

# Words of Wisdom

Category: Unsung Heroes

written by Debra Bures | April 2, 2023

Decades ago, I worked with hospitalized children and their families as a child life specialist on the pediatric unit of a local hospital. We cared for kids from birth through age 18.

One of our patients was a 14-year-old young man who had been in a bad automobile accident; he was on our unit for some time. A nurse, a young, new graduate, insisted that this young man be bathed every day. He declined, and she insisted. The conflict accelerated until a wise, experienced nurse's aide came into the room. She looked at the young man, then looked at the young nurse, and told them both to calm down. She then said, addressing her words to all of us, "Honey, no one has ever died of dirt."

Then she calmly walked out of the room. The power struggle was defused. I don't remember what happened to the boy or the nurse, though I've thought of the nurse's aide on and off ever since.

Years later, when I was a young mom and my kids didn't want to bathe daily, I replayed that wise woman's words in my head: "Honey, no one has ever died of dirt."

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