

# Kid of the Year! Paisley Elliott

*Paisley, age 8, becomes News-O-Matic's youngest Kid of the Year!*



Paisley flashes the peace sign after landing in Uganda.

“No matter what age you are, you can always change the world.”

Paisley Elliott said those words. And the 8-year-old *lives* them too. She created a group called Paisley’s Pals. It helps refugees in other parts of the planet. Paisley also inspires other young people to make a difference. She is the 2021 *News-O-Matic* Kid of the Year!

*News-O-Matic* chose its first Kid of the Year in 2012. Back then, 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai won the award. For the 10th Kid of the Year, *News-O-Matic* readers gave Paisley the top prize. She’s our youngest Kid of the Year ever!

“I voted for Paisley because I love the work she’s done with the refugees,” explained Chris. “I love it when I see people doing good for the world,” wrote the reader. “I want to try to help people like that out too,” added Iman. “It’s great that she’s helping out so much!”

Paisley first found out about refugees when she was 4 years old. “It just made my heart cry,” she explained. Paisley learned that more than 80 million people have had to leave their home to stay safe. And about 35 million are children. “I decided to do something,” the 3rd-grader said from Grapevine, Texas.

Millions of refugees come from Syria, Venezuela, and South Sudan. They end up in other nations, such as Turkey, Colombia, and Pakistan. More than 1 million refugees have gone to Uganda. In October, Paisley visited the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement in that African country.

Paisley and her family handed out supplies at the refugee camp. Those include books, bicycles, and computers. Paisley also gave out 10 “SHINE boxes,” which help provide an education. The boxes can become desks, benches, a puppet theater, or shelves. Refugee camps may not have electricity. So, Paisley brought along solar-powered lamps to let kids study at night.

How did the kids react to those materials? “They were just so happy,” said Paisley. “And it makes me feel great,” she added. “I’m helping other people because I feel like that’s one of my talents,” Paisley explained. “It’s just what I love to do — it makes my heart filled with joy.”

Paisley said the young refugees were “pretty much the same” as her. “I mean, we’re both kids,” she explained. “There aren’t really any differences.”

“I’ve already done some amazing things like become Kid of the Year,” added Paisley. But the 8-year-old doesn’t plan to stop soon. “It just feels like I can do more.”

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*By Russell Kahn (Russ)*