

## *Abused children can't wait*

Damon found that role model in his Dallas CASA volunteer Jesse.

When Jesse visited Damon the first time, the connection was immediate. A young man in his 20s with a college degree and a full-time job, Jesse represented everything Damon realized he wanted in life.

The pair bonded over football, a lifelong love for both. Jesse encouraged Damon to play football for the high school he attended. Damon made the team with ease and excelled on the field, often with Jesse cheering him on from the bleachers on Friday nights in the fall.

Soon, Damon was not only playing for his high school football team, but he was working part-time at a fast food restaurant and back on track to graduate high school.

Jesse understood how to connect with Damon. When Damon passed all his classes, they celebrated with a trip to paintball. Another time, they flew Jesse's drone. Other times, they'd meet up to watch major football games.

Damon started seeking advice from Jesse. When Damon was having trouble working with the manager at his fast food restaurant, Jesse spoke to him about handling the situation with respect. When he needed advice about girls, he asked Jesse. As Damon started to think about graduating high school, Jesse showed him how to calculate his GPA and what that meant for college applications and his future.

Damon is entering his senior year of high school and hopes to start on the varsity football team this fall. His grades are good, and he's beginning to look at colleges. Appropriate decision-making is still not always natural for him, but he's got Jesse to guide him on his path to manhood.

