

*New Kids, Christmas and a New Year*

We had another special Christmas with our kids! Welcoming six new kids just before Christmas presents several challenges (especially when four are teenagers 😊), but also many wonderful opportunities to include and involve them in our Collins Family traditions.

A couple of notes from the Boys' Home: *One of our fifteen-year old's commented on Christmas Morning, that this was the most gifts he has had since he was 5 years old. There were lots of smiles and laughs over the entire Christmas break! Most parents are excited when it is time for kids to go back to school, but we would like a little longer! We have loved spending this time bonding and getting to know these boys! Thanks to all that make it possible for them to enjoy Christmas!! Bridgette (Boys' Home House Mom)*

*(In reference to three of our teenagers) ...As most teenage boys do, they like to eat! I think they spent a good portion of their Christmas money buying junk food. We had a good time making tacos for dinner and frying eggs for breakfast. They've all been eager to help/learn with cooking. Cleaning up after meal prep still needs work though! Cooking with them reveals a lot about their personalities. David (Relief Dad)*

A couple of notes from the Girls' Home: *Christmas was hectic but always worth it to see the smiles on the kids' faces. All except one said this was, "the best Christmas ever!" Our eight-year old asked for a play mobile school bus. When he opened it, he said, "I have always wanted one of these. I know it's for younger kids, but I love it!" This has been his most played with gift. Our thirteen-year old received an Action Bible and although she already has a Bible, it was touching to watch her excited response and see how much she loved it. She said it was her best gift. She has been very engaged reading and studying it. Another thing that warmed my heart over the Christmas break is the positive comments from the kids of how it feels like a family her for Christmas and how they think we are doing things better than they've experienced in other placements. The laughs and joys of teaching kids to roll out cookie dough and then the kids being creative with different ways to decorate them. Crystal (Girls' Home House Mom)*

*Children enjoy the spirit of those who gave to them for Christmas...* I want to again express our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who donated either gifts or monetarily over the Christmas holidays to make certain that our children had a Merry Christmas.

*Back to school...* Did you hear the moaning and groaning in the air yesterday? That would have been our children adjusting to the reality of the alarm clock and school bells. Yes, they went back to school.

*Well wishes for the New Year...* Each of us at Collins Home wishes you and your family a very Happy New Year. Thank you for loving Collins Home and helping to make a difference for hurting children and families in our community. You are a blessing!