



“This is what protecting children is about”

Recently, I had an encounter with a young man out in the community. This encounter will remain with me for some time. From the moment our paths crossed, we knew one another, but kept it man to man and did not speak about it. Finally, he stated, “you look so familiar”. We spoke briefly and I could tell from his eyes and his body language that it was bothering him that he could not place my face. I asked him where he attended school, hoping and believing I had coached him in high school years ago in a previous life. This was not the case. He asked me where I work and I told him, Children’s Cove. He lit up! He told me his name, and I recognized him instantly. We stood there for a moment awkwardly staring at each other. The young boy had matured into a grown man and he is now across from me in a parking lot. Both of our thoughts and memories raced in our heads. We were speechless for a second and then, he hugged me. I returned the hug and we spoke about his family, his job and his memories about what brought him to Children’s Cove. This was a powerful connection for me. It brought out many emotions and made me think about the work we do to protect children at Children’s Cove.

Driving home that evening, thoughts of the “boy” I interviewed years ago were on my mind. I thought about the work we do and the role we play as advocates. These cases are stressful for all involved. This encounter illustrated for me, the lasting impact we can have on a child even in the midst of a life changing event. Most importantly, this encounter reminded me of what it is all about to be a child advocate.

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