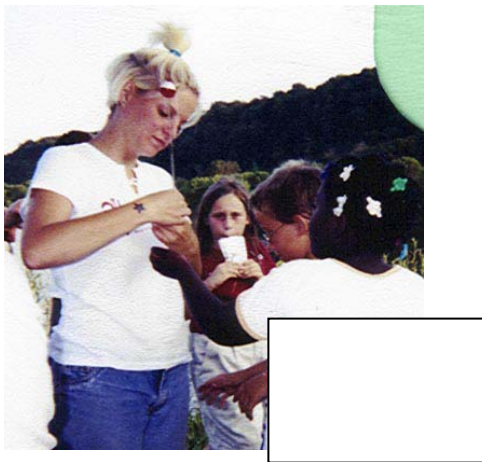


Shauna Duffy- AmeriCorps Summer 2002 Growing in the Garden—Fish Iowa

When I first began the program, I had no expectations, I figured my tasks would not be far from those of babysitting, but I was wrong. After the first week I saw an opportunity for me to be a teacher, a mentor, and a friend.

I have always loved nature and happen to have a strange variety of knowledge on the subject. This summer I was allowed to share this with the children. Together, my partner and I created a nature program with educational facts, crafts, and games all about the earth and it's systems. I was ecstatic to be able to share these things with the children. Each week we had a different theme, everything from animals to recycling to the water cycle.



Nature Time was a program where I had the opportunity to create and teach children about the natural world around them.

I learned so much about how to really be supportive and mentoring to a child. Mentoring is not about telling a child what to do or how to be, it is about urging the child to discover the answer to these things himself. One of the best parts of the summer was the friendships I made. I met so many interesting people and many of them have a small place in my heart now. The children and families I worked with certainly became friends to me. Perhaps the best friendships this summer came from other AmeriCorps Members I worked with. Spending all day with them really began to grow on me. I am more than grateful that I had the opportunity to meet all of these amazing children. I am more grateful that I got to work with some very wonderful co-members. I will never forget the friendships I made this summer.



Making ice-cream with the Growing in the Garden group for our family event. Each child was able to share with their family the garden and all the knowledge they learned.