

Real Impact . . .

This is a true story of a Big Brother, a Little Brother and how a shared interest in tools created change.

Last year, a young boy, Cody, was interviewed by a staff member at Big Brothers Big Sisters about his relationship with Don, his Big Brother. Cody easily described the projects he and Don completed, the many football practices, and the new bike Cody purchased with earnings from working hard with Don. When asked how Cody felt about Don, he looked down, shook his head and was silent. When asked if something was wrong, he replied, “No, it’s just that there aren’t words.”

When Cody was first interviewed for a Big Brother, his potential was visible. He was quick-witted, creative, compassionate and mature beyond his years. However, after discussions with his teachers and school officials, it became apparent that Cody was failing every class and absent from school three times as many days as he was present. Each professional wanted to move beyond the behavior and see Cody achieve.

Cody and Don share joy of building things and making repairs. Three years have passed. Cody’s grades have improved to A’s; his attendance is almost perfect, and he has a smile that spreads from one ear to the other. Just by showing up every week, Don has taught Cody how to gain credibility by keeping his word, has led by example demonstrating a strong work ethic, and has become someone Cody can trust.

One evening Cody was stranded outside of town when a family friend’s truck broke down. It was after 11:00 pm and very cold. Cody called Don because Don was the only person he could think of who would come to pick him up. On the drive back home, Cody made the comment to Don, “You are the only person who hasn’t disappointed me yet.”

A few weeks ago Don said he and Cody were riding in his truck and Cody was telling him a story. “Dad”, he said, then caught himself. “I mean, Don”. After a few moments, Cody said, “I called you Dad.” Don replied, “I would be proud to have you as a son.”

Truly, there aren’t enough words.

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