



It's Not Who I Am



I was contacted in late September by Kids are Heroes. They are another grassroots website that promotes kids and teens that work to make a difference in their communities.

I, along with many other children and teens, including others that received the Kohl's Cares for Kids 2008 scholarships, were recognized by "Kids are Heroes".

This amazing website was created by MaryMargaret (hey two first names just like me) and her dad Gabe. They have dedicated their web page to all kids that are making a difference. Kids are Heroes says, and I agree, that giving back to ones community is a great thing.

Kids are Heroes home page says: "Kids are indeed heroes. This website is dedicated to them. Are you a

kid looking for ideas on how you can give back a little bit of your time to the community? Are you a parent looking for ways your children can participate? Are you trying to discover a way to help other kids who have started something special in their community? Are you just a kid looking to see what other kids are doing? If any of those descriptions fits you then you've come to the right place."

They have a great website www.kidsareheroes.com, please visit them and learn what other great kids are doing to make a difference in their communities and around the world.

Again I feel honored to be a part of a great group of hard working kids and teens. You should join us, it is a lot of fun!

Seizure Dogs

Some dogs are trained to bark to tell someone when a child has a seizure while playing outside or in another room. Some dogs learn to lie next to someone having a seizure to prevent injury.

In a 1998 survey, 77 people 30 & 60 years old and had epilepsy were asked about their pets' behavior prior to & during seizures. 10% felt their dogs knew when they were going to have a seizure. 28% said their dogs stayed with them when they had a seizure.

The survey said that reports of seizure-alerting behavior in dogs is credible. But cautioned, the behavior seems to occur spontaneously and may occur in as many as one in ten situations when the owner is having at least one seizure per month.

What Epilepsy Means to Me

There are many false conceptions about what epilepsy truly is. Like during the late 1400's when a man named *Malleus Maleficarum* wrote a witch hunting handbook, which lead to the persecution to over 200,000 women. As years progressed, epileptics were subjected to torture and mal mistreatment.

Even in modern times such as today, people with this disorder are misunderstood. I have also had the misfortune of being called, 'freak,' and 'seizure girl,' among other things. But what the ignorant don't understand, is that we're no different than those who do not have this disorder. We can do just about anything, with the exception of a cou-

ple of activities that may be dangerous for ourselves or others if we were to have a seizure.

I have a different view on epilepsy. Being on the front lines, I can understand what it really means to have a seizure disorder. The challenges I faced while seizure active proved to be tremendous. Having to take medication routinely, multitudes of doctors visits and the horrid ridicule of those watching on the sidelines. But I don't wallow in those few hardships and complications. I use them as a tool to educate others and let them know I am the same as they are with one small exception. I am an intelligent young woman who wants to be treated the

same as anyone else with or without epilepsy.

I think of all I've learned and received by having epilepsy. I learned what it's like being different and helping those less fortunate than I. I have dedicated my life to epilepsy and teaching others about it. Living life with epilepsy shouldn't be a burden, it should be a joy. My name is Sara, and I'm proud to have epilepsy.

Still, I revel in what I have yet to learn and look forward to the day that we with epilepsy have a cure.

Epilepsy Q & A—

Q: What should I consider if there has been only a single seizure? When a child or adult has never had a seizure before, the first seizure is usually followed by a careful medical evaluation to help the doctor decide whether to recommend treatment with seizure-preventing drugs, or to wait and see whether it occurs again. The most important factor in deciding whether to begin drug treatment for a single seizure is the probability of further seizures. Physicians use both diagnostic tests and careful evaluation of the seizure itself to determine how likely it is that the patient may have more seizures in the future. Age, family history, and possible causes of the seizure are among the factors that are considered. Non-medical issues, such as loss of driver's license or worries about impact on employment, may also enter into the decision. In many cases, the doctor will recommend waiting to see if another seizure occurs before beginning treatment.