortable to sleep in his crib. At times, he would gorge himself until he would vomit and that doesn't begin to explain the process of weaning him off breast-feeding. We had more struggles that we had never experienced before and at times it felt like it was all too much to handle. From the visitations, appointments, home visits, court dates and doctor appointments, it never seemed to end. On top of all of Ryland's requirements we still had to figure out how to maintain the routines and requirements of our three other children.

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GulfCoast

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

Protecting Children, Strengthening Families

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March 2017

For Your Calendar!

*April: Child Abuse
Prevention Month*

*April 14: Safety Fair, Easter Egg
Hunt, and Courageous Candles*

*May 6: Washington/Holmes
Designer Purse Bingo*

June: Hwy 98 Poker Run

*Aug. 5: Designer Purse
Bingo*

Sept. 23: Zombie Run

Nov.: Little Black Dress

Dec.: Christmas at CAC

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Even with all the crazy going on in our world we fell in love with Ryland and he quickly became part of our family. We found our children learning the true meaning of love, family, and life as they quickly accepted Ryland as their own. As Ryland quickly integrated into our lives and forged everlasting bonds with us we had to remain realistic that Ryland might go back to his biological parents, after all, that is what we wanted when we first started this journey. Our plan was to nurture and care for Ryland until his parents were in a better place to care for him. We had this talk with our children when Ryland first came into our home that there was a high probability that Ryland would not be with us for long.

As time went on we found ourselves talking about what we would do if we had to give him back to his parents. It's hard to process the emotions that would come with that and to think of the loss our children would go through. We talked to them many times of what to expect if that day ever came, but that day never did.

After just over two years of him being with us we were blessed to be able to adopt Ryland on February 15, 2017 and we are beyond ecstatic to announce him officially to our family as Ryland O'Neil Holbrook.



Friends and family with Ryland on his adoption day



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Washington County Designer Purse Bingo VIP Tables Now On Sale!



Mark your calendars for the Washington County Designer Purse on Saturday, May 6 at the Washington County Agricultural Center! VIP tables are now on sale. For \$200 you get a table for eight, a pack of play per person, snacks, and drinks. Sponsorships are also available if you would like to sponsor a game.

If you would like to reserve a VIP table and/or sponsor a game, email Whitney Sewell at whitneysewell@gulfcoastcac.us!

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone that came out to support the Walk In My Shoes committee at Old Navy on Saturday, March 18. Thank you Old Navy for the continued support of the Gulf Coast Children's Advocacy Center and the WIMS committee. Thanks to all the support our lemonade stand was a success! We raised \$419.94 to help fight child abuse!



Gulf Coast Children's Advocacy Center

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You can support the GCCAC with an online donation at gulfcoastcac.org!

