

**Nicole Ruffing**  
**Our Lady of Victory**  
**Page: 1**

Hi, my name is Nicole Ruffing. I am currently attending Our Lady of Victory School and I will be going to Seton high school for the next four years. I definitely have tried to have a positive impact on peoples' lives. Whether it is a simple smile, offering to help them in some way or by being a good listener. I know that doing something good for someone else is very important in life. Sometimes my differences may be very big, but sometimes the way I make a difference might seem small. No matter what kind of difference I make, all of my differences and the way I impact people's lives count.

Every time I touch someone's life, it makes me feel good inside. I love the feeling of knowing that I made that person feel better. I also love knowing that the person I affected knows someone cares about them. The way I have affected people has varied over the years. When I was younger and only in kindergarten, I affected the life of a girl in my class who was handicapped. She was autistic and couldn't speak. The only way for her to get through life was by using sign language. Every day I would see this little girl's mom come into school with her and spend the whole day signing to her what the teacher had said. This made me sad to think about how this girl couldn't be normal and go to school without her parents just like all of the other boys and girls. I wanted to learn sign language so I could communicate with her and make her feel like she was one of us. I did learn some sign language which made her and her mom very happy. I know her mom was very grateful for what I did. She told me that her daughter was so excited to come to school because I was her friend and helped her. From then on, her mom did not have to come in anymore to school to help her because I learned how to communicate to her what the teacher was saying. My classmate and I had a very strong bond and we formed a

## Nicole Ruffing Page: 2

friendship. I was very happy with what I had done and today I know that I made a huge difference in that girl's life as well as her mom's. My teacher even told me how very helpful I was in the classroom.

Making a difference in someone's life can be very rewarding. I try to make a difference in people's lives, no matter what age, race or religion they are. Another person I know that I have affected greatly is a relative of mine (out of respect for her I don't want to reveal her name because she might not want me to). She has been ill for a very long time. Sometimes she struggles to get things done and I make sure I am always there to help her no matter what it may be that she needs help with. Sometimes she struggles with even simple tasks and I know it is hard for her to deal with it. It is clear that at times she gets embarrassed and is sad because she knows the task she can't do is something she should be able to do. I try to make it seem like it is not a big deal and she always tells me that I make her feel so much better. I do all I can to make her feel like she isn't different than other people. I treat her like I treat everyone else. She has multiple problems that she deals with everyday. One of them is kidney failure. This effects her 24/7 in so many ways. It has made her change what (and how much) she eats and drinks and it has changed what she can do and when she can do it because she has to go to dialysis. It hasn't been easy for her and there have been complications. To help her with these challenges I make it a point to make her laugh because it is another way to make her feel good. She has always enjoyed laughter. She is definitely an incredible person. Even though her life is full of struggles she tries to make the best of it. Although she has told me what a difference I make in her life and how she appreciates me making her life happier I have learned a lot from her. It is a win, win situation, we are good for each other!

### **Nicole Ruffing Page: 3**

Some other ways I have had a positive affect on someone's life was being a good role model for some younger kids, being friendly to everyone, including people when they feel like they are being left out, and accepting people for who they are.

Thinking about differences I have already made, makes me want to continue to affect people in a positive way. It makes life happier for everyone involved. It doesn't matter if the difference I make is big or if it is small it can have a great impact on someone's life.