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Winter Adventure Camps

In July during the school winter holidays here in Brazil, we held our first ever ND Winter Adventure Camps! We found it a very



challenging and exhausting few weeks (especially with us still having such a small staff team) but it was a huge encouragement to see the children and teenagers having such a lot of fun, learning how to work together and

value themselves and discovering more about God and how much He loves them.

The first camp was for a group of deaf children (8–14 years old) from various favelas in Belo Horizonte, who attend a day care centre for the deaf run by YWAM (Casa Semear). The second camp was a group of children between the ages of 9 and 15, from the biggest favela in Belo. And the third camp was the teenage group from

the same deaf project, who were visiting ND for the second time. The first time they came it was the end of the rainy season, and the trails were overgrown so they couldn't do our adventure programme. This time was a very different experience for them!



It was the first time that we have included drama in our evening Christian programme, and although we are very aware of being amateur performers, the sketches seemed to make a real impact on the groups.

The sound of music

The feedback we had from the young people themselves and the leaders who brought them was really positive, however we were very challenged when one young South African volunteer said to us at the end "I think what you are doing is amazing but there is something missing there is no singing".

Interestingly enough, despite the fact that several of us on the team are musical, we have never incorporated singing/music into our programme. Romeu is an excellent drummer, Fábio and Morven both play the guitar, Ted plays the piano and Deirdire has a beautiful

voice. Perhaps we mistakenly thought that particularly the older boys from the slums would be embarrassed by singing and that it just wouldn't be appropriate. But the words of that young guy really impacted us and we have a new desire to see the Centre filled with music. A friend of Morven's recently felt moved to stop and speak to a group of children sleeping on the street in Belo Horizonte. She wasn't really sure how God could use her and what she should say, when all of a sudden a Christian Brazilian song came into her mind, so she began to sing right there and then. One by one the children began to wake up. She played games with them and talked to them for a good while, but when she was leaving to go, one of the older boys said "I liked it when you sang". It was her singing over him that had made an impact.

Short term staff

Ramin Lolachi arrived at the end of June and stayed for six weeks. He was a great blessing to ND, not only because of his information technology skills (teaching us how to update the website, making an English leaflet to help us advertise the work, etc) but he was just such a willing volunteer, lending a hand to make new activities and helping Luisa in the kitchen, making her life a lot easier during our Winter Camps.



One of Ramin's passions is astronomy so we included a spot in the camp programmes for the children to look at the stars and planets through

his telescope. It was a completely new experience for them and one boy said he didn't know Brazil had so many stars because where he lives the pollution and city lights block them out. We are greatly relieved that Ramin will be continuing as our UK website engineer.

Ed & Vicki Metcalfe and their three girls, **Abigail, Jessica and Anna** have just been out to visit us for about ten days. Ed is on the New Destiny Trust board in the UK. It was great to have him back with us for the third time and he really encouraged us by saying how much the Centre has developed since his last visit. They all got involved in helping to clean the newly reformed staff house, even little Anna who is only five.



We took them to visit a couple of projects in city favelas, to show them where is home for many of the children who come to ND.

Lauren Smith and **Georgie Spurrier**, friends of the Collington and Santos clans, are with us at the moment for two weeks. They were keen to come out to see what the work here is all about.

Hope for the hopeless

The story of one of the boys who came to Winter camp deeply saddened us, and yet it was moving to see how he responded to the Christian message and warmed to our love. Lúcio is eleven years old and has already lost his virginity. He said to us that it is easy to get what you want from the girls in the favela where he lives; you just offer them a few coins. He also bragged to us about how his sister is one of

his regular conquests. If his stories hadn't been confirmed by one of the leaders who brought him to camp, it would have been hard to believe them. When we heard the rest of Lúcio's story, it all began to make sense. His mum is a crack addict and is never in a state to look after him. His brother has been expelled from the favelas by the traffickers because he owes drug money. If he comes back they will kill him. About three months ago, his dad was murdered for stealing in the slum, an unforgivable offense in the eyes of the gang leaders. Just before his father died, Lúcio was run over by a car and the doctors said it was a miracle he survived. He now walks with a limp and suffers from constant pain.

On the last night of camp, Ted told a true story to Lúcio and the rest of his group, about a little boy in Africa, who was brought up by his grandmother in a very small, remote village. One day after having done a very bad thing, instead of punishing him, Umbango's grandmother took hold of his hand, and brought down a burning red hot poker from the fire on her own hand instead of his. Ted went on to tell of how Umbango grew up and became the owner of a large property and a very well off man, all by deceiving and cheating people. He



forgot all about his grandmother until one day he heard she was dying and went to visit her. For years he had wrestled in his mind with why she had punished herself that day instead of him. Lying there on her death bed she told him that she did it so that one day when he heard the story of what Jesus did on the Cross, dying in his place, that he would understand what it really meant and remembering what she had done, that Umbango might turn away from his sin and choose to live a different life with Jesus.

Umbango made the choice to follow Jesus at that very moment and went on to become an evangelist in Africa. You could have heard a pin drop the whole way through the story. Even Lúcio, normally so difficult and disruptive, didn't make a sound. Later on we gave the boys the opportunity to pray a simple prayer with us if they wanted to, asking Jesus to forgive them for their sin and accepting Him as their saviour. If you are a Christian, please continue to pray for the young people who pass through ND, that God will give them the strength to choose the more difficult, narrow way that will lead them to life, even though they live in such dark places.

New staff house

When we first got New Destiny Farm in November 2004, there were three houses, two in great need of renovation before they could be lived in, and one big house which we were able to start using right away. We hope eventually to turn the latter from accommodation for eighteen people, into a house that can sleep thirty four. The first house we renovated became the yellow house, where the Santos family has lived since October 2005. And in the last few months we have been doing up the third and final house of the original three, which needed the most work. As the Santos family just keeps growing (Morven is now pregnant again), they are going to move into the newly renovated house when it is ready. It has four bedrooms so will accommodate the family of six with much more ease. The yellow house will become much needed accommodation for single volunteers and visiting teams.

New Destiny Trust UK

The New Destiny Trust is now an officially registered charity in the UK. The chairman of the trust is Lorimer Gray, and there are two other trustees at present, Ed Metcalfe and Andrew Marrian. They are proving to be invaluable to the work here in Brazil, helping to

raise awareness and funds in the UK as well as giving us advice and encouragement. Lorimer is the executive director of the Abernethy Trust, which now has four Christian Outdoor Centres in the UK and thirty years of valuable experience so we are very honoured to have him on board. Ed worked as chief instructor at the Abernethy Outdoor Centre for six years and after coming over with Andrew to see the Centre last year just after we bought it, he then brought a team out last September who built the first stage of adventure challenges in the forest. Andrew is now on the leadership team of the Abernethy Outdoor Centre.

Our UK Coordinator, Moira Gray, (Lorimer's wife) recently organized a fund-raising initiative which raised around £3800. She sent a note home with all the Abernethy campers, telling them about ND and inviting them to contribute towards to the work, so that ND can receive more groups of children for camps. We are so grateful to everyone who gave so generously. Thank you.

Raising funds in Brazil

Because the young people who come to stay at ND cannot afford to pay, we have to raise money through other means. We are so grateful to those of you who contribute to the work and we really couldn't do what we do without you guys. Another way that we are trying to raise money to be able to run and develop the Centre, is by offering camps for paying groups when we have space in the diary.

So far it has been difficult to find groups willing to pay for a weekend or few days away at ND as most churches and organizations need accommodation for a minimum of forty people. At the moment we only have beds for eighteen. We look forward to the day when we will be able to receive much larger groups.

However it was with great joy that we received an email from the leader of a YWAM Discipleship Training Course (DTS). He was looking for a place to be able to take a group of 15 students, where they would be challenged and also have

time to rest. We assured him that ND was the place! We discovered when they arrived on 11th August, that they did not have the money to come, but they had booked the weekend in faith believing that it was right, and trusting God to bring in the money.....and He did! They received an offering the day before they were due to come.

On the Friday night we shared the miraculous story with them of how we got New Destiny farm in the first place, and it was so wonderful to be able to tell them that their step of faith in coming, was going to have a knock on effect in helping us to keep helping the kids.

A holiday with a difference!



In the future, we would like to organize summer and Easter holiday camps here at ND to help raise more funds. Is that something you or your whole family or someone you know might be interested to participate in? Would you pay for a taste of fun, adventure, volunteering and missions in Brazil?

Please let our UK REP know if you would like to receive more information about this in the future (see contact details in next section.)

How you can help

There are several ways that you can help. All are of great value!

- *Become a monthly sponsor*
- *Give a one-off financial gift*
- *Pray regularly*
- *Organize a fund-raising event*
- *Lend us your skills - come to help*
- *Spread the word - find friends interested in receiving our newsletters*

Please contact our UK REP, *Moiria Gray*, if you can help in any of the above ways, and remember that what may seem like a small contribution, enables us to keep helping these children.

Email: loriandmo.gray@virgin.net

Tel: 01479 821 110