

When you get out of the bed in the morning and brush your teeth, do you think about how easy that was for you? As you drive to work and pull an eight-hour shift, have you ever thought to yourself, "Wow I am blessed"? My name is Kayla, and I am a PCA at Children's hospital Cincinnati. In 2013, I started volunteering at a camp for kids with Epilepsy, called Camp Flame Catcher. The average incidence of epilepsy each year in the U. S is estimated at 150,000 or 48 for every 100,000 people.

As a child, being "different" can change your life. You learn to evaluate your surroundings to make sure people won't stare or laugh at you. You fear sleepovers with your friends because they are afraid of your condition.

As a parent to a child with Epilepsy you also fear that nobody can take care of your child when they are away from you. You want so badly for your child to feel like part of the group. To be a "normal" child.

Camp Flame Catcher allows all those things to happen. The camp is staffed with nurses, counselors, and volunteers like me. We are trained to keep the children safe, make sure they get all their medicine, but most importantly to allow them to enjoy their camp experience. The camp offers rock climbing; horse back riding, as well as many other activities these kids otherwise would not be able to participate in. The best part of camp is: everyone has Epilepsy, and for just a moment in time, these kids can let down their guards, and feel safe, loved, and carefree! And most importantly, Camp Flame Catcher offers them friendships that last a lifetime!

After volunteering at the camp I found myself humbled. I watched many kids struggle to do things you and I do every day without thought. One of the teens has multiple seizures a day, and had seven to eight seizures while trying to reach the top of the rock climbing wall. Well, guess what? She made it to the top! These kids teach you to see the world in a whole new light. They are much braver than we are; they persevere, and find strength when many of us would give up.

That first camp changed my life, and I am asking you to help me continue changing these kids' lives. These families spend countless hours at hospitals and doctors visits, they spend every penny on medicine to try to control this disorder. Some of the families can't afford to give their kids this amazing gift.

So what do you do when you have a problem? You find a solution. I started a fundraiser event called Light My Fire. This year will be our third year doing this; all the money raised goes directly to the camp to cover tuition for families unable to provide the funds.

My mission: To shine light on Epilepsy and provide a way to see children smile through their fight! With your help we can change the way a child experiences life, even for a day. With your donation you can help me achieve this.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. You can reach me at
kc.fundraiser@yahoo.com or 513-284-7475