

IM IN TOUCH

IDENTITY MISSION NEWSLETTER

CHOSEN 2 CARE CONFERENCE 2016

When we met Angie, director of Hogar Esperanza residential home, over 10 years ago, we were taken aback at her delicate skill of disciplining her 19 children with such love and respect. The positive reinforcement stoplight chart that displayed a small piece of her method hung in the kitchen of both the boys' house and the girl's. We realized right away that a smaller but less orderly home only 15 minutes away desperately needed her expertise. During the next several years, this sort of realization would happen again and again; one residential home's area of expertise would be shared with another and in small ways their shared resources assisted in improvements for the better of the children they served. This networking that took place simply when we visited the different homes regularly led to an idea that would provide a means for residential homes to share and encourage each other from a much larger platform. That idea took form in 2014, when we held our first conference for orphanage staff and directors.



LAURA, CODY, GISELA, TARA, & JORGE



Just this month, IM was thrilled to host the third annual IM Chosen 2 Care Conference. Directors, staff, and personnel from 40 different residential homes and orphan care organizations gathered together once again here in Honduras to share resources and best practices that would equip them to serve their children even better. Speakers joined us from across Honduras, Guatemala, and the United States. They shared with the attendees their expertise in helping a child heal from trauma and abuse, spoke about how to care properly for their staff, and shared insight on what is happening around the globe in orphan care. Over 80 orphan care workers gathered, Honduran and missionary alike, and attended workshops on play therapy, staff development, and the healing process. We all laid aside our personal vision and agendas to delve together into the depths of what more God may be calling us to as advocates for the fatherless; as peers humbly shared how God had remolded their own organizations to bring them closer to His heart for kids in families. Some heard about kinship care for the first time, and others received the realization that the continuum of care means reaching outside our previous capacity and embracing more in order to serve each child as an individual. It was a time of refreshing, encouragement, and unity; all wrapped up that Saturday afternoon with prayer over the Honduras map, each attendee ministry noted with an arrow over their location.

That map will rest in Identity Mission's office throughout this year; reminding us of God's glory in bringing us together for the cause of the orphan and what a sweet thing it is to serve side-by-side. We ask you to pray regularly too not only over us here in Honduras serving the vulnerable children but over all of those in the U.S as well that have joined us in this effort to see better orphan care brought to each and every part of Honduras. Although the IM Chosen 2 Care Conference lasts only for a weekend, we are prayerful that the fruit from our reunion will endure throughout the entire year as we believe God will continue to whisper to all of the orphan care workers' hearts His best plan for each child they have the privilege of caring for.

MEET IM INTERN, LAURA CHELF!

Laura's tasks while volunteering for Identity Mission involved: helping with administrative work and sitting in on many DINAF meetings, learning first hand how Jorge and Tara advocate for the children in Honduras who are without a loving family. Witnessing the daily life of a foster parent and children placed into a loving family. And serving wherever a need presented itself.

“Coming down to Honduras I knew a general idea of what I would be doing, but I still was headed into the unknown, trusting in the plan the Lord had for me. I am so thankful that I stepped out and obeyed the call I believed He was telling me. Little did I know how much I was going to learn! I have a better understanding of God's heart for the orphan and a better understanding of His original design: for children to grow up in a loving family. God's heart is for the lonely to be set in families. They do belong, they are loved and cherished, and they do have unique gifts and talents that can be used for the Kingdom of God. My heart is still heavy and overwhelmed by the amount of children not able to experience the love of a family and to develop physically, spiritually, and emotionally in the way we are supposed to, but I know that The Lord is always Faithful and He is moving mightily in this country! I am thankful that the Lord has allowed me to be a part of His work here in Honduras and that I am able to be a vessel of love to these children. I am trusting and believing that the Lord is going to perform many more miracles in this country as He is just getting started with the foster care movement here in Honduras!

I have hope and believe that many families are going to step up and answer the call the Lord has for us to care for the fatherless. One of my roles as a believer is to be the voice for these children and to advocate for them to experience a loving family. My



time here has changed my life for the better and I love the heart behind Identity Mission and the passion they have to set the lonely in families and to be a part of a child knowing their identity in Christ!”

“One of my roles as a believer is to be the voice for these children and to advocate for them to experience a loving family.”

SWEET HANDS OF A NEWLY FOSTERED BABY!

Rosie is a sweet baby that came to our attention this month. She was given away by her mother to DINAF and even though DINAF attempted to reintegrate Rosie and assist the mom with her care, it was unsuccessful. The mom missed several of Rosie's needed cleft lip appointments and shortly afterwards a concerned neighbor brought in Rosie to the children's police, the Fiscalia. At this point, she was covered in ant bites She was covered in ant bites, burned badly on one ankle, and malnourished, weighing only 5.5 pounds at a month old. IM was referred to the Fiscalia by the children's court, where we informed them of our foster care program! We contacted a missionary family who had just completed their training and they immediately agreed to taking in Rosie! They came that very day to integrate her into their family!



ABUNDANT IMPACT BY: TARA GARCIA

As the time approached for Abundant Life Community Church's youth group to join IM staff for a week of service in Honduras, more than just budget, agenda, and activities were on our planning plate. Current research is beginning to prove that volunteering with vulnerable children isn't simply about serving; **it's got to be about serving them in an ethical manner that improves their lives and doesn't in any way harm them.**

Kinected, a program of ACC International, shares with us that, *"Without careful consideration and awareness of the broader issues, our good intentions could contribute to the exploitation and vulnerability of the children we seek to help."*

Many of the children growing up in orphanages have already suffered from attachment disorders when they were separated from their family, and continually suffer when caring staff have to move on and be replaced. So when we, as an orphan care organization realized that our visiting mission groups could possibly be providing an opportunity for more attachment and then loss; **we quickly desired to revamp how we served.**

Abundant Life took on the challenge of ethical volunteering, and they completely brought a positive impact to the vulnerable children we serve in Honduras. Here is a quick glimpse of what their mission week looked like and the abundant impact they were able to leave behind. Abundant Life served orphanages and their children in a manner that connected them to their community. They hosted a community-wide VBS and medical clinic at Little Lambs in Siguatepeque, transported and worshiped with the older boys of Senderos de Amor at the local Musical Garage's worship night, and provided a leadership workshop for the youth of Eternal Family. The team used their collaborative abilities to begin and fund the completion of several projects that would leave a lasting impact beyond their week of serving. Little Lambs received a

completed classroom for tutoring; this provides a venue for the children to grow academically and continue to build strong relationships with local Hondurans that come to provide tutoring.

One of the goals IM attains for our mission teams is for them to experience the importance of family-based care programs. Upon learning about how a sweet aunt and uncle took in their three nieces, Abundant Life jumped right in to assist them in the completion of our Family Preservation home project. (To read their story from the beginning please visit: taraimhis.blogspot.com) Now the family has a closed in home, and all 8 children can rest safe and secure!

The team continued to work hard and sweat on their last day by visiting one of our foster families in San Pedro Sula. There, we had a need for a storage room where IM could store items that the foster families in the city could share and utilize depending on the stage of the children they are fostering. Alba, Estrella's foster mom, offered for IM to repair a run-down building in her back yard for the purpose and Abundant's team provided for the repairs! Amazing teamwork!

While we are continuing to improve how we operate mission teams, our prayer is that you too will join us in the challenge to be sure all of our efforts are for the BEST of the children we serve. You can continue to learn more about ethical volunteering by reading this document created by Kinected: <http://kinected.org.au/assets/resources/2016/1.Ethical%20Volunteering%20with%20Vulnerable%20Children.pdf>

We are more than grateful for Abundant Life's partnership in serving the fatherless children of Honduras, and praise God for their compassionate hearts that chose to step out of the comfort of Lowville, NY. These projects would still be undone if it weren't for their YES to the great commission!



Medical Clinic at Little Lambs



Community-wide VBS

IM PRAYING

JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR

For the abandonment process of all children in our foster program. With that process completed they can continue to adoption! Prayer for miracles in that area because due to lack of staff and resources in the welfare office it is a slow process.

Continued fruit and blessings for all those that attended this year's IM Chosen 2 Care Conference as they return to their ministries and seek God's guidance on how to implement best practices. And that God would provide the needed resources!

Prayers for Jorge as he continues to speak in indigenous churches to raise awareness of the need for Honduran foster/adoptive families. And continued prayers for families to answer the call and become the solution for more kids needing families!

Prayers for all IM missionaries, staff, and volunteers on the ground and in the U.S. as they seek God's direction and grace in continuing to serve the vulnerable children of Honduras. For their health, their families, provision, and rest.

IM CONNECTED



@IDENTITYMISSION



IDENTITY_MISSION



MAIN PAGE
IDENTITY MISSION
PRIVATE PAGE
IM LOVED



WWW.TARAIMHIS.BLOGSPOT.COM

**"O LORD, YOU HEAR THE DESIRE OF THE AFFLICTED;
YOU WILL STRENGTHEN THEIR HEART; YOU WILL INCLINE YOUR EAR
TO DO JUSTICE TO THE FATHERLESS AND THE OPPRESSED" | PSALM 10:17-18 |**

IM BLESSED!



EASY WAYS TO GIVE!

1

GIVE ONLINE

Securely give at:
www.identitymission.org

2

GIVE BY MAIL

Send donations to:
PO Box 411691
Charlotte, NC 28241

3

GIVE AUTOMATICALLY

Send an email to:
tara.honduras@gmail.com