



Top left: Austin is just a few weeks old, and still doesn't enjoy the cold air after a warm bath.

Top right: Austin and his mother sit on the couch, enjoying a December afternoon.

Second right: Vicky helps Megan prepare Austin's bath in the kitchen. Megan will often receive help from her mother on tasks such as bathing, and feeding.

Third right: Baby Austin gets ready for a bath while lying on the kitchen counter.

Middle left: Megan and Austin stand in the nursery after he takes a nap. "He doesn't sleep in here often," she said.

Bottom: Megan is beginning to learn the tasks she is required to do as Austin squirms in her arms as she tried to dress him after his afternoon bath.



All About Austin

Photos and Story by Meagan Pecjak

Megan Hopkins is 17-years-old and has the responsibility of most 30-year-olds. She does not pay bills, or have a career, but she has something that some women hold off on far beyond college or university. She has Austin.

The daily life of a young mother seems easy on the outside. But early mornings, inconsistent sleep, and the constant attention necessary for a baby to grow can cause anyone to break down. And yet they continue their lives. Still being the mothers, they were taught to be, and holding on to the one thing in the world that they love most, their baby.

Austin was born on Dec. 8th, 2011, just months after Hopkins turned 17.

Hopkins was fortunate. Her mother Vicky was willing to take time off work to help her daughter blossom into the mother she needed to be. Hopkins always had a ride to any doctor's appointments, as well as a helpful hand with

bathing and feeding Austin.

Graduating was difficult for Hopkins. She finished high school just weeks before Austin was born. In order for Hopkins to be the mother she was required to become, she had to give up something that most girls spend their life waiting for, teen life.

Hopkins traded in nights out with her friends for changing diapers, and taking any opportunity she could to sleep.

Hower, while her friends shake their heads trying to remember their Friday nights, Hopkins will be smiling at Austin's first laugh, word, and step. She won't remember going to prom, because she was home, getting up in the middle of the night to the sound of Austin crying.

Hopkins may not have had the typical senior high school year, but she had so much more.

She will have the ability to look back and say, "Yes Austin, I loved you this much."

