



# Wayfinder

## FAMILY SERVICES

We understand the unique challenges facing some of our state's most vulnerable children, youth and families. Those in foster care, those without a home of their own, those who have been abused and many, many more.

We believe in the amazing potential in, and for, each and every one of them.

**Join us to make a collective impact and together, we will turn that potential into reality. Together, we will change the future.**

### OUR IMPACT

**17,000+**  
children adopted  
since 1980 

**10,000+**   
foster, adoptive and kinship  
care families served annually

**CA**   
statewide  
programs and services

### WHAT WE DO



#### LIFELONG FAMILIES

Family finding and family-based services that ensure children will be part of a safe, nurturing, lifelong family.

#### SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Early intervention, prevention and in-home support that build parenting skills, strengthen family relationships and prevent child abuse.



Changing  
the  
Future  
Together



#### THRIVING CHILDREN

Support services that promote healing, resiliency and a child's success at home

#### STRONGER FAMILIES

Programs for birth, foster and adoptive families that keep families safe and intact.



### KEY SERVICES

#### Resource Family Approval (RFA)

This program recruits, supports and prepares families, including relatives and non-related families, to move children in foster care toward a permanent family of their own.

#### Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)

Our kinship program supports grandparents, extended family members or close family friends who step up to raise children so they avoid the trauma of separation from their birth family.

#### Adoption

This program works with counties and state district offices to conduct assessments for families interested in adoption.

#### Post-Adoption Support Services (PAS)

These free post adoption services provide adoptive families with a support system and reduce isolation and emotional stress.

**Support us today and together, we can change the future**

Contact Alexa Adams for more information: [aadams@wayfinderfamily.org](mailto:aadams@wayfinderfamily.org) • 916-940-6382 • [www.WayfinderFamily.org](http://www.WayfinderFamily.org)

# We Fell In Love

## A Unique Beginning

Families form in many different ways—and for Lester and Vanessa, it all started with a television commercial.

Vanessa had always carried a quiet hope in her heart: to one day foster to adopt. But she had never spoken to Lester about it.

Then, one evening while visiting family and watching TV, a commercial about fostering to adopt came on. It caught Lester's attention. "It stuck with me," he says. "When we got home, I started Googling 'foster to adopt.'"

When Lester brought it up, Vanessa was stunned—in the best way. "I felt like God was answering my prayers," she says. It was clear they were both being pulled in the same direction. Together, they reached out to Wayfinder Family Services and began their journey.

After completing Wayfinder's thorough training for prospective foster and adoptive parents, they waited patiently. Three potential matches fell through. And then, came Alex.

## Meeting Alex

"We visited him at his foster home in Sacramento," Les recalls. "And we just immediately fell in love."

Alex was a sweet five-year-old boy whose birth parents had relinquished their rights shortly after he was born. That helped accelerate the adoption process. "Once he moved in," Les says, "we just had to wait six months until he was officially part of the family."

## Growing Love

Months later, Wayfinder reached out again. Would Les and Vanessa consider adopting another child? Their hearts were open.

## Learn More

If you are inspired by our families, this is your Wayfinder Moment. Join us! Contact Alexa Adams for ways to get involved or make a gift today: [aadams@wayfinderfamily.org](mailto:aadams@wayfinderfamily.org) • 916-940-6382 • [www.WayfinderFamily.org](http://www.WayfinderFamily.org)



This time, the process took longer. They were eventually matched with Mia, a compassionate and expressive two-year-old who was still having visits with her birth mom. Over time, visitations ended, and her birth mother gave up parental rights.

Mia had been living with a warm and nurturing foster mother who remained part of her life. "My wife still texts her," Les shares. "She always asks about Mia."

Shortly after joining the family, Mia's preschool called with a question—was Mia on the autism spectrum? "That's when we realized—oh, that explains some behaviors," Les says.

They jumped into action, got Mia assessed and immersed themselves in understanding her needs. Though school can still be tough, especially socially, Mia is slowly finding her rhythm. Her parents can't imagine life without her.

## Family Ties

Later, they learned that Alex has two older sisters—and they naturally welcomed them into their extended family.

The girls are included in family gatherings and milestones. They keep up with Alex's basketball schedule and lovingly call Les and Vanessa "Uncle" and "Auntie."

## Prepared With Purpose

Les credits Wayfinder for preparing them for this journey. "The training and support groups were incredible," he says. "We got to connect with others going through the same experience."

## A Heart for Giving

Today, Les and Vanessa are proud supporters of Wayfinder. From volunteering at toy drives to sharing their story, they give back with full hearts.

"I always believed in doing my part," Les says. "I talk to Alex about how many kids are still out there needing a family—and how blessed we are to be together."

Vanessa adds, "I truly believe God brought this all together. When Les brought up fostering to adopt, I knew it was a divine nudge. I had prayed for this, and suddenly, we were living it. Our story is a testament to love, faith and the beauty of saying yes—even to the unexpected." •

