

ENGL 1101 Intangible Cultural Heritage Interview Project

Alicia Rhyne Interview

Conducted by Dustin Darby

September 24, 2025

Transcribed by Dustin Darby

The Foster Care System from Experience

Alicia Rhyne, age 49 was born in Columbus, Georgia; moved to Atlanta area in 6th grade; lived in Roswell during high school; moved to Woodstock 7 years ago. She has one sister and stepsiblings. And began foster parent application process in 2020; officially started fostering in 2021.

Dustin Darby (00:01)

I'm going to start by asking you what's your name and age.

Alicia Rhyne (00:06)

Alicia Rhyne I'm 49

Dustin Darby (00:13)

And where did you grow up?

Alicia Rhyne (00:19)

I grew up or I was born in Columbus Georgia, and I moved to the Atlanta area in at six in sixth grade and then moved to Roswell in high school and that's where I went to high school and lived there until recently when I moved to Woodstock about seven years ago.

Dustin Darby (00:32)

Okay, did you have any siblings?

Alicia Rhyne

I do I have a sister um and she's my sibling, but I also had step siblings.

Dustin Darby (00:41)

How many years ago did you start becoming a foster parent?

Alicia Rhyne (00:43)

Um in 2021 so I started the application process in 2020 when covid happened and then took about a year and got once, I officially started fostering kids it was in 2021.

Dustin Darby (00:48)

Okay and since then how many kids have you fostered?

Alicia Rhyne (01:11)

Three and then I would do I did respite fostering for another girl for a very short period of time.

Dustin Darby (01:15)

And how did you decide to become a foster parent?

Alicia Rhyne (01:21)

It's something I've always wanted to do and so I went through my divorce back in 2019 and um gave myself a little while after that and then once covent happened I started working from home and I had the capabilities to do it so I applied and it took about a year long to get approved and so uh in 2021 is what it officially started.

Dustin Darby (01:44)

Okay and how is the fostering program from like your end or your perspective

Speaker B (01:52)

Well to get approved it was a lot of work

it was you know it took a year long a lot of processing my childhood a lot of processing how I was parented talking about my support system um just the whole approval process took a very long time and that was pretty rigorous but I've had a great experience as a foster mom for the most part until it came down to the adoption time then it got a little bit tricky

Dustin Darby (02:22)

Okay and what county did you get go through and connect with?

Alicia Rhyne (02:25)

Cherokee Georgia.

Dustin Darby (02:30)

Right um and then when going through the whole like process did you get to choose who you fostered or was it more of you got put with who you got put with.

Alicia Rhyne (02:49)

No so what happened was when you I get I'm going to say yes because I don't want them to think that I don't want to do this it just has to fit you know my lifestyle otherwise it won't work so the next call I get is for three boys it was a sibling group of five and um it was for three boys ages four to 13 so I said yes and that's when I got these boys here the boys that I have now so no I didn't really get to choose but you do get to say whether something will work for you or not based on age you know all of that so yeah

Dustin Darby (05:03)

And the oldest one was me correct?

Alicia Rhyne (05:06)

The oldest one was you at 13.

Dustin Darby (05:10)

um and then I also want to ask what um what's the thing you're most proud of when it comes to fostering?

Alicia Rhyne

How you guys have turned out um your resilience after everything that y'all have been through how you don't let that you know define you and you've persevered through all of that I'm proud of just of you guys for that.

Dustin Darby (05:34)

All right and then also what is what has been the hardest part.

Alicia Rhyne (05:41)

The most difficult part in the overall when it came time to terminate the parents' rights well I guess the first thing would be when your dad passed away delivering that news to all five siblings that was really really hard and I'll just be transparent in the first year realizing that the dad wasn't really showing up how he want how he should have and realizing that this was probably going to be more of a long –term thing than anticipated because I originally thought that your dad had just lost his job and he was going to come right back you know get his stuff together come back in a month and realizing that that wasn't happening was hard and then with him when him passing away was a hard thing to deliver to you guys um there's been some a lot of hardships through it and then when the adoption time came when they were trying to move you guys so you guys could all be together after y'all had been with me for three years at that point that was hard and then having to move Donald was very hard after a year of having him dealing with some of the issues that we dealt with so there's been a lot of hardships.

Dustin Darby (06:43)

All right and then so going back to earlier you said three was the most you've had at one time correct? (nods yes) Okay and so just looking back on all of those um why should someone else consider fostering?

Alicia Rhyne (07:14)

If they have the love in their heart and the room in their home I mean there's so many kids that this honestly this has been the best thing that's ever happened to me um it's not that I did this because I wanted kids it's not like I'm missing kids in my life I need to have kids it's that I wanted to help kids in a unfortunate situation and I always pictured my life being surrounded by kids even though I never really had the desire like oh I want to get pregnant I want you know but I did always envision my life with kids you know and it has been the most like rewarding thing I've ever done you know.

Dustin Darby (07:30)

I want to go more into detail why did you decide to get into foster care um kind of like the reason?

Alicia Rhyne (08:02)

I just said tied up into I always knew that I wanted kids in my life but I always wanted to like help kids in need versus having my own you know um because I have have a family that some addiction issues in my family and with my ex -husband and um I met some women that lost their children due to their drug addiction but I also saw how hard they were working behind the scenes to get their kids back and so I was in support of that as long as the parents are doing the right thing to get their kids back so I wanted to be the bridge between the parents and the kids during a tough time

Dustin Darby (08:21)

All right and so I'm gonna start wrapping this up what's like been some of your like favorite memories from all what how many years has it been now four four years what are you some of your favorite memories?

Alicia Rhyne (08:35)

Favorite memories have been all the trips that we've taken the snow trip the Disney trip um watching you guys hit different milestones seeing the growth in you from when I first got you just your your dedication to your school work how that has totally changed your um you know and to be honest when you guys all came into foster care you're really only friend group was each other y'all were you know that's who y'all hung out with all the time and to see you branch out and have your solid friend group that you've had the last

four years um even Dimitri he's getting his own friend group you know and watching you wrestling start wrestling your senior year of high school and going out there and giving it your all I was very impressed by that because I would have been terrified but you did it and just you know there's a lot of proud moments that I have from you guys you know.

Dustin Darby (09:33)

What's so kind of like the reverse of this question what are some of your like least proud moments.

Alicia Rhyne (09:40)

I mean my parenting because sometimes you use some polishing, but I hope that everything that I say to you guys and do to and for you guys that you know it comes from a good place and it's out of love you know but I don't know you know.

Dustin Darby (09:53)

And then so the last question I'm going to ask is just overall how would you like how would you kind of describe your experience it's been gone through overall?

Alicia Rhyne (10:10)

It's been awesome and totally working but it has been hard it's been very challenging with some issues you know with your brother having to get moved that was very very hard for me I still have a lot of guilt for that but seeing how well he's doing where he is now I know it was all for the right reasons um and uh yeah that's it I mean honestly best thing i've ever I mean the most the best thing I've ever done hands down okay wouldn't change a thing for the world would change a thing not a thing all right. Would you?

Dustin Darby (10:42)

No, I don't think I would either, Thank you