

'TIS THE SEASON ESSAY CONTEST



By

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'Tis the Season Essay Contest

"If you could help somebody who would it be and why?"

I met Cassie Brondolo once at the ice skating rink a few years ago. We both enjoy ice skating and our moms are old friends. I remember meeting her big sister, Caitlin, too. She did not ice skate with us, because golfing was her thing. A few weeks ago, my mom asked me if I would like to go to Cassie's house to visit after school. "Sure, let's go!" I shouted. Going to someone's house seemed like a lot more fun than homework! However, when I got home, I still had to get to my homework. Oh boy. I emptied out my backpack to get ready. That is when I saw the paper for this essay contest and decided that I would like to help Cassie Brondolo. You see, Cassie's big sister, Caitlin, recently passed away tragically.

On May 31, 2009, twelve year old Caitlin went to sleep over her best friend's house, like most girls do on a Saturday night. While they were asleep, they were poisoned by a horrible gas called Carbon Monoxide. Did you know that Carbon Monoxide has no smell? You cannot see it either. This gas is so harmful since you do not know that it is there. Because of this horrible gas, Cassie is left without her big sister. I cannot imagine what that must be like, but after visiting Cassie, I can see how much she has lost. To feel closer to her sister, Cassie sleeps in Caitlin's room now, keeping all of Caitlin's things the way she liked them. Trophies, pictures of family and friends, posters, and her name in big letters hang on the wall. Even her closet mirror is decorated with drawings and cool words.

Cassie's family started the Caitlin Brondolo Charitable Foundation to help other children. This charity will give golf scholarships to children interested in Caitlin's favorite sport. The foundation will also tell people about the dangers of carbon monoxide. Their website (www.caitlinfoundation.org) has information about the golf scholarships and important facts to learn about carbon monoxide. Caitlin's artwork is also on this website. Caitlin drew some cute animals and her own characters called "People in Purple". One of her cute drawings is now used for the foundation's t-shirts.

I would like to help Cassie start a special day to remember her big sister, Caitlin at schools in Florida. On this day, students, teachers, and parents can wear purple to remember Caitlin. It can be called "Purple Day". If each person wears

purple and also donates just one dollar to Caitlin's foundation, they can help support the golf scholarship program and awareness of carbon monoxide poisoning.

If you have ever lost a loved one, than you might know how Cassie feels. I have lost some of my great grandparents, but losing someone so young just does not seem right. I would love to help Cassie because it must be really hard for her. I want her to know that with her family and friends around her, there is always hope, and there is still good in the world.