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## November 21

Two years ago my brothers and I were excited to have a few days off school. Thanksgiving was upon us and my grandparents were in town. Many members of my family were coming for the holiday weekend. All I could think about was seeing my family and thanksgiving dinner; my mom and I were going to make a homemade pie. It was cold out and the leaves had mostly turned orange and yellow and fallen to the ground. The hope of winter was in the air and my family was happy. We decided to meet some local family members at a nearby restaurant. It was so nice that we walked there. We even saw some neighbor friends at the restaurant. We ordered and settled in for some lively dinner conversation.

After about an hour at the restaurant, my brothers were getting restless and wiggly and starting to annoy the adults. "Can we go home?" my oldest brother asked. My parents thought that was fine. We have always lived in the same house and walked many places downtown so we know the rules of the road. I asked my parents, "Can I go with them?" My parents said yes and told my brothers, "Make sure to take care of Casey." Little did anyone know that my decision would change us all. My parents could not have predicted what would happen next. My brothers were walking ahead of me and I was trying to keep up as we crossed the street. The next thing I knew, I saw nothing. When I woke up, I saw my mom crying. I saw the lights of the ambulance, fire

truck and police car. I felt the pain in my stomach, my head, my knees. I thought I was having the worst nightmare in the world. Everything seemed to slow down and to this day I can still see the lights, feel the pain and lose sense of time. A few seconds later I found myself getting loaded into an ambulance. That's when I started screaming at the paramedic asking if it was all a dream and she kindly responded "No, you have been hit by a car." That is when I couldn't hold back the tears. I felt dizzy so the paramedics took my blood pressure and it was really low. I could not hear exactly what the medics were saying but I think they said, "We have to take her to the trauma center." We later found out that I had internal bleeding that caused my blood pressure to drop. I was scared and my family was too. One of my brothers sat in the corner without speaking as a tear ran down his face. My oldest brother sat next to me holding my hand apologizing even though it was not his fault. Finally, they took me to a room where I could be alone with my family. Everything hurt and there was still blood everywhere. My mom stayed the night with me in my room and I slept. I can not imagine how my family felt. I still was in denial about it all. Over the night, the doctors woke me up every couple hours. So many visitors came the next day making sure I was okay. I have such a wonderful family that supported me the whole way but I also had to support my family mentally. My whole family is still hurt by this experience.

Today I am better. My family and I learned that we stick together and forgive each other no matter what. It's hard to think about this experience because it could have been worse and we all have regrets about the night. The truth is that our fear and our trauma could have broken us but we are ok. We lived through it and were brought

closer because of it. My family helped me through my recovery, physical therapy and concussion therapy. We all learned that life can be hard but we can do the hard stuff.