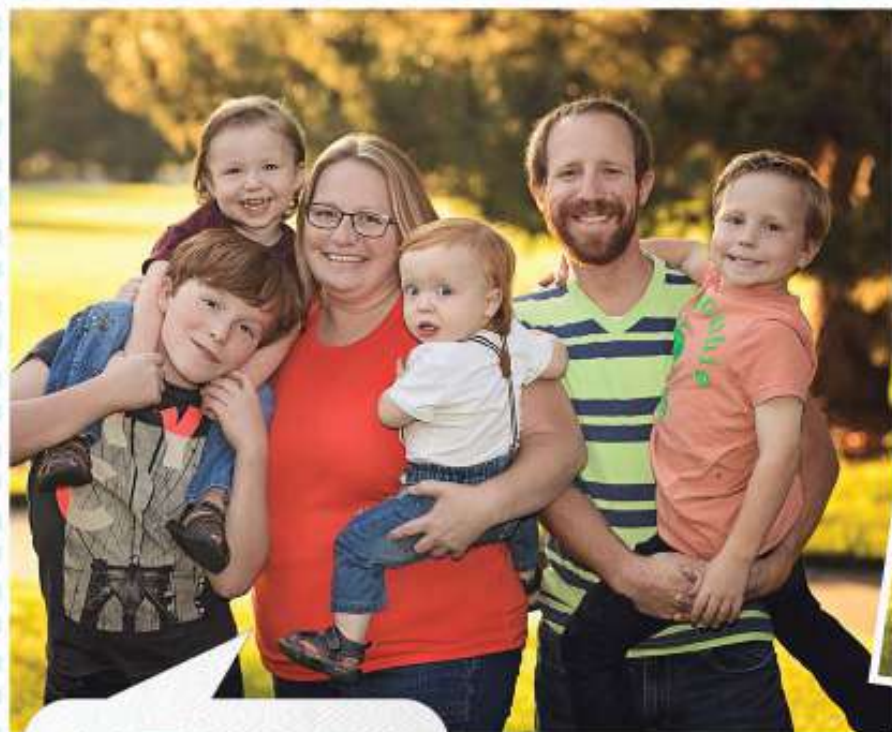


ANTHONY & Shelley





HELLO!

We are **Anthony**,
Shelley Caden,
Kaleh, **COOPER**,
and **Jaxon**!



Hi there Mama to be! Congratulations on your baby girl! Before you get to know us, there are a few things that we would like you to know. First and foremost we want you to know that **THIS JOURNEY IS YOUR JOURNEY**. It is about you and your baby girl and not about us, but about YOU! This is all about what you want and what you feel is best. Second, we want you to know that **we are here to support you and your decisions**. We strongly believe that advocating for what you want, matters more than what we want. While we would be so grateful to be chosen to come along with you, we are here as "background" to YOUR journey no matter what that looks like! Finally, **WE VALUE AND RESPECT YOU**, not only as a mother, but as a person too!

ADOPTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN ON OUR MINDS AND IN OUR HEARTS. Very unexpectedly, we had a 3-month-old baby girl, Brianna, come into our lives who needed us to love her and give her a home to avoid going into foster care. While we were not certified to be a foster family, the state placed Brianna with us through kinship. Having her in our family was a true blessing. Despite our attempts, her parents' wishes for us to raise her, and doing absolutely everything we could, the state decided to move Brianna to a distant family member. We fought and left no stone unturned but in the end, there was nothing we could do. Brianna will always be a part of our family because **WHEN WE LOVE, WE LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY AND WITHOUT LIMITS.** We have 4 perfect boys, however, we have lost 4 angel babies. Much to our surprise, we learned that due to reasons outside of our control we would never be able to carry a daughter to full term. Eventually, our doctor told us that he believes that the angels we had lost had all been girls. After God placed Brianna in our lives, it opened our hearts, eyes, and our minds to know that **WE ALL HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO GIVE.** We began praying for guidance on what God's will was for our family. We feel strongly that now is the right time for us to continue our dream of welcoming you and your child into our family.



Our Story

Told by Shelley

I NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT I WOULD MEET THE LOVE OF MY LIFE WHILE WAITING TABLES AT A STEAK HOUSE, but that's exactly what happened! Anthony and I were both servers at Simms Landing Steak House in Lakewood, CO. We started to hang out with our other co-workers after work each night. Our friendship was quickly turning into a fun flirtatious crush. One night after work, Anthony FINALLY kissed me, and the sparks flew! It didn't take long for us to start dating and for everyone else to find out. Our friends told us that we were going to end up getting married and have a house full of little ones. We were madly in love and fast tracked our relationship. We moved in together after 6 months of dating, and 1 year later, we found out the most exciting news: we were pregnant! We said "I do" 9 months after welcoming Caden. Sure, it might not be the "traditional" way, but it was our way and we wouldn't change a thing. **We had an intimate wedding on the beaches of Riviera Maya, Mexico.** Our immediate family was there to share in our day and Caden was Daddy's best man. It was absolutely gorgeous and everything that we had prayed for! After the ceremony, we celebrated with a delicious dinner and cake. The night ended with all of us changing into bathing suits and jumping into the pool!



We had a big reception with all our family & friends back in Colorado. We wanted everyone to just have fun! The DJ was amazing & kept the party going the entire time. **We had our first dance to George Strait's song "I Cross My Heart."**





**ANTHONY DESCRIBES
SHELLEY:**

Passionate, big
hearted, advocate,
determined, strong,
Christian

**SHELLEY DESCRIBES
ANTHONY:**

Funny, helpful,
hardworking,
intelligent, excellent
cook, Christian

Since the very beginning we made a commitment to each other and our family. Before we were a couple, we were the best of friends, and to this day that **friendship is the center of our relationship**. If we had to choose one word to describe our relationship it would be **WILLING**. We are willing to work through the difficult times, willing to find the light in the dark, willing to go the extra mile, willing to seek and ask for help when needed, willing to learn from our mistakes and be open minded, etc. Being willing is the most important trait to us as a couple and a family because when times get hard **we know that we can get through anything when we are willing**. As parents, we are committed to our children and celebrating them. **We are dedicated to raising our children in a loving, kind, and supportive family.**



OUR FAITH

Religion is relatively new for our family. We now lean on God and grow in Christ every day. We attend a Nondenominational Christian church that's accepting of all regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs. **WE BELIEVE IN A LOVING, GRACIOUS, SUPPORTIVE GOD AND TRUST HIS GUIDANCE**. **We encourage our family to embrace faith by being kind, forgiving, compassionate, and nonjudgemental. Even if their beliefs differ, our hope for our children is that they'll explore faith and continue on their journey of spirituality.**

ANTHONY

I was born and raised in Colorado along with my four brothers and 1 sister. Growing up, everybody in my family played baseball and that was a major part of our lives. My favorite memory was when I hit my first homerun, I was so excited! I still remember the giant smile on my face when I did and my parent's cheering me on in the stands. **I make it my number one priority to attend all our kid's activities and volunteer to help anyway that I can.** In my free time, I enjoy playing, watching, and coaching sports, cooking, and gardening.



GIGGLES & TICKLES



Drop everything & read!



Being able to help others is what drives me! As a District Support Partner, I work directly with all the math teachers in a region of Denver Public Schools. It is my job to find new and fun ways to instruct their students. I have an opportunity to help many teachers improve their skills to be able to support all their students' needs. Even though I'm a bit of an introvert, my job requires that I be outgoing and interact with a people on a daily basis. I don't mind it one bit because I am passionate about the kids, families, and teachers in my region and I love the fact that I can make an impact.

Shelley

I worked in Special Education as an advocate for children with special needs. I am inspired by those who are underestimated due to special needs, but instead of getting discouraged they embrace themselves and prosper. **My ultimate long-term goal is to start my own nonprofit that helps students who have special needs as well as low income students.** I occasionally substitute teach for special needs classrooms but I'm primarily a stay at home mom. I love that I am with my boys all the time and get to be there when they need me no matter what. I love watching the smiles and getting the giant hugs all day. I very much enjoy having my down time and staying in with my family. However, I also enjoy going out and spending time with those that I know. I treasure the "adult" time I can get by spending it with my mom, enjoying the sunshine, getting my nails done, or catching up on an audiobook or tv show.



REMEMBER THIS



good stuff



LOVE



CADEN

Caden is 12 years old and in the 6th grade. He is highly intelligent and has the kindest heart. Caden is bilingual in Spanish in reading, writing, and speaking. He is so thoughtful of others and incredibly giving. If you mention something that you like or want in a random conversation, 9 months later Caden will remember and surprise you on your birthday. Caden is a very shy quiet guy until he gets to know someone and is comfortable. He is a "people watcher" and is the type to sit back, listen, and watch. While Bri was with us, Caden constantly watched over her and took his role as a big brother and protector seriously. Caden asked for his "daily holding time" with Bri (meaning all the other boys could not be there begging to hold) He has always wanted a little sister. Caden struggled when Bri moved and very much is looking forward to having a baby sister.



ACCORDING TO CADEN:

SPORTS: SOCCER + SWIM TEAM

FAVORITE THINGS: FORTNITE
XBOX 1, ROBLOX, + RIDING MY BIKE

FAVORITE SUBJECT: SPANISH

KALEB

Kaleb is 7 years old and is in the 2nd grade. He is incredibly funny! He has kept us laughing ever since he started talking. Kaleb is athletic in every way and a ball of energy. He plays soccer, baseball, and recently started speed stacking cups. He's full of confidence and comfortable with who he is regardless of what others think. He's outgoing and curious and not afraid to try new things. Kaleb is an extremely sweet kiddo and his love language is time. He's my kiddo that has no problem hugging me goodbye and saying I love you in front of his friends.

GET TO KNOW KALEB:

WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY? MY PETS + DOING FLIPS ON THE TRAMPOLINE

FAVORITE THING TO DO? PLAY BOARD GAMES WITH MY FAMILY + VIDEO GAMES

WHAT SPORTS DO YOU PLAY? SOCCER, BASEBALL + SPEED STACKING



COOPER

Cooper just started preschool and loves going to play with the other kids. His face lights up when the school bus comes in the morning! Coop is an incredibly determined little boy. He loves school and happily works hard with his teachers. He has a very vivid imagination and loves to share with those around him. Coop always has a smile on his face. He is very loving and will just run up to give hugs and say I love you and then continue playing. He follows the big boys and will try to do what they're doing. Cooper even asked to play soccer like his older brothers do. He is determined to learn and keep up! Cooper loved to be around Bri. He would do peek-a-boo nonstop making Bri laugh, it was his mission to make her laugh at him. He is so excited to have a baby sister again.



★ QUESTIONS ★ FOR COOPER ★

How old are you? 4

Best part of Pre-k?
PAINTING & COLORING

What makes you happy?
RIDING MY SCOOTER
& PLAYING OUTSIDE
WITH MY BROTHERS





Jaxon aka "Jax" is the youngest boy of the bunch but he does not let being the youngest of 4 boys slow him down. He does everything he can to keep up with his big brothers. Jaxon has the sweetest laugh that can pull anyone out of a bad mood or sadness. He is a "I watch, I see, I do" kind of kid and is more than happy to be the big helper around the house. Jax is fearless and loves to be outside playing in the dirt or going "higher" on the swings. Even as a 2-year-old, Jax very much loved Bri. He was extremely sweet and would lay next to her when she was on her play mat. He called her "baby." Without fail, Jax asks every day when he can be the big brother again.

JAX



JUST ASK JAX!

FAVORITES: CUDDLES,
PLAYING OUTSIDE, LEGOS,
COCO MELON VIDEOS, CARS,
BUTTERFLY KISSES, BEING
TICKLED & MAGNA TILES!

FUN FOR ALL -AND- ALL FOR FUN

WE FILL OUR FAMILY TIME WITH AS MUCH FUN AS POSSIBLE! We love to go do things that everyone will enjoy and that give us an opportunity to have fun together. We love to go anywhere from fairs, Chuck-E-Cheese, trampoline parks, mini-golf, candy making tours, and so much more! **IF THERE IS A FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT WE ARE THERE!** We're a very active family, so in the warmer months we're outdoors and then we cuddle indoors with family movie and game nights during the colder months.



sun & fun



FOOTBALL SEASON IS OUR FAVORITE SEASON, SO IT MADE SENSE TO HAVE SEASON TICKETS TO THE DENVER BRONCOS! Game days at the Mile-High Stadium are a date for us and an opportunity for the kiddos to have their own fun day with their grandparents. In addition to us going for a date night, we also take Caden and Kaleb to their own game so we can have a special day bonding with them.



OH HAPPY DAY



Being in Denver there are **ALWAYS** so many things to do and events going on. We love to find activities that all the kiddos will enjoy despite the age difference.



WEEKENDS ARE SPENT TOGETHER AS FAMILY! During warmer weather, you can find us (and the rest of our extended family) cheering on the kids at their soccer games. After the game, we celebrate with a family lunch and we'll go to church on Saturday evenings. Sundays are our "lazy" days. Life can be hectic at times, so we value a relaxing day at home. The kids spend the day jumping on the trampoline and playing on the playground. If it's cold, we will cuddle up and watch movies and stay in our jammies all day.





We have gone everywhere from the mountains to Disneyland, Disneyworld, Hawaii, California, and Iowa. The Disney Cruise to St. Lucia and Disney Island was hands down one of our best! Disney knows how to make a family vacation unforgettable! We love going on staycations in different cities of Colorado. We're near a Great Wolf Lodge, which is a massive indoor water park hotel as well as a brand-new hotel that is similar. The new one is only 20 minutes away, & we've already stayed there 3 times since opening last year. We love to book a few nights at these hotels & then shut everything down & just enjoy family time.



FAVORITE ACTIVITIES

1. Movies Under The Stars
2. Disney On Ice
3. The Aquarium & Zoo
4. Bike Rides
5. Picnics in the park



Bailey & BEETHOVEN



Bailey is a 13-year-old Shiba Inu & Rhodesian Ridgeback mix. We adopted her when she was a puppy from a rescue. We got her shortly after moving in together & joke that she's our "first baby."



We brought **Beethoven** home in 2017 when a family in a nearby neighborhood had a litter of pups and we couldn't say no! Beethoven is a Saint Bernard; **he's a big dog with a bigger heart**. Both pups have grown up with kids and are amazing with them. **THEY'RE FRIENDLY, GENTLE, AND CALM!** They let the kids play with them and will sleep near the kids at night.



We also have 2 cats:
Tigger & Pretty Kitty Bob!



Best cuddle buddy



.. HOME SWEET HOME ..

We live in an 5-bedroom home that we renovated ourselves. The main floor is incredibly open and that's where we spend most of our time. We have a finished basement complete with air hockey, pop shot, and plenty of toys. **Our backyard is the reason why we chose this home!** We have a 2-tiered backyard that has a deck and a trampoline on the top and a playground on the lower half. On the side yard we have a horseshoe pit area, as well as cornhole and a shed. Even with all of that there's still a TON of grass area for the kids to play.



OUR HOME IS IN THE TOP PERFORMING SCHOOL DISTRICT with schools that will set our kiddos up for success. **Our neighborhood has a swimming pool, tennis courts, a roller hockey rink, and basketball courts.** There's also plenty of parks only a short walk away. We were both born and raised in Colorado and couldn't imagine raising our children anywhere else!

We're ready to redecorate the nursery for baby girl!

FAMILY IS FOREVER

Family plays a very large role in our life. **OUR KIDS ARE VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE VERY INVOLVED GRANDPARENTS ON BOTH SIDES.** They're always attending their grandchildren's games and other activities. It's especially important to us that our children grow up surrounded by a supportive family and have a close bond with them. All of our family lives in Colorado, no more than 30 minutes away, except for Shelley's sister, 1 of Anthony's brothers, and 1 Great Grandma. **Your child will be surrounded by 2 great grandmas, 6 grandparents, 6 aunts, 9 uncles, and 7 cousins and counting**

the best



EVERYTHING ABOUT

THIS IS

WONDERFUL

SHELLEY'S FAMILY

We spend quite a bit of time with my parents. About once a month, my dad, aka Grandpa Doug, will have the boys over for a sleepover. He likes to joke that the kids keep him young. My older brother Scott, aka Uncle Scotty, and his girlfriend, Aunt Adrienne, live close to us. My sister, Ashley, and her husband, Luke, have 3 kiddos. Even though they live in Iowa, we get together at least 3 times a year and talk regularly. Our kids are very close despite the distance. They all play videogames together, text, and video chat often. My younger brother Taylor, his wife, Sylvia, and my youngest brother, Thomas, are all active in our lives.



FUN



Anthony comes from a large family! He has 4 brothers, 1 sister, 3 nephews, & 1 niece. We may not see them everyday but we're very close & still involved.



We celebrate the **4TH OF JULY** with a cookout and fireworks! Our back deck has the best view of the firework shows happening all over the city.



**RED WHITE
AND BLUE**



HALLOWEEN

We always go to pumpkin patches (usually a couple of them) and we paint or carve our pumpkins for the front porch. The kiddos pick out their costumes as soon as they can and love to wear them around.

On Halloween night, Grandpa Doug joins us as we go Trick-or-Treating around the neighborhood. After trick or treating, the boys all come home and dump their candy and inspect their loot.



THE WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS ARE FILLED WITH FAMILY, FUN, AND FESTIVITIES. We kick things off with Gradpa Doug's family where we eat, play games, and open presents. The next party is with Anthony's fam and we all wear matching PJs! There's the annual dinner at Maggiano's with Shelley's mom's family. There's a DJ, dance floor, and the best Italian food. Our extended family is home for the holidays, we're thankful to spend so much time with everyone.



HOLIDAY FAVORITES

- ELF ON THE SHELF
- BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
- DECORATING THE TREE
- GINGERBREAD HOUSES
- BECOMING "SANTA" FOR A FAMILY IN NEED



Santa comes to our house and leaves his gifts arranged around the living room. On Christmas Eve the boys sleep together in one room and wake up early together. The kiddos go look at what Santa brought them, and then wake us up all excited! **Christmas Day is reserved just for us;** we stay home open presents, relax, and enjoy a delicious feast. It's important that we have our own time together.



HOLIDAY *cheer*

FAMILY VALUES

We want you to know: **we know we are not perfect.**

We know parenting is a process and raising our children is an ongoing journey. Our job isn't to change our children; it's simply to teach them. We teach our children how to advocate for themselves. We teach them how to understand themselves and how to express their emotions. We teach them how to solve problems and that it's okay to ask for help. We teach them to make good decisions for themselves, and it's okay to make mistakes. We teach them to lead with kindness and be accountable.



BE TRUE TO YOU.

We want our children to be confident and happy with who they are instead of trying to be someone they're not. We teach them to channel their unique abilities in a positive way... what makes them "defiant" can also make them a great leader. What makes them messy is also what makes them creative, and they can channel that to design buildings or write award-winning novels.

CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION IS KEY. We make time to connect with each child individually (& with each other) to build a safe environment. Good communication brings us closer together and builds an unbreakable bond.

THIS TOO SHALL PASS, ONE DAY AT A TIME.

We believe that no matter what obstacles will arise, we will get past them and prosper. We're not in control of how long it's going to take, but we know this too shall pass. We live one day at a time, while cherishing and holding onto the good times and riding out the bad times.

BE HAPPY.
BE BRIGHT.
BE YOU.

WHEN GIVEN A CHOICE, CHOOSE KINDNESS.

There are moments in life where we get to choose our paths. Although these moments may seem small to us, these moments might make a world of difference to someone else. Kindness is a simple yet powerful way of changing the world we live in. Our hope is that our kiddos will learn that kindness is so much better than being right or being afraid. We can always do better, be better, and be kinder.

LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES.

We allow our children to make decisions. They may not always make the right decision but that's okay! When they make mistakes, they experience the logical consequences. We do our best to never discipline our children out of anger, only out of empathy. We want our kids to understand that their choices have an impact on their lives.

IT'S ALWAYS OKAY TO NOT BE OKAY

It's okay to feel uncertain. It's okay to feel grief. It's okay to feel disappointed. It's okay to not know how you are feeling. We teach our children to embrace their feelings and that their emotions are valid. We strive to build an environment where they feel safe to express their emotions.



Thank you

