

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF MID-MAINE

Spending a few hours every week together over the last two years, Little Sister Ryder and her Big Sister Hayley, of Waterville, have built a friendship that is positively impacting both of their lives. A small investment of Hayley's time is paving the way to Ryder's best future.



Ryder's mother Andrea, a single mom with three kids, said she wanted to give her youngest daughter another adult to look up to.

"Ryder lacks self-confidence, she struggles at times academically, but also socially, because she feels like she doesn't always fit in," Andrea says. "Hayley has helped Ryder find her own voice, and is really just teaching her how to enjoy life. We are so grateful for this program."

Their community-based match adventures are expanding Ryder's world, as Hayley has introduced her Little to things like roller-skating, hiking and visiting art museums. But it's just time together that creates what Hayley calls "a uniquely dynamic friendship" because the two choose to spend time together like friends, but with a greater sense of responsibility, like family. Hayley says every time they hang out, it encourages her to rethink things she knows, consider others' points of view and just puts things in a different perspective.

For Ryder, it's simply about having a caring friend she can depend upon to be there for her. "We have so much fun together. I can't wait to see her every week."

EDUCATION