

Dear host family,

Hi! My name is Demetra Penner. I live on a farm 7 miles west of the small town Altona, Manitoba. Altona has a population of about 3500 people. It is a quiet community that consists mostly of Mennonite background. It is a very beautiful town, with several little parks, a man made nature pond, and a huge swimming pool.

The farm I live on is owned by my dad and his brother Melvin. They have quite a large farm and own farmland all across the province. I have lived on this farm my entire life with my family, which consists of my mom and dad, my sister Desiree, my brother Kris, and my dog o.j. Times have changed. While I still live on the farm with my parents, my brother, who is 24, is now married to his wife Vanessa. They live about 15 minutes east of the farm in a tiny town called Rosenfeld. In January they became the proud parents of a baby girl. Her name is Kara Lynn. My sister, who is 23, has been living in the city of Winnipeg for the last five years. Winnipeg is Manitoba's capital city and is located 1 hour north of our farm. This year she completed university and has a job in the city as a Physical Education, and English teacher. This past august she got married to her fiance, Arik Engbrecht. My family just keeps on growing. It gets better and better.

I've had a lot of experience with children, in my early teen years I was a babysitter for the children around the area. I would play with them, prepare meals, clean up after them, and once the night grew older, would read them a bedtime story

and tuck them in. For the last three summers I have been a lifeguard/instructor for our local aquatic center. Being a lifeguard and teaching swimming lessons, results in being completely surrounded by children of all ages all of the time. This gave me a lot of skills. These were disciplinary, communicational, and teaching skills. Other jobs have included teaching gymnastics for 2 years, respite work, teaching Sunday school, and helping out with a summer daycare program. In terms of volunteering, I have been a mentor to three children in the past year. The children all came from different towns and backgrounds. All in all, I have worked children of all ages, ranging from 2-18, and I have learned that one still needs to have the spirit of a child but the mind of an adult in order to truly succeed in making the experience rewarding for both of the parties involved.

At home and in school I have been taught to work hard. As a child I have always had many duties on the farm and in the house. On the farm I would mow the lawn, work in our garden, pull weeds along shelter belts, prune trees, among various other chores. In our home I was in charge of feeding our dog, cleaning my room, vacuuming, washing windows, washing the dishes, and sweeping our driveway.

My personal life is very involved in the arts. I'm a painter, a singer, songwriter, I play guitar, take modern dance lessons, and was involved in the high schools musicals and dramas. In high school I was a part of the choir, chamber choir and vocal jazz ensemble, which are by audition. My friend Carla and I sang together for a couple years, singing at coffeehouses, in churches, at weddings, and talent shows. In addition, I was the arts rep in student council, part of the high schools amnesty

international chapter, on the basketball, and varsity volleyball teams, involved in the peer support network, and on the honor roll every year. My favorite subject was English literature.

I've been told that I have a very unique personality. Words such as eccentric, spontaneous, free spirited and lover of life, have been used by peers to describe me. I have a fire for life, and I want to truly experience and appreciate every moment. I also love to try new things and discover other areas of life and culture. I'm truly looking forward to this experience of being your au pair.

Sincerely,

Demetra Penner