

**Repair
the world**

Changing a Kid's Life in 4 Days

These teens create a camp for kids who might not have anywhere else to go.

LEAH ZFAZ

You wouldn't expect the phrase "good things come in small packages" to come from the mouth of an 8-year-old. You especially wouldn't expect it from an 8-year-old who lives in inner-city Atlanta, facing violence and poverty every day.

But every year, a group of students from Walter Francis White Elementary have the opportunity to learn that good things really do come in small packages. During Memorial Day weekend, over 150 elementary school students from Atlanta get to experience the magic that is Camp Jenny.

Camp Jenny was created in 1988 in memory of Jenny Rosenthal, a Jewish teenager from Montgomery, Ala. who passed away in a car accident. Jenny had attended the Union for Reform Judaism's (URJ) Camp Coleman in Georgia and touched so many lives that her friends and family decided to honor her memory by founding Camp Jenny, which takes place off-season at Camp Coleman.

As the teens of the Southeast Council of the URJ, we run every aspect of Camp Jenny. From raising the funds that are needed to make Camp Jenny happen to serving as the counselors and unit heads, we do it all.

Camp Jenny gives participants a chance to experience the magic of summer camp all in one weekend. The campers spend their time playing sports, doing arts and crafts, singing and dancing, swimming in the pool and making new friends—things that many of us take for

granted. But the kids certainly don't. Coming from inner-city Atlanta, these children are forced to face violence, poverty and drugs in their daily lives. In order to be able to attend Camp Jenny, however, a student must keep good grades and good behavior records throughout the entire year. Camp Jenny is a privilege, and the kids know it.

But it is not only a privilege for campers. The entire staff must go through a rigorous application and training process before the weekend even begins. As the Programming Vice President for my NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth) region, I was privileged enough to serve as co-director for Camp Jenny 2006. I, along with my co-director, Josh, spent one year planning and organizing the events for this life-changing weekend. From organizing the schedule to choosing the counselors, Josh and I spent hours making phone calls, sending emails and typing text messages.

But now that this year's Camp Jenny has come and gone, I remember the days of preparation when I'd felt overwhelmed and now feel nostalgic. Every minute of my life that was dedicated to Camp Jenny was filled with joy and passion.



Camp Jenny is more than showing a bunch of elementary school kids a good time

Leah with one of her campers

for four days. Its spirit touches the lives of campers and counselors alike throughout the entire year.

Camp Jenny gives both the children who attend it and the Jewish teens who lead it a new outlook on life and a new appreciation of themselves. We show the campers that they are loved and that there is hope for their futures. As for the teenage counselors, we teach them *tikkun olam*, healing the world. In return, the children completely change our lives. And in the end, everyone gets to experience the benefits and importance of social action. ★

To learn more about this year's Camp Jenny, visit www.campjenny.org.

LEAH ZFAZ, 17, is a senior at the University School at Nova Southeastern University in Florida. She is the Programming Vice President of NFTY's Southern Tropical Region, and during her free time, she likes to travel and go to the beach. Leah hopes to go to college in Israel.

**"GREATER IS THE ONE WHO FACILITATES
THE ACTS OF ANOTHER THAN ONE WHO
ACTS [ALONE]." Baba Batra 9A**

