

El Hormiguero



BULLETIN FOR LAS HORMIGAS COMUNIDAD EN DESARROLLO A.C.

1.- Mothers and Daughters Workshop: Girls with a voice, women who sing" 2.- May sowing 3.- Visit to INBA museum / 4.- Maquila and women's health

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS WORKSHOP: "Girls with a voice, women who sing"

From March 9 to May 25 we had a beautiful, very important workshop thanks to the support of the Swiss OAK foundation.

By means of shows, teamwork, and sharing from the heart, the goal was to accompany girls and their mothers in a dignifying process of growth and consciousness, for them to be able to identify from their young age which experiences are of submission, violence and abuse towards their gender. For them to learn from their childhood that they can stop reproducing the story of their mothers and grandmothers, if they are capable of knowing and stating their personal worth, their feelings and emotions, and to tell the abuses they experience.

In a parallel direction we accompany the mothers so that they may, by seeing and working on their own lives, be a support for their girls in developing their autonomy, self-esteem and self-dignity, in the assertive expression of their feelings and their thought; so that both girls and adults heal the violence learned and the absence of love which has hurt them and with which they inadvertently hurt others.

The last two sessions we worked with the girls and their mothers together. In one session they had the experience of giving birth to their daughters



again, from a new experience, viewing life and themselves with more awareness; the girls in time were able to experience all their strength, all the possibilities their new life can bring to them and to the city. It was a truly deep experience, very significant both for the girls and for

their mothers. When they told their daughters "I gave you life for you to do the great things I was unable to do..." the mothers were crying with emotion. And in the last session they told each other how important the Workshop had been for each and what they learned.

It was beautiful to hear the girls they learned to speak, to tell their older brothers and classmates "respect me", "don't ever talk to me like this", "don't push me", "don't yell at me"...

These are the changes that will make a difference in Ciudad Juarez...

Time of the promise to earth before starting farming.



MAY SOWING

For the second time, on May 16 we experienced with the girls and boys of the educational Project "Smiles in the Desert" the wonderful experience of sowing seeds in the soil. Before the sowing, we explained the importance of what we were about to do. Together with the children, we asked the earth to forgive all the damage we have caused it, we undertook to take care of it to prevent more illnesses and to help it heal, and we asked it to al-

low us to put in it new seeds which would grow and become new life, food.

With all their love, each child received the corn, tomato, and onion seeds, and respectfully deposited them in the soil with the help of don Ramon, the person in charge of the farm and the orchard.

This confirms us that just like people, the soil of Anapra can become fertile land, with work, with love, believing it is possible to transform it and being very consistent.



The beans were planted with care.

Visit to INBA MUSEUM

Saturday May 21st we had the opportunity to go out with the girls and boys to the INBA Museum. They had the whole morning to develop their creativity, because there were painting, manual work, and drawing workshops, and in each of them the children expressed their imagination and their internal beauty.

Besides Cecy and Paty, who are responsible for the group, two mothers and the brother of one of the children came with us.

We finished the experience with a marionette show where the lesson was caring for the environment and learning to put the garbage in its place.



The kids had fun in creative workshops.

ARTICLE

“Maquila and women’s health”

Despite the wave of violence unleashed since 2008, Ciudad Juarez is still a warm, beautiful city. It has opened its arms to thousands of migrants who arrived years ago and who continue to look for a job in the maquiladora industry, or who intend to go to the United States to experience “the American dream”.

Women – and with them, their children and partners – are the first to show the social effects of what the economists and entrepreneurs called “the great economic expansion in Juarez”.

Two are the areas where we have found, in our psychotherapeutic experience, the deterioration a female worker starts to experience after one



PHOTOGRAPH: INTERNET

or two years of adjusting her life to the maquiladora schedule: a) the family environment and b) her physical and emotional health.

When an income begins to exist which wasn’t there before (some of them come from little towns, ranches, or cities

where they hardly found any work), the woman by herself or with her partner seeks a place to live or rent and the necessary furniture. The \$600, \$800 pesos and bonuses she manages to get a week are slightly increased by the well known “overtime” she starts

to accrue, and with them, the possibility to “improve” her family life. That is when the changes at home and in the family appear: a larger stove, a stereo, an American car without all the papers, a TV, etc. And still more to come: more overtime, less time with her children, little time and quality contact-communication with her partner, among other things. Thus, work hours represent the possibility to have a lifestyle with a certain comfort, and at the same time they represent the absence of moments which are necessary and important for them to rest, to regain balance, and attain personal development.

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In "Las Hormigas" we are making a fundamental contribution to families through the direct attention we provide women in psychotherapy and in the Growth Workshops, so that this work may contribute to stop the deterioration of this city which has already been so hurt.

When a woman describes her daily chores and working schedule at the maquiladora it becomes very clear that sooner or later her physical, mental, and emotional health will suffer. Just by being standing most of the time, performing a mechanic sequence, feeding on industrial menus which don't provide nutritional quality, forcing their body to stay awake during key moments in which it needs rest and sleep, all this weakens and upsets her physical and emotional capacity to respond with energy and maintain balance and harmony within herself and with the others.

A woman who starts treading the path of physical deterioration will soon

fall in the pit of emotional deterioration, and most certainly her relationship with her partner will suffer, together with the tolerance she needs towards her children and the many responsibilities culturally appointed to her by her role as a mother; all this, together with the heavy economic burden of the household expenses.

In therapy, it is common to hear these women say they have gastritis, that they have a nervous illness, that they have high blood pressure, that they have pain in their nape and shoulders, or that they just "don't feel like doing anything", as the physical symptoms of accrued exhaustion. But even more serious are the cracks which start to open in their lives

and which we witness when they share and state that they feel guilty about their violent reactions with their children, by their lack of interest in their sexual life, and by the feeling that they are falling in the dark hole of depression.

This is why we don't think the idea that the economic growth of a town means happiness to their inhabitants and well-being in their lives is real.

There is still a long way to go until the maquiladora industry takes into account the PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH of the women who contribute their cheap labor in exchange of a very low salary, because what the economy is interested in is production and profits, no matter the cost.

Wellbeing and health of their female workers is not part of their labor program, despite the large economic profits these companies make. That is, women and their families don't receive the quality of health rights they should have in our country.

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There is still a lot of work to do, but we trust that the seeds we are sowing will sooner or later give fruit.

Welcome New donors:

- Tere Carter • André Borrego • Emilio y Rumalda Delgado • Jaime Acosta
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- Que esta colaboración se les multiplique al ciento por uno.

Remember you can make your donation to the name of Las Hormigas Comunidad en Desarrollo A.C. as follows:

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