



newsletter 60

september 2010

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it”

Proverbs 22:6

This is a familiar text in which the word train conjures images of structured teaching of particular disciplines that will be of value when the child grows up. Children are trained by more than what they are taught. Passive learning from experience and the examples set by those around them train a child in how to deal with the circumstances of their life.

Many children in Colombia don't have the opportunity for structured learning but perhaps of greater concern is the lack of positive experiences and examples to take into adult life. Part of the ministry of IMC is to provide children with opportunities to have new experiences and examples as well as structured teaching to make a real difference in their lives but often their earlier experiences leave a legacy of difficulties.

Peniel Farm

Football is Andrés' passion and he is feeling particularly down at the moment as he has had to be taken out of the football college on the advice of his cardiac specialist. He has a heart condition, aortic stenosis, and is not allowed to play high exertion sports. Aortic stenosis is a narrowing of the main valve from the heart into the aorta. It makes the heart have to work very hard to keep pace with the body's exertion — it can cause the heart to enlarge and possibly fail. (explanation courtesy Dr Phil Moore)

Egson has been at the farm since he was very young but in recent years he has been having difficulties. He has lost interest with school and doesn't want to study and he doesn't want to do anything in the house either. He has received help, psychological and spiritual but there has been no change. His family are able and ready to have him back so a decision is needed as to what is best for him now.

Oliver is also struggling with feelings of abandonment and has become rebellious in his behaviour. It is likely these two factors are connected.



Estiben

In June Estiben, aged 8, came to live at the farm. Both his parents have been in prison for 5 years and he had been living with his grandmother for a while and also with his aunt. But sadly no one in his family wants him or his little sister who is currently being cared for in





another programme. They have suffered much already in their lives causing pain and distress and need a lot of love.

Unfortunately the Peniel boy's favourite dog was accidentally run over and died recently which has resulted in a lot of sadness. There is considerable therapeutic value in the relationship between the children and the dogs so this must be tough on them. Another dog was given to them and was at the farm when they returned from their holidays.



Saying thank you to Luis and Kely

In July Luis and Kely, house-parents, ended their period of service at the farm and it was a sad farewell for the boys who sang songs for them and cried when they left.

A new couple Felix and Viky have come to the farm to care for the boys. They have completed a study course to be missionaries and have already been involved in a ministry with children through the Baptist Church they are part of.



Felix & Viky with the boys

You will remember David and Yanira who were house-parents before Luis and Kely and who left to work with Youth With A Mission. They recently came back to the farm for a visit with students from YWAM's School of Mercy. YWAM are interested in what IMiC is doing and are considering sending students to work at the farm as part of their training. David and Yanira were very moved by their return and said they had been praying about coming back to work for IMiC.

There seems to have been a lot of sad news so far but here is an uplifting story. Grant Bye who works with the boys at the farm in the workshop where he trains and supervises various construction projects and activities visited Haiti recently and took with him toy cars made by the boys at the farm. Each car had a Bible verse stamped on it in Haitian Creole and they were given to a pastor of a local church to distribute.

You can read all about this on Grant's blog at penielworkshop.blogspot.com/ There are some great pictures of the boys at work too.

Please Pray especially for the boys having difficulties, for all the children in the various programmes and the staff that care for them that together with God's help the difficulties and pain the children experience will be overcome. Pray for the new house parents that they settle into life at the farm quickly and build good relationships with all the boys. Give thanks for Grant and the work he does with the boys in the workshop.

Fusa Feeding Programme

Carlos, Sofia and some of the children have been suffering with Dengue fever, a disease carried by mosquitoes, but are now well again.

There have been some problems with a particular woman in Fusa who has made false accusations against Nancy to Bienestar Familiar (social services authority).

Also more sad news from Fusa; one of the older girls, Angelica, has taken her own life. It was not anticipated that this would happen and



there were no signs of her difficulties. She had been working and had plans for her future. She was hoping to become a policewoman and had applied and taken the entrance exam.

This has been a very distressing time for her family and also for the community who have many fears and false ideas.

Please pray for continued health of the workers and children in Fusa. Pray for a speedy resolution to the problems Nancy is having. Pray for the family of Angelica and the community.

Altamira

No! ...to the Ranch

Our rent-free lease of the ranch at Altamira has come to a close. After careful consideration of the purchase price, and a survey of the state of the terrain and buildings, the Board in Colombia concluded it is not viable, and decided to relinquish use of this property.

We are thankful to God and to Action International for the generous use of this ranch over the last five years.

All the children who were at Altamira are still being assisted by IMC. About half have been re-housed in a rented property in Fusa, while the others are being given extra support in returning to their family situations.

Transport

Yes! ...to the Minibus

Praise God! Our minibus appeal has been filled in record time! Four months and it has topped out at £10,800 just a little over what we were aiming for. An enormous thank-you for all donations, little and large, which have made this possible. Now IMC can purchase a suitable vehicle to replace the dilapidated and often overloaded estate car!

Children will soon be shuttled to and from school and church in safety, as well as making easier trips to doctor or dentist, contacts with family and also leisure outings.

We are now closing this appeal. Any further funds that come in will go towards conversion to LPG (cheaper fuel), fitting seatbelts and fire extinguishers, servicing and other ongoing transport costs.

Working Together

Two of our Trustees, Terry and Seren, will be visiting Colombia in October to meet with the board and to encourage Nancy and her staff team in their work.

We also have a short term volunteer going out soon. Leah Payne has gained experience in an urban community in London, and will now spend six months working alongside the Colombian team, helping with any and every task as needed.



Leah Payne

Leah's prayer request, "that I pick up the language quickly and am able to communicate effectively. Also that God will guide me in what to say to people and help me know how best to help look after the children and have some kind of positive impact."

Shop early for Christmas!

EthicTrade:

Toys, beauty products, clothing, stationery, household items, and much more are available in our fair trade online shop. Quality is good, prices are good, and 20% of the cost of your



purchase goes to us as a charity, so the benefit of your gift is shared!

Pictures from Scotland:

Quality individually produced cards suitable for any occasion and photographic prints have now been added to the range. Sales of all cards and prints will benefit children with 10% of the price going to IMC. The box of cards which specially highlights IMC will still contribute 50%.

Gospel Cards, etc.

Once again we will benefit from the sale of their Christmas cards and calendars.

20% of Christmas card sales and 5% of calendar and diary sales will be given to 33 Christian charities including IMC.

The various quality calendars make excellent gifts for children, families and adults; while the cards are perfect for sending to family and friends.

Please see the enclosed flyer for details, and please remember to tick the box by our name if you place an order — thank you.

All the above can be accessed online via IMC's website, inministrytochildren.org

Feeling the Pinch!

We know that every penny turned into pesos is put to full use in providing for needy children and their families. Nancy and her team waste nothing. Over the last year there has been the added financial pressure of a 10% drop in exchange rate, so Nancy has been trying to keep things running with less money coming in than usual.

A big thank you to all who contribute throughout the year. You are very much appreciated.

Our regular givers provide about half our income and help to keep the books in balance.

Although we don't have a specific funding appeal at the moment if you are able and would like to contribute monthly or quarterly, it is easy to do! Please download a form via our

website, or else contact the office to send you details. Don't forget if you are a UK taxpayer you can increase the value of your gifts by completing the Gift Aid declaration.

Please remember: any cheques should be made payable to "Links International (IMC)" and sent via our office in Petersfield.

...and Finally

Some of the news about the children this time highlights how tough things are for them. The foundations laid by their early experiences can take a lot longer to renew than it does to meet their immediate needs. Hunger and thirst are quickly met by food and drink. Health care and education can be readily provided. Love can be given to these children but the pain of abandonment, indifference or abuse by those who should have cared for them most is deep seated and takes longer to deal with. Their parents probably received the same too.

Their carers today have the difficult task of dealing with the consequences of these experiences; re-laying foundations so the children are equipped to become well adjusted, secure adults and breaking the cycle of pain.

Nancy often writes and says that without your love, prayers and gifts none of this would be possible.

Not only that they are also a great encouragement to Nancy and all who work for these children, so once again thank you.

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