

While on a quick errand for day camp supplies at the dollar store, I turned the corner toward the till and saw a boy no older than 10 standing quietly in front of the cashier. In his hand were two crumpled \$5 bills and a loonie. He was asking the cashier to remove items, one by one, until the total came under what he had.

There were no toys or treats in his basket, just essentials: a loaf of bread, canned goods, a few basics. It was clear he'd been sent to pick up what his family needed and was doing his best to make every dollar stretch.

The cashier had to call a manager to approve the voids, and as we all waited, the boy stood silently with a worn backpack on his shoulders. You could feel his anxiety, his eyes scanning the counter, unsure, trying to get it right. When the final amount was tallied, he handed over his money, took the few items he could afford, and turned to leave. As he walked away, he quickly wiped his eyes.

In that moment, it hit me: **this is why outreach support matters.**

I stepped forward and asked the cashier if I could pay for the items he had to leave behind. The boy began to say, "You don't have to," and I replied, "You're right, I don't. But I want to. It's Friday, and we all deserve a little joy on a Friday."

The cashier rang the items back through and handed them to him. He hesitated, unsure if he was allowed to take them. I looked him in the eye and said, "It's okay. You're good to take that food home now, I promise."

The entire exchange lasted under ten minutes, but I won't forget it. The range of emotions he went through, worry, confusion, relief, gratitude was overwhelming to witness in someone so young.

As I walked back to my car, I saw him again, helmet on, backpack secured, riding his bike home. And all I could think was:

**This was a moment I was able to say YES.**

**This was a moment your support made possible.**

This was a moment where, for just a little while, we lifted the weight off a child's shoulders.



**SO TODAY, I JUST WANT TO SAY: THANK YOU**

