

# ADOPTION >> LIFE HASN'T BEEN EASY



PETER CIEHLKA/THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Yesmine, 15, has been in and out of foster care. She hopes to become part of a permanent family.

## Foster teen wants the security that a family provides

BY AMY FLOWERS UMBLE  
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When Yesmine smiles, it's impossible not to smile back.

Her wide grin lights up her face, showing off bright white teeth and sparkling brown eyes.

And Yesmine smiles quite often.

Which is amazing, really, because the 15-year-old has had a rough life.

She entered foster care at a young age and was adopted at 9. Last year, Yesmine went back into foster care.

"It has its ups and downs," she said with a small smile.

She rarely tells her friends

about her life. When they complain about their parents, she longs to tell them what foster care is really like.

"I'd be like, 'You wouldn't know how it feels if they were taken away from you,'" the Henrico teen said of the parent figures in her life.

Yesmine loves to style hair and hopes to be a cosmetologist when she grows up. She likes to shop, go out to eat and attend church.

Yesmine wants to be adopted into a family with siblings and hopes to have the security that comes from a permanent home.

"When you have family, that means you have love and support," she said. "There are people out there trying to make sure you're safe."

### ABOUT THE SERIES

On any given day, 1,400 Virginia children seek an adoptive family. The Free Lance-Star joined with Children's Home Society of Virginia, a private adoption agency, to spotlight some of these children. First names are used, but no last names are published to protect their identities.