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Houston girl's donation helps other by a hair

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HOUSTON-Eleven-year-old Kristen Johnson did not think twice when it came to a chance to serve another child.

Moments after watching an "Oprah" episode about Locks of Love, a program providing hairpieces for ill children, she made plans to become a donor.

Locks of Love began in 1997 and has helped thousands of children receive hair donations, which may otherwise cost up to \$3,000 a hairpiece. The organization accepts hair donations of at least 10 inches long, and about 80 percent of the donations are for young children.

Johnson, a member of Willow Meadows Baptist Church, said being a donor was easy. Having had long hair all her life, she welcomed the change.

And the ambitious sixth-grader wasn't shy about giving up her locks. During the latter part of the school year, she dropped into a local salon and chopped off 14 to 15 inches. Her brown hair now rests near her shoulders.

For Johnson, it was just an opportunity to help another person. Like Jesus, who she says, "did a lot of things for people," to her it just seemed like the

right thing to do.□

"It made me feel good," she explained. "It made me feel better that somebody else was getting something they needed."

Houston's summer weather was reason enough to donate her long locks, Johnson said, noting she may donate her hair again.

Helping someone makes a person "feel better in your heart, and you feel better about yourself," she said.

For more information on Locks of Love, call (561) 963-1677 or visit www.lockslove.org on the Internet.

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