

Abused children can't wait

The house was moved in by forklift on a hot afternoon and immediately put to use. The modern playhouse, designed and built by OMNIPLAN with DnG Construction, now has children to climb to its second story, to peek out its windows, to imagine and dream within its brightly-colored walls and best of all, a family to love it. For Jeff and Matt, the entire scenario – playhouse and happy children - is a dream.

“We weren’t always sure having a family was even possible,” Matt said. “So it’s pretty amazing to see where we are now.”

Matt spent several years in foster care as a child. Jeff’s grandmother was a foster parent to special needs children. Ten years ago, Jeff and Matt decided to become licensed foster parents themselves. Since then, they have fostered more than 30 children. They have adopted five of the children and are in the process of adopting a sixth. Their children are Dylan, 16, Walton, 15, Angel, 8, Braedan, 8, Kaedan, 5, and Jessiah, eight weeks old.

Together 23 years, Matt and Jeff initially wanted to help the same type of kid Matt had been as a child – living in foster care and in need of a home with love and structure during a time of family crisis. Matt’s parents separated shortly after his birth, and he and his three siblings were placed in separate foster homes as his father battled alcoholism.

“I actually had wonderful foster families as a child,” Matt said. “They were loving and caring, and I stayed in touch with many of them. I came to realize that was my calling – I could take in children who needed a home and we could provide that home.”

But soon their mission to foster turned to desire to build a permanent, loving family and they adopted their first child. One child turned to two then three, four and five. Jeff, a former business analyst, stays home with the children and Matt has a flexible schedule as a flight attendant for Southwest Airlines where he’s worked since 2001.

One of Matt’s fondest memories of his time in foster care was when one family made him a memory book of his time in their house. Matt has done the same thing for the foster children in his care.

“Whether they are in foster care for the short or long-term, we can provide a home where they will flourish,” Matt said. “I’ve loved every child who’s come through this house and I hope we’ve been a positive place for the children.”

And now the De Stijl playhouse can provide a place for their children to play as part of a family where they are loved and cared for and allowed to blossom.

