

What we should do now?

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Remember a happy birthday party you've enjoyed with your family. Now, imagine that you'll never see your family again the day after that. This is exactly what Yokota Megumi's family experienced. 45 years have passed since she was abducted by North Korean agents. According to a public opinion poll carried out by the Cabinet Office in 2017, 85.3% of people in their sixties remained interested in the abduction issue, compared to only 64.9% of young people. What should we teenagers do to solve the international issue? I believe we should do two things: develop our knowledge of the issue and take action.

First, we must improve our knowledge. When I initially learned about the abduction issue in junior high school, I realized what a gross violation of human rights Megumi's family had suffered. It opened my eyes to the injustice. Since then, I've always asked myself what I can do to resolve this issue. Before writing this essay, I watched the Japanese animation MEGUMI. There was a scene that left a deep impression on me. Shigeru, Megumi's father was given a comb as a birthday present by Megumi on the day before the incident. For 42 years, Shigeru had always carried the gift in his breast pocket. At his funeral, Sakie, Megumi's mother, did not put the comb in Shigeru's coffin. Instead, Sakie decided she would keep hold of it, so if they were ever reunited, Megumi could see that her father had always been thinking of her. I feel strongly that we young people should inherit the determination of Mr. and Mrs. Yokota. We need more opportunities to learn about these struggles.

Second, we must take actions ourselves. So far, I have always shared what I learned in class with my family. My mother says that she remembers our talk about the abduction issue. It's so important to share our opinions with those around us and get them interested in human rights issues. Currently I'm a member of a committee on human rights education. I hope to hold activities to educate the public during North Korean Human Rights Abuses Awareness Week. I want to tell all the students at school about some events, which are available on YouTube. Fortunately, after reading my ideas, my teacher promoted my action and introduced the anime of MEGUMI in the school newsletter for students and parents. I'm sure that expressing our opinions will inspire others to take action, too.

In conclusion, this essay outlines two steps all young people can take: develop our knowledge of the issue and take action. The most important thing in learning about human right issues is to never give up. I want to increase opportunities for young people to learn by continuing to enlighten them. Moreover, I hope they themselves will spread the knowledge

they have learned. For this reason, I want to be a leader who can constantly push myself to learn more. I'll continue to research the abduction issue and strive for a resolution.