

Devin (left) was reunited with his entire family including his parents, Gusty and Teri Graham (center)

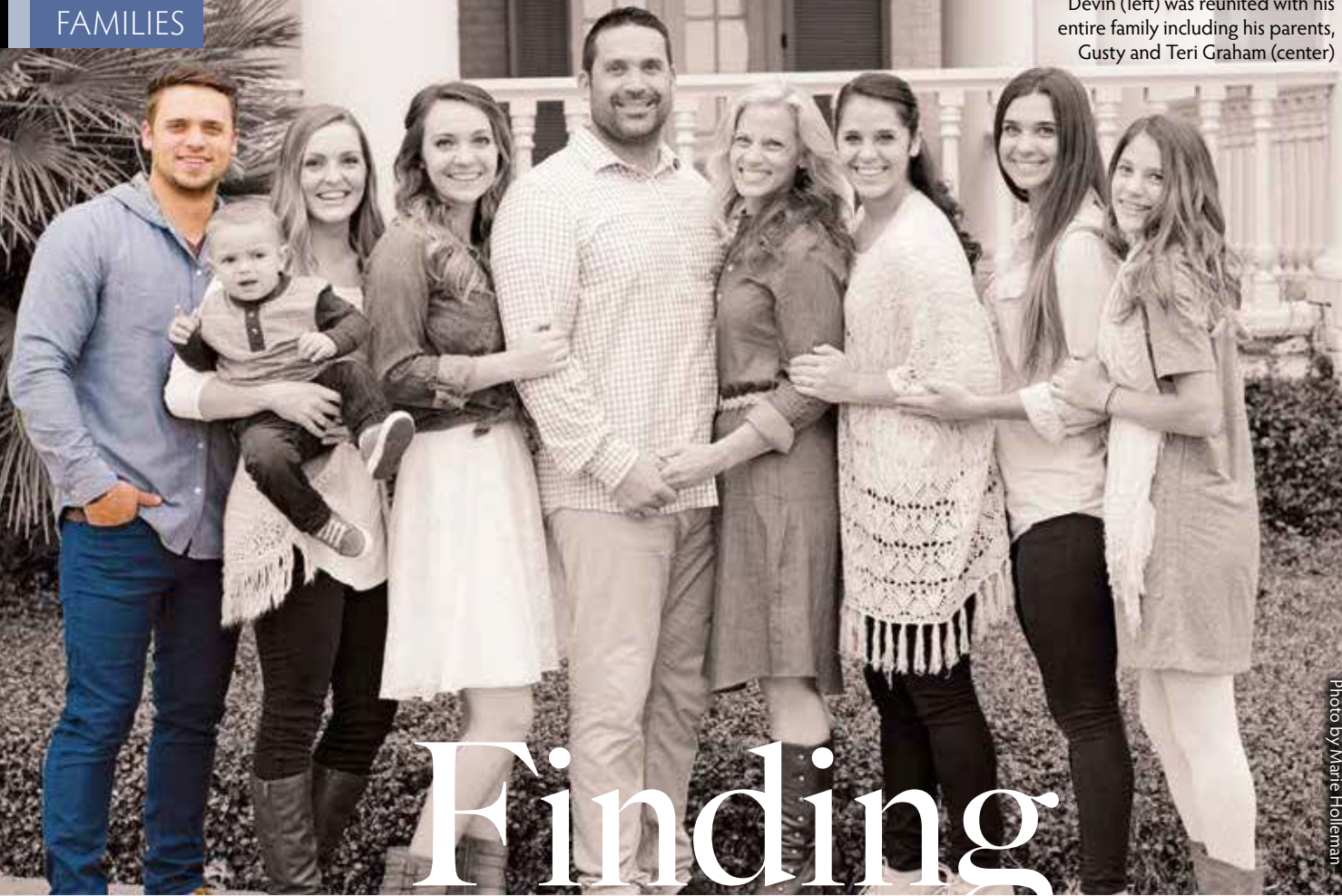


Photo by Marie Holleran

Finding DEVIN

Through TLC's new TV series *Long Lost Family*, Katy couple Teri and Gusty Graham are reunited with their son Devin, who they gave up for adoption

Written by Kirsten Cornell



Devin meets his birth parents for the first time

Photo courtesy of TLC

Gusty Graham and Teri Bisson met in high school. The romance quickly blossomed and the couple became inseparable. In 1990, the summer after she graduated, Teri found herself having to make some difficult decisions - *she was pregnant with a baby boy.*



“Even though both of our families were very supportive, we knew that because we were so young, the best thing for the baby would be to place him up for adoption,” Teri recalls. Devin was born in March 1991.

Holding out Hope

Although heart-wrenching, Gusty and Teri remained close and knew they had made the right decision. “We just always hoped that he would eventually want to meet us,” Gusty adds.

They continued to date and married a few years later, moving to Katy in 2003. They now have four daughters - Aisha, Sierra, Madison, and Terin - Devin’s full-blooded sisters. “As the girls got older, we told each of them about Devin. They were very understanding and loved knowing they had an older brother,” says Teri. “They too hoped to meet him someday.”

The family tried different avenues to find Devin, but nothing panned out. “We held out hope that when the time was right, it would happen,” Teri says.

Auditioning for TLC

TLC’s *Long Lost Family*, a TV documentary series that aims to reunite family members, was looking for participants. Teri posted a picture on Instagram that attracted attention from a staff member at Shed Media.

“I clicked on the person’s bio, and it took me to their site where it had a questionnaire to fill out if you wanted to be reunited with someone,” Teri recalls. She filled it out, sent

some pictures, and within a few days was contacted by a producer. “After that we had several Skype sessions where we shared our story. We provided them with what little information we had, and because it was a closed adoption, it wasn’t much,” she shares.

A few months passed and they received word that their family would be featured on the show. While the network was very clear up front that there was no guarantee that they would be able to find Devin, the Grahams remained hopeful.

Long Lost Family

The TLC crew came to meet with the Grahams and film their story, but did not share with them ahead of time that they had located their son. “When the host told us they had found him, it was the first time we had heard it and had a genuine reaction,” says Gusty.

Adding to the emotional reunion, the Grahams found out that Devin, along with his parents’ support, had been looking for them, too. “We couldn’t believe the day we had been hoping for was finally here,” adds Terri.

When they first saw Devin, both felt as if the moment were surreal. “We just kept hugging him and wanting to make sure it wasn’t a dream. It was wonderful,” shares Teri.

But Teri and Gusty were in for another surprise - they were grandparents! Devin brought his wife, Jordan, to the reunion along with their 1-year-old son, Huxen.

Family Reunion

After Teri and Gusty were able to spend some time with their son, they brought in their daughters so that they too could get to know their brother they had loved for so long. "They were just as excited," Teri shares. "There were lots of laughs and happy tears."

Devin wasn't done with his bag of surprises, he brought his adoptive mom whose name is also Terri. "We both felt such gratitude for each other," shares Teri.

"*Long Lost Family* provided us with the reunion that might have never happened without their help," says Teri. "We feel very lucky they chose to help us and we can never thank them enough."

Combining Two Families

For the Grahams, their family is now complete. They never have to spend another birthday or holiday wondering where Devin is or if he is happy. For Teri, the peace that brings is indescribable.

"We never even experienced a transition period; Devin and Jordan fit right in with us. It was like we had known each other forever," Teri says. "His mom and dad in turn made it very clear that they wanted all of our girls to feel like they

had another set of parents who love them too. We literally combined two families."

Devin's family lives in Idaho, which is where Sierra goes to college and is about four hours from where Aisha attends college, which has allowed them to spend a lot of time together. Through the benefits of modern technology, Teri, Gusty, Madison, and Terin text, call, Snapchat, or FaceTime daily with all of them.

"My hope with having our story made public is that it will portray the positive side of adoption," Teri says. "Even though it's a very hard choice to make, it can have a happy ending. I hope it may help someone who is contemplating adoption or give hope to someone who has gone through it." KM



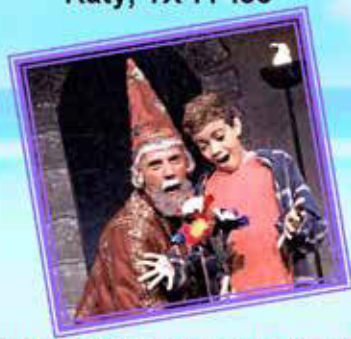
KIRSTEN CORNELL is the lead associate editor for *Katy Magazine* and loves a real-life happy ending.

Long Lost Family

This episode aired on March 6 on TLC
#LongLostFamily



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