

Pass It On®...

Let the Kids Give it a Try

How 17-year-old Dasia Taylor developed sutures that detect infection.

Dasia Taylor is your typical high school student, with one exception. She cares about the rest of the world — and she's doing something about it.

Dasia became very interested in science because of how it benefits people. When she started chemistry class last year, she sat in the front row, wanting to absorb as much as possible, not knowing yet how she might apply her altruism. When the teacher announced the upcoming science fair, Dasia was all in. She stayed after school and pored through science and medical magazines, looking for an idea.

Then she found an article on sutures that change color when an infection is present. The so-called smart stitches work, but the technology is too expensive for developing countries, where infections in surgical incisions are a major cause of new illnesses and even death.

There had to be a solution that would make it to the people who needed it most. "I said, hey, I can do it better," remembers Dasia.

Dasia looks at science from a different perspective. Not having a million-dollar laboratory makes you look for solutions in new places. Dasia describes her project as "a novel suture additive."

That novel additive is beet juice. For six months, Dasia stayed after school, cutting and boiling beets and soaking sutures in the mixture. Beet juice is organic, and it changes color when human tissue changes pH levels during an infection. That means patients and doctors can see when an infection is starting before it gets out of hand. And treating an infection early can be the key to beating it.

For Dasia Taylor, the best solutions are the ones that help the most people. Her focus now is getting the color-changing sutures to developing countries.

Often, we think of high schoolers as being too young to solve the world's problems. But there are a lot of kids out there like Dasia. It might be time to let them give it a try.

Science...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

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