

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.>> She may only be 5 years old, but Porter Haupt has already made a big difference.

On Monday night, Porter and her mom delivered \$1,200 worth of winter coats, power bars and clothing to Soul Saving Station Church for the Code Blue program.

The idea began earlier this year at Saratoga Springs Public Library when she read a book. She didn't remember the title of the book, but the message behind it resonated strongly with her.

"She kept talking about wanting to start a homeless shelter," said Porter's mother, Meghan.

Porter brings ideas to her parents all of the time. The idea she had of helping the homeless was something her mom found particularly appealing.

"This is really worth helping her pursue right now," said Meghan. "I really would hate to squelch any desire she had to do something really important and really big and really good."

Porter and Meghan began a mission to find the exact title of this book that quickly became the talk of the house. Meghan phoned the library; later finding out the book was about Jane Addams, the mother of social work who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. She opened a settlement house in Chicago called Hull House.

The Saratoga Springs resident wanted to help people, but instead of Hull House she had something different in mind.

Porter calls it [Whole House](#) — with "whole" as in "complete," her mother explained.

The fundraising began two weeks ago when Porter hosted friends to make glass Christmas ornaments together. Porter instructed her friends on how to make them, which the children took home. Meghan read the story of Jane Addams, "The House that Jane Built." In exchange for the ornament, donations for Whole House were accepted. Porter raised nearly \$100 through the party. People then asked Meghan how they could contribute, prompting Meghan to create a Facebook fundraiser through Whole House's Facebook page.

In February, Porter wants do another party where guests will make heart-shaped handmade soap. "She wants to keep doing parties as a way to engage people rather than just all of the money coming in on the Internet, because the truth of the matter is that when it comes in on the Internet — I tell her every time, but obviously there's a disconnect for a five-year-old," said Meghan.

Porter even created a logo for Whole House.

"I didn't know what Jane Addams' symbol was, so I just made up my own," said Porter. "I just thought of smiling faces give good luck, and good luck helps homeless people."

On Monday night, after Porter, Meghan and a few Code Blue guests walked the bags up the Soul Saving Station steps, Porter interacted with the homeless staying over that night.

"She loved it. She absolutely loved it. She met several people. She got to hear their stories. She was talking about them again at breakfast," Meghan said Tuesday. "They loved her, giving her hugs. I honestly don't know if I ever seen her so happy. She was just beaming last night with all of the thanks and praise and just feeling so good to help."

Porter told her kindergarten class at Caroline Street Elementary School.

"They were very excited for me," said Porter. "They thought they could do something to help me."

One classmate, inspired by Porter's message, said she wanted to begin a program for sick animals.

Porter said she feels like Jane Addams.

Addams wasn't alone in her work. Her best friend, Ellen Gates Starr, co-founded Hull House.

Porter said to her mom one day, "You know, you're my Ellen."

"I feel really fortunate to be able to do this with her, do something meaningful with my daughter. We play puzzles together, we do stuff together all of the time, but this is super meaningful for both of us and for the community and that's a really important piece of it is that we're doing it together. And I want to keep progressing it in a sustainable way," said Meghan. "...As long as she has the enthusiasm, I'm going to help her keep doing what we can."

Most children worry about how many gifts Santa will bring them at the end of the month, but Porter has something else on her mind.

"My goal is to help all of the homeless people in the world," said Porter. "I know I can."