

Toddler Survives in the Woods in Freezing Temps for 2 Days After Befriending a Bear

A toddler says he survived two days in the woods after befriending a bear.

Yes, you read that right.

Three-year-old Casey Hathaway disappeared into the North Carolina woods last week by himself and survived because, he says, a bear watched over him.

His family calls it a miracle.

“He said he hung out with a bear for two days,” his aunt posted to Facebook. “God sent him a friend to keep him safe. God is a good God. Miracles do happen.”

His grandmother said, “This little one was lost in the woods for days in the freezing temperatures, rain, dark nights and wind. He told us that his best friend the bear was with him to help keep him safe. Thanks to God’s mercy, he came home to us alive and well. His parents searched diligently minute after minute of every hour/day without stopping.”

Here’s how it all began.

Last Tuesday, Casey was playing at his grandmother’s house when he disappeared. The family reported the disappearance within the hour. By 8 p.m. that evening, the temperatures dropped below freezing. In the days that followed, professionals and volunteers combed the area around the house. By Thursday, inclement weather forced the FBI to halt volunteer operations, and only professionals could continue the search.

NPR reports the terrain was “treacherous,” with some areas flooded and filled by sinkholes, the Craven County Sheriff’s Office said in an update online. Even trained searchers were experiencing difficulties.

Thanks to prayers and police, Casey was found Thursday night about 40 to 50 yards deep into the woods.

Craven County Sheriff Chip Hughes said rescuers waded through nearly waist-deep water to get to the toddler.

“We just want to tell everybody that we’re very thankful that you took the time out to come search for Casey and prayed for him.” Casey’s mom, Brittany Hathaway, says. “He is good. He’s up and talking. He’s already asked to watch Netflix.”