

The Interview with the Family

On October 22nd, 2013 I went to Queens and visited the home of the XXX family to interview and meet XXXX for the very first time. Seeing him made my heart so happy, he was just the cutest little guy I've ever laid eyes on. I asked XXXX, his mother, if I could hold him to make this interview a little more vivid in terms of what questions come to mind as I hold him closely. Firstly, his name is XXXX and he is now 11 months, his birthday is on November 25th and will be turning one year old soon. XXXX father wasn't present at the moment so I sat XXXX down and began the questioning.

The first topic we covered was about her pregnancy and birth with baby XXXX. She said when she was pregnant the experience was absolutely horrible, I laughed at her reaction because her eyes widened with disgust and annoyance. Apparently, having a belly was a handful. She said that while pregnant, she would always have morning sickness, dizziness, hated meat and eggs, couldn't stand for too long and described herself as the laziest person on earth because she spent most of her experience sleeping. Overall, even though being pregnant "sucked" for her she said she couldn't help the anxiety and excitement she felt to finally meet him.

When it was time for XXXX's birth, I learned that she arrived at the hospital at 6 a.m. and while there, her water broke. XXXX explained that she was always afraid of giving birth, thinking the worst of it, and how the pain must feel. Her birth was honestly the easiest and quickest experience. She said that the only bad thing about it was her contractions and back pains. XXXX had a natural birth, using no epidural. By 3:30 p.m.

she was pushing at 8cm. and she explained that on the fourth push at 3:50 p.m. he was born.

During the first weeks of XXXX having being born, XXXX explained that he spent most of it sleeping, and that sometimes he would sleep so long that she personally had to wake him just to feed him. She barely slept constantly worrying about him, and he would wake her in the middle of the night with his cries. To self regulate, she started a routine for him to get use to. Obviously the baby can't see unless it's vivid dark colors such as black and red and is aware it is no longer in the warmth of his mother's womb. She made it comfortable for him by holding him close, talking to him, feeding him, singing to him at the same times every day. By the time he went to bed it would usually be the same time and it became easier for her to do the same things daily.

XXXX fed XXXX baby formula every 2 hours at first, once again he continued to sleep long hours, and in terms of toilet training he still uses diapers because it is now that he is beginning to learn how to walk. Now that XXXX is 11 months old, I asked her what were some of the new things he was able to do. I learned that he crawls, and knows that the only way he could stand is by holding on to something. He also learned how to clap, wave bye-bye, when asked for a kiss he puts his hands to his cheeks to form a kissy face. I turned XXXX around since he was sitting on my lap playing with his toys, and asked for a kissy face. XXXX just giggled, and the emotion that he was showing me was that he was shy. When XXXX did it he did it, he kissed her right away and you can tell how close she has gotten with him, that their mother-son bond was really strong.

XXXX is currently learning how to walk and little by little he is progressing. I really didn't need to ask XXXX much about communication because it was clear that

baby XXXX only babbled (baby talk). XXXX does understand body movement and language now such as if you shake your head from side to side it means no, and when you nod it means yes. He's starting to understand emotions with the facial expressions you give him as you speak to him. He knows that if you're smiling at him that it is good and also returns the smile. During the interview XXXX turned on the channel for cartoons, and I could tell that XXXX was really interested because he gazed at it and completely dazed out. I also knew that he was interested because when I got in front of the TV he started to cry, and when I moved he stopped and continued to watch.

The types of activities XXXX does with XXXX is usually allowing him to play with his toys, plays peek-a-boo, chases after him when he tries to run, tickles him, reads to him, and then on days that XXXX visits his dad they have family time, by going out to eat and having walks at the park. I asked XXXX about XXXX's relationship with Rodolfo (biological father) and Bebe (thought to be the dad). She says that XXXX isn't old enough to understand their situation, and that he loves them both just as much because they both show him that care, and their with him so much to build that relationship in which he won't separate from them. She tells me that every time either one of them visits; he lets out a happy cry, and that when they leave he cries out of sadness.

Since meeting XXXX for the very first time today, his reaction to strangers was pretty clear. He stared at me from the moment I came in, and couldn't stop staring. When I picked him up he tried to put his fingers in my mouth and there was no emotion on his face but one thing was clear he was trying to know whom I was and what was I. It was like I was a creature from another island the way he was exploring my face. XXXX's

temperament is usually that he's shy and quiet but once he gets to know you he is super funny and friendly. XXXX is Ecuadorian, but XXXX is Ecuadorian and Dominican. XXXX wants XXXX to learn the way of her culture and beliefs in terms of not only will he learn English but, Spanish because it runs in their blood.

She also wants to teach him the different foods, take him to both Ecuador and Dominican Republic to learn more of where he is from. When I asked her what does she think about the whole teen mom experience, and the fact that she wasn't aware of who XXXX's father really was, she told me that she was raised to be responsible for her own actions. She doesn't believe in abortion and said that why should the baby die if it was her and his fathers own fault for being irresponsible, and he shouldn't pay the price with termination. XXXX explained to me that because of her own mistakes XXXX would probably suffer in the quad family that they have. But, she hopes to remind him every day that she will never leave his side, and will continue to go to school in hopes for a better future. She agrees that being a teen mom is rough and if she could go back she would do things differently but one thing she taught me was to never regret anything in life because you just might find that it was everything you ever wanted.

I am eager to come back for my next visitation with XXXX and XXXX and asked to arrange it with the father there this time. I would hope to learn more about what XXXX does in a day, what he eats, what he likes to do, I want to know everything about him to the point where I know him like the back of my palm. I asked XXXX if it was ok to constantly return even with the assignment being over. Because in the future, children like XXXX might cross my way and by then I'll know for sure what I should do.