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Midland College Legacy Scholarship Essay  
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Emily

I have always known the impact that feeding the homeless, constructing a house, or clothing a child could potentially have on a person. Not only on a person receiving the action, but also the rewarding aspect to the person doing the good deed. So when I was asked to play with some children at Safe Place, I agreed, but figured it would have an insignificant impact on any of the children. Little did I know, the influence I would have on these children would be more than significant.

As a part of my required community service to be a Symphony Belle, I chose to spend an evening at Safe Place. Safe Place is a 24 hour emergency shelter that is both secure and confidential for families affected by domestic violence. I knew that this would be a different community service project than I had ever experienced before, but I was looking forward to a new opportunity.

I was somewhat nervous as I buzzed myself in to get through the door. My identity was confirmed and I walked up to check in at the front desk. The lady sitting there happily greeted me and took me down the hall and into a room filled with colorful toys, crafts, shelves of books and board games, and a row of computers. The lady informed me that the children were finishing a snack and would be in the room soon. Not long after, the door cracked and a small child peeked around the corner. After I introduced myself, the little girl timidly made her way towards me and told me her name was Emily. As she sat down at the table with me, her curious eyes caught sight of a Checkers board game that was on the shelf next to me. When I reached to grab
it and asked if she wanted to play, her eyes lit up and she excitedly shook her head. She giggled and grinned as we played the game, clapping happily whenever she moved one of my checkers off the board. It amazed me how a simple game of Checkers could make a person so happy!

After Emily and I had played for awhile, more children began to shuffle in. Some joined in on our game, while others went to the computers or to do a craft. However, when a little boy asked me to read him a book, all the children in the room gathered around. They sat in a circle around me and gazed curiously as I turned the pages in the book. Again, I was surprised at how a book could hold the attention of these children, all under the ages of 11 years old. Before I knew it, my two hour shift was over and the children left the room to get ready for bed. My heart melted as they all hugged me and insisted that I come back again soon. I promised I would, and we went our separate ways.

After I left Safe Place, I began to realize the impact that I actually had on the children. Most of the children at Safe Place have not received the special attention that every child at that age deserves; and for them to get that attention meant the world to them. I was touched to think that just the two hours I spent with them that evening had brought even the slightest amount to joy to their lives. Not only had I affected them, but they had affected me. The children at Safe Place taught me that no matter how insignificant an act of kindness may be, that act can make a person’s world a little brighter. Something so simple, so seemingly insignificant, proved to make a small impact on the precious lives of the children at Safe Place…as well as my own.