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Encourage the Next Generation



Jordan Okeefe's 16th Birthday

Be generous and thoughtful to your friends' children. Most people would rather that you do for their kids than for them. It's a tremendous compliment to be good to your friends' children. It also helps a child to see another adult think well of them. If you think back to your childhood, you can remember that great relative or family friend who was a positive example and influence. My uncle Ronnie was a huge influence. He owned an independent insurance agency and was very generous. There aren't that many of them out there; you need to be one of them!

When I receive high school graduation announcements, I normally respond with \$100 and an opportunity for the would-be graduate to earn another \$100 by writing me back with a list of written goals. It's a win-win-win. My friend's child gets \$100 if they do nothing more. The second win kicks in when they actually take the time to write their goals (surprisingly 80-90% actually write back with written goals) and the third win hits when I send a kind note of encouragement with the additional \$100.

There are a lot of opportunities between birth and graduation to be helpful and thoughtful to your friends' children. One of my favorite and oldest lines I represent in the Security business is a universal Key FOB that arms and disarms security panels, called Street Smart now owned by Honeywell. My boss for that line is Mark O'Keefe who lives in the second best city in America, San Diego, but he's from the best city, Dallas. His wife Lynn called me a month before some monumental birthdays. Their son Jordan was turning 16 over this spring break and Mark would be 45 that same week. She told me she was thinking about surprising them and flying them to Dallas for a few days! I made a deal with her: you get them to Dallas and I would have the rest covered. So they came, and, in one day, Jordan got to drive a Ferrari, drive a Lambo, sit courtside at a Mavs basketball game (which they won in the final seconds to clinch a playoff spot) and saw himself on Sports Center with his dad. Talk about a day!

Mark is a dialed-in great father. There is simply nothing I could do for Mark that would have measured up to what we could do for his son. It's not money. It's the freedom that money allows

you the opportunity to do great things for great people. Talk about a real life “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off”! Jordan did his part. I got a Top 10 best thank you card I have ever received a week later from him. Thank you Jordan for that first-class follow up! What made his thank you card so great was his sincerity and genuine appreciation.