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### Being Raised by Law Enforcement

Since a very young age, I knew my life was different from my peers. Most people I grew up with had lived in the same place their entire lives and would watch their parents leave and come home from work at the same time every day. With my dad having a career in law enforcement, it doesn't just affect his life, it affects the whole family. Growing up, I have had to move away from my home, change my daily routine many times, and watch my dad have to leave us to go on work trips for many days at a time.

When I was about eight years old, my dad had just started working in law enforcement, and he got stationed in a small city about two hours away from my home. At first, my dad moved by himself and would come down to visit us whenever he could. After a few months, my mom, my siblings, and I packed up our stuff and moved to a completely different city to be with my dad. Although I was very young, I was able to realize that life was very different than it was back at home. Not only was it a much smaller city with not much to do, but I would no longer see the rest of my family as much as I used to. The new school I went to was different than the school I went to back home and so were my peers. To top it all off, after about five months, we packed up

our stuff once again and moved back home. Although it was exciting knowing I would be going back to my old life, I had just got used to the new place.

In most jobs, a person will go in at a reasonable time and get out at a reasonable time. However, my dad has a job where he sometimes has to work a graveyard shift. This shift doesn't just happen once a week like in some jobs, he has to work all night for weeks at a time sometimes. This means, as my siblings and I are heading out to school in the morning, my dad is barely getting home from his shift. By the time we get home, it is almost time for him to leave again. If he wants to spend time with us, he would have to sacrifice some of his sleep which I know takes a toll on him. When I was younger and my dad would work graveyard shifts during the summer, my mom would have to find activities for us outside the house because we would get too loud and my dad wasn't able to sleep. As kids, it's not easy to keep quiet all day so I know my mom always had a hard time with us.

The saddest thing of all has been when my dad has to go out of town for work purposes. Just recently he was gone for two weeks because of training. Although we still have my mom and we're old enough to not give her trouble, the house doesn't feel complete without him. I know it also hurts him to leave because he feels useless being so far away and because he is constantly worrying about us when he is gone.

My dad being in law enforcement has shaped the way I grew up and has played a huge role in who I am. Although I notice the difference in my life from some of my peers, this is my normal. From growing up with his, I have learned that having an important job takes sacrifice from many people. It can be scary sometimes watching a person I love go to work every day but I know what he does out there so important.