

Jennifer Lange- AmeriCorps Summer 2002 Dubuque Community Y Cool School

I'm anything but a morning person. I was at the Y by 7:30, five days a week. Serving longer than 8 hours a day wasn't unusual. This didn't leave much time for myself, and when I could find time, I usually wanted to sleep. The second I groggily arrived at my placement, I had to be ready to deal with children who had explosive amounts of energy. Also, there were always those who chose to leave their ears at home, and some days, I swear, they all forgot them.

The little ones weren't the only people who could make my day frustrating. Always around to drain my spirits were a select few of my bossy, pessimistic co-workers who sometimes seemed to forget why we were there. But every time a child's cute little face would light up when I walked into a room...I would remember. Every day I was reminded by each and every child that we were all there for one simple reason—they. Before serving with AmeriCorps, I hadn't done that much work with children. I was kind of worried that I wouldn't know what to do with them, and they'd end up hating me. I soon learned to just have fun and be full of love.

With all the piddle stuff I can find to complain or worry about, when someone asks how my summer went, I will honestly be able to say it was one of the best yet, and my placement at the Y was definitely a major contributor. Not only was I able to touch the lives of many children; they all succeeded in touching mine.



I helped with the Detective Kids group, which was 3rd and 4th graders. We planted flowers to help brighten up the Y.



We went on field trips every week. We were able to go to the Madison Zoo.



I taught the kit, "Who Borrowed Mr. Bear." The kids had a great time being detectives.