

# Tucson Child Making a Big Impact

Written by Ashley Pearlstein

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Mia Lonsway is a fun-loving 8-year-old Tucsonan who enjoys walking her dog, staying active, and attending school with her friends at Ocotillo Ridge Elementary School. When she is not doing typical 'kid' stuff, Mia is using her bravery and voice to shine a light on juvenile diabetes, proving that even the smallest people can make a big difference.



**AFM: You are a part of the Children's Congress through the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, what exactly is this organization?**

ML: It's when children talk to congress about finding a cure for diabetes.

**AFM: How many young delegates got to go to Washington D.C.?**

ML: There were 160 kids (ages 4-17) from across the country and even a few international delegates.

**AFM: How were you chosen to go to the Children's Congress event?**

ML: I applied online and they sent me back a letter that said I was accepted.

**AFM: Why did you decide you wanted to be an advocate for juvenile diabetes research funding?**

ML: I wanted to do it because I have diabetes. I found out that I had it in August of 2009. I knew that if I did this that I could be a voice for other kids with diabetes.

**AFM: How has diabetes affected your life?**

ML: I haven't been able to have sleepovers, and I have to check my blood sugar eight to 12 times a day. I also had to learn to use my insulin pump; I wear it all the time. It's how I get my insulin so I don't have to give myself shots everyday.

**AFM: What did you do when you got to Washington D.C.?**

ML: Once we got there, there were a bunch of different parts. The first part was when we sang a song called "Promise to Remember Me." Crystal Bowersox (American Idol contestant) sang with us. Then the next day there was a breakfast and training for the adults for what to talk about on Capitol Hill. There was also a celebrity panel that we got to talk to with Racecar driver Charlie Kimball, chef Sam Talbot, and actress Mary Mouser. She is a teenager and she was really nice. Then the next day we went to talk to Congress.

**AFM: What was your favorite part of your experience?**

ML: My favorite part was the song "Promise to Remember Me," because you got to sing and my favorite thing is to sing.

**AFM: What other things did you enjoy doing while you were there, besides lobbying for diabetes research funding?**

ML: I made lots of new friends and went to the Lincoln Memorial and I got to meet Miss America 1999, Nicole Johnson.

**AFM: Were your efforts in Washington D.C. successful? What was Congress' reaction to your request?**

ML: Everyone was very supportive when we asked them to renew the diabetes program. They said they would support it and there will be a vote about it later in the year.

**AFM: What are some of your hobbies when you are not being a voice for diabetes research?**

ML: I like swimming, roller-skating, and gymnastics. I also like walking my dog a lot, Pinto.

**AFM: What do you want to be when you grow up?**

ML: I would like to be a veterinarian because I get to be with animals. Helping animals is my passion, pretty much.

**AFM: What would you say to another child who was recently diagnosed with diabetes?**

ML: I would tell them not to worry because there are lots and lots of other kids who have diabetes and there are many people looking for a cure so they won't have to be worrying about there never being a cure.