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Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation



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The New Transition Home *Adjusting to Change*

by Christine Amo

Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
Board President

During my recent brief, "I need time in Vallarta" trip, I was immediately struck by the changes which have occurred again this summer; particularly those connected directly to the opening of the new Transition Home for the Refugio's oldest girls. This single move has forced adjustment not just for the girls now living in an entirely new environment, but also for those still at the Refugio. Sol, the Refugio administrator for both the Refugio and the Transition Home, along with her husband, Juan Carlos, the Madres, plus other CSHF Board members and individuals, have spent lots of time the past few months helping to make these changes as comfortable and smooth as possible for all involved.

At the Transition Home the girls, along with their housemother, are establishing new routines, expectations, and respectful relationships. Elsa, the oldest Refugio child at age 15, made a heart-tugging choice recently to live with her older sister, who lives in the central Puerto Vallarta area.



Sofia

At the beginning of the new school year in mid-August, Sol enrolled the girls in two different private and parochial schools where they are experiencing a more robust curriculum, smaller class-sizes, and more individual attention than is available at the public schools in Vallarta. The private school that Sofia and Lucia attend, offers a bilingual program in English-Spanish, as well as many specialized vocational opportunities. Carmen, Angela, and Mari Luisa are attending an academically focused parochial school near their home.



Lucia

Living away from the Refugio and the other children, has also been quite an adjustment. The Transition Home girls have known the Refugio as home for most of their lives. Their new home is small (approx 1200 sq ft for 5 girls and a housemother), with 3 bedrooms upstairs, and one downstairs for the housemother. It is, at this point, quite nicely furnished thanks to donations and efforts by several of our CSHF Board members along with Sol's time and energy. The major concern now for our Foundation, is helping to pay for monthly basic Transition Home expenses of approximately \$3,000 US, which includes rent, food, telephone, bus fare, clothing, uniforms, school tuition, etc.

The Refugio also has a much different atmosphere without the active teenage girls. New sibling-type relationships have begun to develop with Carlos, Andrea, and Marcela taking on stronger leadership skills. New staff members have been added and more

volunteers are being recruited to fill in the gaps covered previously by the teenage girls. More consistent help is still needed on weekends and at night with the infants and toddlers.



Giggly Refugio girls

More than half of the 46 children at the

Refugio are currently under the age of five.

Sol has done a wonderful job of establishing a calmer, quieter environment at the Refugio: playing soft music throughout the day; encouraging the volunteers to do art and reading with small groups of children; and hiring several tutors to help with individual educational needs. Most recently, Sol converted a room by the lower grassy area, to set up a "toddler and baby stimulation room." In the room, she has included puzzles and simple games, along with stacking, building and sorting toys, and balls for playing on the grass.

Monthly expenses of over \$10,500 US is a major challenge for the Refugio (RISE)

The Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation, along with our sister-foundation Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation, are committed to supporting the needs of these wonderful children at the Refugio and Transition Home, as well as those children at Pasitos de Luz, a center for children with severe disabilities.

Please help us by sending donations.

Thank you!

Chris

Meet the Children

from Pasitos de Luz - Bebe



This special boy's legal name is José Agustín, but we call him, Bebe (*Baby*). He is one of the poorest children at Pasitos de Luz. He lives with his mother and sister very close to the garbage dump. Amazingly, nine-year old Bebe is one of the healthiest children at Pasitos.

When Bebe first came to Pasitos, he got around by crawling on the floor. Thanks to therapists and other trained staff, he took his first steps when he was seven years old.

Bebe is very loud and happy, and he always eats twice as much as he should, and says, "I want more!" There are times when he also asks for food to take home to his mother and sister.



Bebe, proudly invites us to his 18 square foot home; and he teaches us the importance of love!



from the Refugio - Elena



Elena Isabel Robles Jimenez has been at the Refugio for most of her life. Now seven years old, Elena is an active, sometimes mischievous member of our primary school-age group. She loves doing difficult puzzles and is amazingly smart at tasks that interest her, including counting in English. It is easy to get a smile out of Elena, especially when one acknowledges that she has done a good job at cleaning her lunch plate or just requesting her to pose for a photo.

Elena has a very tender heart and has always taken on the role of helping new children who arrive at the Refugio adjust to their new surroundings. She has now stepped up to become the "little mother and guardian" for the youngest of a new group of five children who have newly-arrived. Although the newest little girl is only inches shorter than Elena, you can find Elena carrying her to play time and helping to get her in the high chair at meal times. Elena is such an excellent caregiver that she even changes the child's diapers when needed, and finds her new clothes when they need changing. Her sweet and gentle side far outshines her other moments of wanting attention for less positive behavior. Elena is definitely a child who will capture your heart if you are lucky enough to be able to visit or volunteer at the Refugio.

Gabrielle's Story

Note from one of our donors, published with her permission.

My name is Gabrielle. I am 13, and I live in Chicago, Illinois. I recently had a bat mitzvah, which is a celebration that comes in a young girl's life in the Jewish religion. It signifies the beginning of womanhood and involvement in your community.

Every year my family and I go to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico for Winter Break. For the last two years we decided to go out and visit an orphanage, which happens to be the Refugio. My sister, who is 10, and I, have always wanted a baby sister. But my parents say that two kids is enough, so we thought it would be fun to play with the children at the Refugio. We went last year and met this little girl named Cecilia. My sister and I both fell in love with her and still to this day talk about her at least twice a day.

So, on behalf of Cecilia, I have chosen to donate money to the Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation. Even though Puerto Vallarta is not close to my community, I want to help the children there. In past emails from CSHF you have asked for money to help furnish the new teenage home. I am donating my money for this cause.

*Most sincerely,
Gabrielle*



Cecilia

Save the Date!

Please join us at the
**6th Annual R.I.S.E. for Hope
A Valentine & Friends Fiesta**
Saturday, Feb 9 from 5 to 9 PM
At the American School - Marina Vallarta

**Fabulous food from Vallarta's most popular
restaurants, beer and wine, live entertain-
ment, oral and silent auctions, and more.**

To reserve tickets, please email Chris Amo at

keithamo@msn.com





Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation

by Anne-Marie Haynes
Board President

Current Needs and Highlights



Since our official acceptance as an approved Revenue Canada foundation in March 2007, our Foundation's role has continued to grow within Canada and Puerto Vallarta. We have held two board meetings. At the first meeting, Chris Amo was welcomed as a new board member. Chris brings great experience and commitment to our mutual causes.

We have set goals that we are hopeful to accomplish. While building a foundation may be slow, our ambitions are high.

We have received several donations for which we are very thankful. We are hopeful that through future fundraising, the lives of the children and families in the Bay of Banderas region will continue to improve.

If you are interested in helping the Canadian Foundation with its fundraising activities, or if you would like to be on our mailing list, please contact us at canadiancshf@gmail.com

If you would like to make a donation, please visit our website for our **online donation link**. You may also send a personal cheque. All Canadian donors will receive a tax deductible donation acknowledgement.

Anne-Marie

Anne-Marie Haynes
Board President
canadianchildrensshelterofhope.org

- Please be aware that the Refugio has recently changed their website address to refugio-infantil.org
- Because of the desire to keep the new Transition Home as "home-like" as possible for the teenage girls, Sol (the administrator) has asked that they have no visitors there. **Visitors are still welcome at the Refugio and at Pasitos de Luz.** Please contact Chris Amo to make arrangements and find out about current needs.
- Sol also has decided to have the children wear **uniforms at the Refugio.** Therefore they no longer need clothes. Crayons and coloring books are also in plentiful supply at this time.
- **Current needs at the Refugio** include backpacks, underwear (girls & boys) for 1- to 5-year olds, lightweight sweaters, pajamas, towels, tennis shoes, socks and undershirts for 2- to 4-year old.
- We are also in immediate need of "stimulation" type toys for Refugio toddlers and infants, and also for the children at Pasitos de Luz. These would include such things as **wooden puzzles, stacking and sorting type materials, balls, mobiles, and simple educational toys.**
- And, as always, we are in need of **MONEY** to pay monthly expenses and staff at the Refugio, Pasitos, and now also at the Transition Home.

PASITOS at PROGRESS

by Chris Amo— Foundation Board President

The summer months seem to have passed quickly and easily for the staff and children at Pasitos de Luz. During my recent visit there I did note many new children; particularly very young, small ones who require intensive staff attention.

Pasitos has no regular volunteers at this time and are relying entirely on their dedicated and sometimes unpaid nannies, and other employees, to provide quality care so important to each of these special needs children.

Cesar and Yolanda have arranged for several different fundraising events in the next two months, but continue to struggle just to meet monthly expenses. If you happen to be planning a trip to Vallarta soon, please plan to attend one or more of the events below:

- Nov. 3—theater play at El Cecatur for 500 people
- Nov. 27—their annual fundraising event at Outback Steak House.

For more information or tickets for any of these events, please contact me directly at keithamo@msn.com

Donations are also still desperately needed for Pasitos.



Please help us to add more money for staff salaries, equipment, and other basic expenses by sending a donation right away to our US-registered 501(c)(3) tax deductible foundation:

Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
505 N. Tomahawk Is. Dr.
Portland, OR 97217

Or donate to the new Canadian foundation a Revenue Canada-registered tax deductible foundation. Save postage, try their online donation link.

Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
2038 Laughton Ave.
Mississauga, Ontario L4X 1H1
CANADA

Thank You !

You really can change the world if you CARE enough.

Marion Wright Edelman



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Meet Two More Important People

From the Refugio—
Miriam Jesenia Lopez Flores



Miriam is lovingly known at the Refugio as the *morning baby* nanny.

Born in Sonora, Mexico, she is 24 years old and the oldest of six children. Miriam has been married for two years and attends school in the afternoon, to become a technical educator.

In her spare time, Miriam loves to read. She has plenty of time for reading during her commute one hour each way to her Refugio job.

Beginning her work at 6 AM, Miriam's responsibilities include getting all 10 babies up, feeding them breakfast, giving each a bath, cleaning and changing their cribs, cleaning the nursery, and then feeding them all lunch before naps in the afternoon.

Her favorite time with the children is when she can play with the young ones, and give them love.

From Pasitos—
Lourdes Morales



Lourdes Morales, or Lulu as we know her, is the secretary at Pasitos de Luz. She has been at Pasitos for 2 1/2 years and is very supportive and enthusiastic about this wonderful center. The physical therapy it provides for the children is important; but equally important is the security it offers parents to know that their children are well-cared for while they are at work.

Initially, Lulu was a volunteer and, after a short time, she was appointed secretary. Although her office is in the newly-constructed upstairs area, she is often found downstairs helping children. Lulu is 24 years old, and is presently studying for a license in business administration. She loves new challenges and is learning new skills each day. She has demonstrated with her efforts and dedication that she is a valuable "jewel" in the center. When you call Pasitos de Luz, you will most likely be greeted with her sweet, warm voice.



If you wish to contribute directly to the Refugio, make your check payable to:

Refugio Infantil Santa Esperanza, AC
R. Flores Magon 251
Col. Benito Juarez
Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco

DO NOT SEND DONATIONS BY MAIL.

Questions?
Carmen Berkowitz
carmengalvanpv@msn.com
322 222 5713
(Puerto Vallarta)



If you wish to claim a charitable contribution for USA tax purposes make your check payable to:

Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
505 N. Tomahawk Is. Dr.
Portland, Oregon 97217

Questions?
Amy Welch
amywelchpdx@hotmail.com
503-285-4007
(Portland, Oregon)



If you wish to claim a charitable contribution for Canadian tax purposes make your check payable to:

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Questions?
Anne-Marie Haynes
canadiancshf@gmail.com



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