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PROPAC Day Care Centre in Brazil



A short term missionary team from the UK went to Brazil this summer. The team members were Bernard Lane, Rachael Lewis, Liz Coldrick, Sue Fallon, Callum Adams, Bob and Sara-Jane (SJ) Stevens. They worked at a day care centre, painting the centre and doing children's mission. Sue Fallon writes about the beginning of the centre and what it aims to achieve.

The PROPAC centre was started through the vision and compassion of one of the local Pastors in Águas Formosas. He had seen and heard that there was a problem with children suffering from violence at home. It started small with him and his family hosting five children coming from such situations, but soon it was fourteen and getting more than could be handled by one family. His idea was to have the church host the children and that is where the project began. The church building and property was used to start a day care centre and from the beginning they had thirty children. Sixteen of these had been referred to them from the courts because they were in need of foster care. The first year of the project was done with very little resources and even now that is still difficult.

The centre continued in the church for as long as it could, but it outgrew the space. They now have a house that they use and up to one hundred children can come through the house in a day!

There are two sessions: one in the morning and one in the afternoon with thirty – fifty children in each.

Erbeni Andrade is the current manager of the project - she took over when the pastor left. She had been a missionary with the Presbyterian National Mission for twelve years and had come home to be a 'normal Christian at church' for awhile. That was until she met the pastor! Erbeni has been involved with the centre for seven years and manager for the last three and half of those. When I asked her what she liked most about working with the children she replied: "Everything! I was chosen by God to take care of these children. Despite lack of funds, the challenges and headaches, I like everything in it. To be able to see these children get out of the bad situation is a blessing. To see them have a new perspective..."

Hearing the stories of many of these children, it should be a house of sadness. But it isn't! It was such a joy to walk into the





house and hear the laughter, see the smiles and watch the children playing. It was an honour and privilege to work with the three ladies, even for such a short time. Erbeni and Helena work directly with the children and Lucia made sure they were well fed, cooking amazing meals that we enjoyed too. We witnessed the difference they are making in these children's lives. It is a house where the children find safety, can know peace and feel love. You can see it in their faces!

Evil and human forces have tried to destroy children's lives, but the message Jesus Christ has given to his church is that he came to restore lives and bring human beings to their fullness. And it is with love actions that the church can respond to the great needs of children at risk. I am happy that Emmanuel Brazil can help Aguas Formosas church in that ministry.

Fred Silva (El Country Representative in Brazil)



Fred, Erbeni, the team and some of the children at the day care centre.

What the team did...

Liz Coldrick writes to tell us about the work the team did at the centre.

From the moment we arrived at the day care centre we were welcomed with open arms (and a non-stop supply of delicious food) and the children's bright, smiling faces made us all feel at home. The fact that most of us on the team spoke no Portuguese did not seem to prevent us from getting alongside both children and staff, and of course Bernard and Fred proved to be extremely useful translators!

Our time with the children would start with plenty of cheerful singing, usually

accompanied by enthusiastic actions, and Bible teaching from SJ, followed by a craft (the friendship beads and Noah's ark craft proved to be particularly popular with the children). Then Rachael and I would spend some time teaching the children about life in England compared with life in Brazil. We would focus on something different each day – flags, animals, weather, money. The children loved looking at our globe and playing with the hand puppets, and when we showed them photos of a snowy English winter it seemed as if their eyes would pop out of their heads!! After this Bob and Callum would teach the children some games. There were many football fans amongst the children and the highlight



for them was probably penalty shoot out, with Callum in goal. This was particularly entertaining to watch and at one point there even seemed to be a whole team of cheerleaders involved! As well as being with the children we managed to paint most of the rooms at the centre, expertly led by Fred and Sue.

Many of the children have such sad home lives and been through very difficult situations - quite a number of the children have been victims of abuse. We had the opportunity to visit the children in their homes and we saw just how little they have. And yet it is clear that their involvement with the centre is having a positive impact on

their lives. It was so encouraging to see the practical difference the centre is making.

Although we were there to help out with the work at the centre, we all came away feeling so blessed and having learned and gained much. I really hope that our time there meant more than simply the work we were able to contribute. Even though our time in Aguas Formosas was short, it felt significant and it was a real privilege to have the opportunity to participate. I was sad to say goodbye to the friends we made at the centre, but would love to return and hope that the opportunity arises at some point in the future.

Their testimony...

What is your most memorable moment?

Too many to pick just one but I loved the children at the day care center greeting us with smiles and hugs and 'I love you' as the days went on and they got to know us. I also loved to watch them singing songs of praise to God in English and Portuguese. I loved being able to share with the church that runs the day care center and be encouraged by them and be an encouragement to them. *Rachael*

What was different than you expected?

The trip was much more exhausting than I thought, and the standard of the area was much higher than I thought it would be. Overall the trip was very enjoyable and it was nothing like any of my original expectations. *Callum*

I'm a vegetarian and normally it is risky to go on an overseas trip as they think that being a vegetarian means you still eat chicken or they just feed you eggs all the time! But the food was fantastic and I was spoilt by having my own special food cooked by Lucia. *Rachael*

Would you do it again and why?

YES. It is always challenging, tiring and fulfilling. The faces of the children, the great sense of team unity and fun all make for a superb time of serving God. *Bernard*



Life in the PROPAC Centre

Sue Fallon talked to two of the children who attend the day care centre to find out how the centre is helping them cope with their lives.



Sabrina is 11 years old and has been coming to the centre for 16 months. Her schooling is 3 years behind and she finds learning quite hard at the moment and was finding it difficult to relate to people but the ladies at the centre have noticed a difference in her recently.

She is currently living with her aunt after she finally was able to tell the court of the sexual abuse she was suffering from her stepfather over a four year period. Since taking her stepfather to court her mother has not spoken to her.

Her life at home was hard for her. Her mother has alcohol problems and Sabrina would often sleep on the street when her mother was drunk.

When I spoke to her about why she liked to come to the centre and what she enjoys doing, her answers were "I want to pray for my family and want them to be blessed." and "I love playing and especially with the dolls."

The centre encourages play as much as possible so the children don't totally lose their childhood.



Mateus is also 11 years old and has been coming to the centre for four years. He lives with his mother and two brothers. His father had been in jail for setting fire to the house the family lived in. Mateus, his mum and two brothers were in the house at the time. The government placed the family in a special home but since his father's release from prison he has phoned them and threatened to kill his mum with poison. She also found out that she had been infected by her husband and is HIV+. It has been hardest on Mateus out of the three boys as he seems to understand more what has been going on and tries to look after his mum as much as he can. As a result he is quite rebellious, finds it hard to be happy, school is difficult and he is not sleeping well. There is a local psychologist that helps at the centre but Mateus has so far refused to speak with them.

The centre is also helping the family paying bills and buying food.

When I asked Mateus why he liked to come and what he likes doing he had similar answers. "I can praise the Lord here and pray for my family." and "I love playing and football the most."

Emmanuel International Annual Conference



11 to 13 February 2011
Sunbury Court Conference Centre, London

EIUK Annual General Meeting 12 February 2011

This weekend promises, as always, time for worship, reports on the work of EI, meeting some of our workers and hearing their stories, and meeting up with EI friends old and new!



The keynote speaker is Stephen Rand.

Stephen is a writer and speaker who in recent years has

shared his time between the *Jubilee Debt Campaign*, persecuted church charity *Open Doors*, and *Mainstream* (a Baptist church leaders network). He is a great speaker with considerable overseas experience from his previous work as a Director with Tearfund.

Andrew and Miriam Wingfield (our Country Representatives in Tanzania) will be at the conference. They are looking forward to being with us at the conference...

Andrew and Miriam Wingfield



The Wingfield family have just arrived back in the UK for their home assignment. While they are in the UK they will be spending time with their home church in High Wycombe, visiting supporters around the country, fundraising for projects, and Andrew will be also be starting a Masters course on mission and development. They are also preparing for the arrival of a brother or sister for Ben and Sam, due at the end of October! Join us at the EIUK conference to hear them share what's on their hearts about working with churches to alleviate poverty and about their work in Tanzania.



EIUK Annual Membership

Emmanuel International is an organisation that values the people who support our work, both prayerfully and financially. Without the involvement of people who care about the work we do and the way we do it, it would not be possible to continue to fulfil our mission:

We encourage, equip and assist churches to serve the poor.

We like to keep our supporters up to date with what is happening in our projects. For some our quarterly magazine, BushNet, serves this purpose. Others like to get more closely involved and would like to get more regular updates and information, and also wish to pray for our work. They choose to become members of EIUK.

The members benefits:

- Members receive a monthly magazine, the Down to Earth, which provides further information on who is working with EI, exciting news in our projects and regular notices.
- They also receive a monthly prayer calendar in which we list prayer requests for our project countries and affiliates. You can pray for our missionaries, for the projects and for the countries that we work in.

- Our Annual General Meeting, which takes places during the weekend of our conference, is open to anyone who is interested in our work. At the AGM we discuss issues regarding governance of EIUK, including selecting of board members, financial reports, a report on activities in the year. Decisions made here influences the direction that EIUK takes and we are held accountable to our constituency. Only members are allowed to vote at the AGM and influence decisions.

The cost of membership is only £30 per person or £39 per couple. The membership fee has not been increased for a number of years to make it affordable for all. The membership fee is used to offset the cost of printing and distributing the regular publications and also towards some of the administrative costs in the office.

Please become a member or renew your membership now!

For more information, please contact the office on info@eiuk.org.uk or telephone 01243 537040. All the information is also available on the website www.eiuk.org.uk.