



# Bringing up BABY

## Baby daughter changes basketball player's life

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Jill Fosdick has changed. She used to go out with her friends whenever she wanted to. She had two worries: basketball and school. All that changed when her daughter, Jaylin, was born 14 months ago. Parties are now out of the question. So is going to the bars with other 21-year-old friends. Even going to a movie is unlikely. "I feel like I've gone from a kid to an adult in the matter of nine months," said Fosdick, who moved back into her parents' home in Lincoln after one year in the residence halls. "(Jaylin) takes up all my time. I rarely have free time. That's the only drawback, but she's definitely worth it." Initially, Fosdick wasn't so sure a child was worth it. She said she was scared when she found out she was pregnant. "I was wondering what people would think, what my parents would think." She knew marriage with Jaylin's father wasn't an option. She knew she was going to be raising her child by herself.

Fosdick's parents, Mike and Jane, took the news at first almost as if it were a death. "(Being a single mom) isn't the way we wanted it for any of our children," Jane Fosdick said. "You grieve first. Then you deal with what you have to deal with. Our main concern was the baby." As upset as Fosdick's parents initially were, they knew a support staff would be necessary for her. Jane, who has six children of her own, knew her daughter would need help being a single mom. So the rest of Fosdick's family — four sisters, a brother and her parents — decided to help raise Jaylin. Telling her family was just the first of many obstacles Fosdick had to overcome during her pregnancy. The next was a health complication. Fosdick had a problem with her cervix, and doctors told her if she walked for prolonged distances she would risk delivering the baby prematurely. So Fosdick took the 1997-98 fall semester off and stayed at home. Once Fosdick overcame her health problems, she faced the reality that her basketball career might be over. She missed the entire 1997-98 season. Fosdick went to all the home games

after Jaylin was born, but not being in a uniform was difficult for her. "Watching encouraged me, but it was hard to stay away from something I loved to do," she said. Having Fosdick away from the sport she loved was hard on her mother, too. "This was the second part of the grieving process," Jane Fosdick said. "We thought we were going to have to say goodbye to all her dreams of playing basketball." Then, a door opened as NU Coach Paul

Sanderford told Fosdick she didn't have to give up basketball. Sanderford told her he had coached other women with new children and gave her the option to return to the team. "Getting pregnant is something that happens," Sanderford said. "If you're devoted to the sport and can raise a child and go to school, more power to you. Jill has invested a lot of time and effort into the program." Knowing she could return to basketball

helped Fosdick stay positive throughout the 1998 fall semester. "I received great support from the coaches," Fosdick said. "I couldn't have made it through without them." Fosdick returned to school January 1998 and to the NU basketball team last fall. Sanderford said the year and a half away from basketball hurt Fosdick's development as a player. "Her skills have to catch up to the other players," Sanderford said. "She's always enthusiastic." Fosdick has played sparingly this season, but just the fact she's out there in a uniform makes her mother proud. After red-shirting last year, Fosdick has two years of eligibility remaining. When Fosdick is at class, practice or away for games, her mother takes care of Jaylin. On March 5-7, the Fosdicks took Jaylin to watch her mother at the Big 12 Tournament. But it was Fosdick who did more of the watching. "She kind of gets me in trouble because I can't stop looking up at her," Fosdick said. "She's very, very special."



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- JILL FOSDICK  
NU basketball player