

MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION

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I imagine most of you reading this have at least heard of Make-A-Wish, maybe even some of you have personally been touched by this organization or know someone who has had a wish. In Iowa through November 2018, there have been 50 wishes granted. Here in Dubuque we grant more wishes each year than you may realize and the fundraising and wish granting is done 100% by a dedicated group of volunteers. I have personally been volunteering with Dubuque's Make-A-Wish Foundation for 10 years now. I have countless stories of how this organization has given joy to local children.

One in particular that has always stayed with me was a Dubuque little girl who was fighting cancer. She really wanted to meet Cinderella and wear a Cinderella dress. She was in remission and was heading to Disney later that year. Shortly after remission, she relapsed and as cancer often does, it came back with a vengeance. Make-A-Wish was able to rush her wish and get her to Disney. I bought her a dress to wear for her Cinderella meeting, that picture is one I'll hold forever. Shortly after they returned from the trip, she passed away. Her family said those days at Disney were some of the best they had and was so thankful for those memories.

The mission of the Make-A-Wish foundation is to grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. A wish experience is more than just a wish; it is often the catalyst that brings back the child's belief in themselves. Not to mention a break from the doctor visits and every day unimaginable worry the family experiences.

The light in a child's eyes when we show up is an indescribable feeling. It gives the child and their family something to look forward to, outside of the next appointment, the next surgery, etc.

Children who are granted wishes are between 2 ½ years of age and 18 years of age and are confirmed by their physician as having a life-threatening medical condition (this is not necessarily terminal). They get to choose a wish under the ideas of ...I wish to go, I wish to have, I wish to be, I wish to meet. The Make-A-Wish Foundation covers all aspects of the wish including travel, tickets, meals, incidentals and medical needs. As you can imagine these can get costly and it is estimated every 34 minutes a wish is granted across the United States.

The children and families I have personally met are by far the strongest children I have ever met. I joined and feel strongly about this organization because it is one that gives a child and their family some amazing memories at a time when they are enduring the most unimaginable situations. Thank you for your consideration! I hope you will choose Make-A-Wish as a cause for C&B!