

Dare to care: Nine-year-old girl delivers puzzles to seniors with dementia

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When she's not helping other kids with sick family members, Hailey Richman distributes puzzles designed to benefit people with dementia. Photo from: John Herr/Family Fun Magazine/TNS

Meet Hailey Richman, from New York City. This 9-year-old girl is on a dual mission: When she's not helping other kids with sick family members, she's distributing puzzles designed to benefit people with dementia. What was her inspiration for it all? Her grandmother, of course. We are proud to share her story.

How She Got Started

When Hailey was 4 years old, her grandma (whom Hailey calls her best friend) was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. After the diagnosis, Hailey's mom, Emma Richman, reached out to the founder of Puzzles to Remember, a charity that gives jigsaw puzzles to nursing homes, veterans institutions and other facilities that care for dementia patients, to ask how her family could get involved. Hailey soon became passionate about delivering and completing puzzles with the residents at her grandma's nursing home. Later that year, Hailey was named the

honorary assistant director of the organization and, four years later, the "honorary" was dropped. She also donates her allowance and provides puzzles for her classmates to take to other elder care residences.



Her Passion Grew

Hailey's experiences at the nursing home inspired her to start an online support group for kids helping a sick family member. On Kidcaregivers.com, Hailey, with her mom's supervision, answers questions and writes about her family's experience with Alzheimer's. The site has reached kids from every continent (except Antarctica). What is Hailey's most important message to other kids? They're not alone.

Her Advice To Other Kids

A nursing home can be a scary place for children, so Hailey reminds them that their job is to help loved ones feel calm and happy. "Go into their world," she says. For example, some of the residents think Hailey and her friends are their grandchildren, and the kids happily play along!



Quiz

- 1 Read the section "How She Got Started." Select the sentence that suggests other people noticed and appreciated Hailey's hard work and dedication.
 - (A) When Hailey was 4 years old, her grandma (whom Hailey calls her best friend) was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.
 - (B) Hailey soon became passionate about delivering and completing puzzles with the residents at her grandma's nursing home.
 - (C) Later that year, Hailey was named the honorary assistant director of the organization and, four years later, the "honorary" was dropped.
 - (D) She also donates her allowance and provides puzzles for her classmates to take to other elder care residences.

- 2 Which paragraph in the article supports the idea that children might not feel comfortable helping the elderly?

- 3 What is MOST likely the reason the author included the information about Hailey's grandmother's illness?
 - (A) to show why Hailey is so passionate about helping people with dementia
 - (B) to explain why Hailey enjoys doing puzzles in her spare time
 - (C) to describe how children can help the nursing home patients feel happy
 - (D) to illustrate that kids of any age can have a sick grandparent

- 4 The author MAINLY explains the importance of Hailey's work by:
 - (A) listing her motivations to deliver puzzles
 - (B) talking about her online support group
 - (C) naming her roles with Puzzles to Remember
 - (D) describing how she helps people