

Letter-writers praise Project Children and visits to Central New York from Northern Ireland

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Readers' Page

She'll remember Chloes's visit from Belfast the rest of her life

To the Editor:

My name is Jennifer Spelder and I recently hosted a child from Belfast, Northern Ireland through Project Children. It was a great experience.

Project Children is a group that brings children from Northern Ireland to America in order for the children to escape witnessing fighting and aggression going on in Northern Ireland. The children come to America for four weeks and get away from the fighting.

My family and I hosted Chloe, an 11-year-old girl from Belfast, Northern Ireland. Both Chloe and I are only children. We went many fun places such as Niagara Falls, Howe Caverns, the Renaissance Festival and the zoo. Chloe and I became really close, almost like sisters. It was hard to see Chloe go home.

Chloe and I still keep in touch by email and Skype. If you are thinking about hosting a child next year from Belfast, I would highly encourage you. Your family will remember the child forever and you will know that you helped save a child.

Jennifer Spelder

LaFayette

Violence in Northern Ireland continues need for summer visits

To the Editor:

In July, our family had the wonderful opportunity of hosting a child from Belfast, Northern Ireland, through the program Project Children. The program started in 1975 when Northern Ireland was in political turmoil. The purpose was twofold: 1) to get the children (ages 10 to 14) away from the violence, and 2) to show the Protestant and Catholic kids that they could live together and like each other. Today, the program places more than 600 children from Northern Ireland with host families across America each summer. Belfast has improved over the years, but the need is still there as evidenced by the violence there this summer.

We received Matthew M. from Belfast, Ireland on July 2 and had a wonderful four weeks with our little Irishman. He was personable, polite, helpful and a delight to have in our home and we hope to have him back next year.

We feel blessed that we were able to be part of this wonderful program. Kathleen Kelly is our local coordinator in Syracuse. Please open your hearts and your homes to a child from Northern Ireland.. You will be blessed in more ways than you can imagine.

MackKnight family

Syracuse