

Hello!

My name is Nicole Estrada, and this coming summer will mark the 21st anniversary of when I received perhaps one of the most important gifts of my life.

When I was 3 years old, I was rushed to the hospital after going into anaphylactic shock from eating a bag of trail mix at my grandparents' house in Newport. I don't remember the details of that day since I was so young, but I do remember reaching into a basket of stuffed animals and being told that I could choose any one that I wanted. Little did I know that the teddy bear I chose 21 years ago would be with me during some of the hardest points of my life, and even move with me to my college dorm room.

Recently, I have been searching around the internet for any backstory of Casey the Teddy Bear and have learned that K of C provides them to first responders to distribute to children during difficult and traumatic moments. Never did I imagine, nor did my parents, that my Casey would continue to bring me comfort when I needed him, and I cannot thank the organization enough for the gift of security that this teddy bear provides. He may not be in perfect condition anymore, but to me, he will always signify safety and the fact that every day I am lucky to be alive after that traumatizing day in 2003.

Again, thank you to the organization as a whole for such a simple gesture, he has truly been a rock for me over the years. Unfortunately, I was not able to find a picture of the two of us from my childhood, but I have attached a current picture instead. I wanted to share the story about my Casey because he means so much to me, and without the K of C, I may never have found my best friend.

God Bless,



- Nicole Estrada