

## Teenage Boy Finds Family With New Adoptive Parent

Like many people looking to adopt, Robert Dean went into the process trying to find a child between one and five years old.

“After close to a year, I realized that a younger child is harder to come by, and I realized it is even more of a challenge for me being a single male,” Robert said.

With this new perspective, Robert first observed Da’Shaun, a 13-year-old boy, at an Adoption Picnic held at Montgomery County Children Services in September of 2013. “He seemed very well-mannered, and there was just something about him,” Robert said.

Da’Shaun was placed in Dean’s home under a foster care arrangement in January after a four-month-long home study. Then on September 19, they finalized the adoption and the young man became Da’Shaun Dean.

“More than anything he’s made a difference in my life. I think I needed him more than he needed me,” Robert said. “Da’Shaun just needed to feel wanted and loved. We faced a lot of problems at first – just typical teenaged boy stuff – but once he realized I wasn’t going anywhere those things just kind of worked themselves out.”

Now 14, Da’Shaun enjoys going to the movies, playing sports, going out to eat and, of course, hanging out with family. “I really feel like I’m with the family,” Da’Shaun said. “Everyone is there for me, and I have someone to talk to no matter what. I actually have family who cares for me.”



**Da’Shaun Dean, 14, poses with his father, Robert Dean, at Children Services’ Family Fun Night. Da’Shaun’s adoption was finalized on Sept. 19.**

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"The vast majority of the 110 children who are currently available for adoption in our county are age 10 or older," said Adoption Manager Craig Rickett. "We offer many events that give prospective parents a chance to interact with waiting children, and that often generates interest in older children as it did for Mr. Dean. It's very rewarding to see a teenager find their forever family."

Since the forming of the new Dean family, Da'Shaun reports that he is doing better in school and at home, particularly when it comes to showing respect for others.

Through Robert's association with Da'Shaun's biological cousin, Da'Shaun was able to see baby pictures of himself for the very first time. Robert has been so pleased with the adoption experience that he is doing it again. He credits Kelly Walsh, Lisa Dietrich, Sue Powell, Cynthia Myers and other Children Services team members for making the process faster and easier than he expected.

To learn more about adoption through Montgomery County's Children Services Division, call 224-KIDS (5437) or [click here](#).

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