

Stepstone Student's Promising Future



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Thurlon Young entered into the foster care system as a very young child – a time when brain growth and development are most active. During this critical development period, stability and structure in a child's environment is essential. Because many children in foster care are bounced from home to home, mental or behavioral health problems often develop as a result. Luckily, Thurlon was adopted by his foster family who took active measures to provide the kind of environment he needed to thrive. To continue providing that environment, Thurlon's adoptive mom enrolled him in kindergarten at Stepstone Academy for the 2012-2013 school year.

When the school year began, Thurlon's teachers evaluated him and discovered that his math and reading abilities were significantly below the national average. Additionally, they noticed that Thurlon had a lot of energy, but a very short attention span. Through Stepstone Academy's unique Momentum Learning curriculum, coupled with Stepstone 360, which offers students and their families a wide array of learning supports, Thurlon began to show significant progress.

"Thurlon's mom believes in us and trusts us to do what is best for Thurlon," says Catherine Duplisea, Kindergarten Teacher. "Her support has helped to

facilitate his success. She checks in daily and collaborates with us to help Thurlon succeed in both the classroom and at home."

After spending two years at the kindergarten level building his skill set, Thurlon is now working above the national average in both reading and math, and is a true leader in his class both academically and behaviorally. "Every teacher that Thurlon has had at Stepstone has been marvelous," says his mom. "They have been the driving force in Thurlon's success, and I appreciate each one of them."

Thurlon is excited to begin the 2014-2015 school year as a first grader. He has thrived at Stepstone Academy, developing friendships with his peers and respect for his teachers. He is excited about learning and wants to become a police officer when he grows up.

"It is the 'Thurlon's' of the world that remind me what teaching is all about," says Catherine. "Building strong foundations academically, emotionally, and socially through relationships based on trust, respect and hope is the key to success. When the family and school partner together, our students' futures are bright and promising."



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