

Introducing Ellen & Dan

Dan and I became a married couple in 1998. We knew from the outset that we wanted children to be a part of our lives. We also knew that the timing was not right for a biological child for a number of reasons. We decided that caring for a child in need of a loving family was more appropriate for us and equally as rewarding. After a move from a city apartment to a suburban house, a change in jobs that brought work closer to home, and completion of the foster parent/adoptive parent training and certification we were ready.

We soon had an opportunity to care for the most amazing 2-year-old boy. He was medically involved, at risk, and difficult to place. We were touched by his story. The moment we met him our course was clear. For the next two years making sure that he was safe, unconditionally loved and nurtured, and as healthy as possible was the focus of each new day. During those two years Dan and I learned a great deal about parenting a child who has had difficult transitions and special needs. We learned a lot about ourselves and discovered that we worked well together in creating a positive family environment for him. He was special. Our darling son left us after he suffered post heart surgery complications. We were devastated. He will be in our hearts forever. Despite our grief, there was never a moment's doubt that caring for him had been a privilege.

Now that some time has passed we know that our sadness for him will not prevent us from opening our hearts and our home to another child. Dan and I live in a small town. Quite a change for two people who had lived in the city a long, long time. We have small but comfortable home. There is enough room for communal gatherings, as well as someplace to go when you need quiet, alone time. Our house is on an acre of land – so we have nice outdoor space and a garden that is always in- progress. The area is very family oriented. Things to do and places to go with children surround us. Our town or nearby towns have Y's, children's theatres, karate classes, pools, and every sport imaginable, etc. Dan and work within 5-15 minutes of home. No long commute to endure.

I am a licensed psychologist. I have always worked with children and families as a psychologist. For the past 5 years I have worked at a Children's Rehabilitation Hospital. Dan works in real estate, mainly as an appraiser and underwriter of loans. We are both physically active people. Dan is the runner and I am more the biker/skater in the family. I would have to say that we are both in pretty good shape. We are mature, knowledgeable about the unique needs of children in care, and have hand-on experience caring for a child with special needs. We are ready to be a family again.