

Children of the Andes offers many kinds of support to families - from home-based, individual support to family support workshops, and even recreational outings. In situations of crisis, our partners are there to lend a helping hand and will always act in the best interests of the child. Our partners carry out intensive work to change attitudes and help families relate to and provide for their children.

Children with disabilities

It can be difficult to cope if your child has a disability, even when you live comfortably and have people around you to help. Caring for children like Jorge, who has severe cognitive disabilities, can be tough. Jorge was unable to communicate verbally and often resorted to hitting his own face or hitting his mother. His mother, from a poor neighbourhood in Cali, with no support and other children to look after, had run out of ways to control his aggression. The only way she felt she could deal with his behaviour was to put Jorge in a strait jacket. Our partner the Carvajal Foundation worked with Jorge and his mother, finding a way for Jorge to communicate and gradually removing the strait jacket as Jorge's anger and frustration lessened. With support Jorge was able to express his feelings in a non-violent way for the first time in his life and his mother learnt how she could help him. Jorge and his mother also joined the support programme at the local community base where

they were able to meet other families with disabled children in the area, participate in workshops, and learn about other support services available to them. Her response to this support was one of enormous relief, as she had given up hope of being able to relate to her son. She told us how refreshing it was to receive advice and learn strategies that she could easily use, without extra cost or disruption to her daily life. *"The project has given me back some hope and confidence that I can be a good mother to my son."*

Working children

Families who send their children out to work often do it because they think they have no other options. Struggling to survive with very little, and working for a meagre return in precarious and unreliable jobs, some parents believe sending their children to work is the only way of providing for their family. Our partners work hard to change parents' minds about this as an essential first step to eliminating child labour. Most of the time, once



they know there is an alternative, parents of working children don't actually want their children to work. Like anybody, they want what is best for their child, they want them to study. But even then they can still struggle to control their children and get them to attend school. Our partners work hard to help parents help their kids into school and to find economic alternatives to their children working.

One of the mothers we have helped is Nancy, whose five children have joined our partner ACJ's education programme for child workers and



Drawing by Paula Ávila, age 6



who herself was able to join their basic literacy scheme for parents.

"I decided to study because I realised that even though I work at the traffic lights I need to become educated, and I want to show my children that the best way of improving your life is by studying. I want to be a support and a good example to them; you have to learn to fish and not only to eat a fish. "I have learnt to feel more confident as a wife and mother, to feel capable of making progress in life, to know that it is never too late to learn. I have learnt to appreciate people



more, to love my children and not mistreat them but instead offer them support and talk to them before hitting them – I have learnt they understand better with words than with my fist."

Another is Estella, who – along with her children – has been attending our partner FNA Manizales' elimination of child labour project for three years.

"With help from the staff my relationship with my son has improved a lot – we fight less and I don't have to punish him as much as before. I've learnt to try and talk to him when he does something wrong or is rude to me, and try not to react physically.

"Through the project I've had the chance to train in manicure and pedicure which will help me earn money in the future and not have to rely on others so much. I used to work as a prostitute, but with support from the project I've been able to stop this work. I understand that as a mother I should be an example for my children."

Children in care

Recent changes in legislation in Colombia mean that children in care normally have to return to their homes within a few months. This can be difficult for the families, as well as the children, who are not always ready or able to cope with the child's return.

Our partner Albergue Infantil Mama Yolanda is working to support families to ensure they can look after their children and prevent them from returning to street life. The Albergue visits



families in their homes to give vital advice and counselling including therapy sessions – for example using film to explore and improve communication between family members – and immediate support in crisis situations. In addition, they run monthly advice and educational workshops on themes including family planning, child development and peaceful resolution of conflict, and provide recreational and cultural outings for families.

All kinds of families

We work with some of the poorest and most vulnerable families in Colombia. Relationships between family members are frequently strained, difficult, authoritarian, violent or entirely absent. Sometimes it is not possible or in the child's best interests to return them to their immediate families. Children like Jonathan who left home when he was 9 years old, fed up with being beaten up by his stepfather while his mother did nothing. When children cannot be returned to their families, one way our partners help them is by placing them with members of their extended family or foster families. Jonathan was linked up to the Albergue's 'Family Programme', which pairs children with voluntary families for a few hours a week. This has been a great support to him.

Our work with children and their families would not be possible without your support. Thank you for helping us to improve the lives of thousands of Colombia's most vulnerable children and their families.

Thankyous

Dear Supporters

Colombia has been in the news quite a bit recently. While this has been for happy reasons, with the freeing of hostages including Ingrid Betancourt, the general themes have been depressingly familiar: conflict, hostage taking and guerrillas.

While the conflict cannot be ignored, there is another side to Colombia not often reported but key to Colombia's future peace and prosperity. These are the small organisations, made up of ordinary men, women and children who, in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill, are trying to understand and find peaceful solutions to the many social problems that the country faces.

These are organisations like Paz y Bien, featured in our last newsletter, tackling problems of poverty and violence; or the Albergue Infantil Mama Yolanda, standing shoulder to shoulder with street children and their families as they strive to re-establish secure and happy homes; or the Carvajal Foundation working with impoverished disabled children and their families to help them take their rightful place as full and equal participants in community life.

By supporting COTA, you too are helping bring a peaceful future for Colombia a little bit closer. You are helping marginalised Colombians realise their aspirations and make their voices heard so that poverty and social exclusion can be overcome. You are helping reject the ideas of those who think Colombia's problems can be solved by violence.

So on behalf of all our partner organisations, and all the children and families they work with, thank you once again for your support.

Warmest wishes,



Duncan Millar
Deputy Director

Community

We would like to thank the students of Magdalen College School (Oxford), Rochester Independent College, Rugby School, Rye St Antony School (Oxford) & the University of Bristol for their solidarity and fundraising activities, as well as the Rotary Club of Axminster.

A big thank you to all the churches and religious groups that have supported us in recent months, including: Alexandra Presbyterian Church (Belfast), Carmelite Monastery (Preston), Church of the Immaculate Conception (Stroud), the Highcliffe Methodist Church, Holy Trinity Catholic Church (London), Justice & Peace Group (Billericay), Southdown Methodist Church, St Andrews Clubmoor (Liverpool), St Leonard's Toddler Group (Teignmouth), St Botolph Lullingstone Parochial Church, St Michael's Church (Glasgow) & the Parish of St Michael and All Angels (Kingston Upon Hull).

Individuals



Thanks to Mrs Christiane Embleton and her friends for choosing COTA as one of the charities benefiting from a concert in Bristol in April.

Our most sincere thanks to Mr E Klein who asked his friends to send donations instead of gifts for his 60th birthday, raising £205. Special thanks, too, to Ruben Chippindale



and his parents for remembering the children who COTA support to mark his first birthday. Ruben's birthday appeal raised £200 – making him one of our youngest supporters!



COTA Hall of fame

Special thanks to **Teresa Molano** and her friends from Raíces Latinas and the Calthorpe Project. Teresa has supported Children of the Andes since our establishment in 1991, often acting as a volunteer and regularly organising her own fundraising activities. She is very committed and energetic, and has inspired many of her friends to become COTA supporters too. Thank you all for your valuable support!

Sports & Challenges

Thank you very much to Camilo Courtenay for running the British 10K London Run this year for the second time, to Frank Giraldo who participated in the Eton Supersprint Triathlon, Julia Hayes who took part in the Southwell Sprint Triathlon and Steven McNicholas who completed the Windsor Half Marathon. Together, they raised over £850.

Karel Roell helped us raise £4,187 by completing a stage of the Tour de France in just over 10 hours, despite a thunderstorm!

"Rain drove down on us for 60 miles all the way to the top of the Col du Tourmalet. My clothes were covered in frost on the trip down and were finally blown dry when whizzing through the Hautacam valley. I enjoyed the Hautacam but have to say the Tourmalet is an endless monster!

"I choose to support Children of the Andes for many reasons – for all my memories of this amazing country, for the many orphanages in Colombia I visited and for the inspiration of the Colombian riders I met in my teens. Colombia has so much to offer but is caught in the longest civil conflict in history and mired by the drug cartels. I hope I can play a part in helping Colombia's children build a better future for themselves and their country."

The funds raised by Karel's efforts will be matched by his employer.

Good luck to everyone taking part in the Women's 5K challenge and other fundraising challenges in aid of COTA in the upcoming months.

Recent Events



Thames Walk

Despite the rain, we had a great day on Sunday 28th April. Our supporters managed to raise more than £6,500 - even more than the amazing sum raised in 2007. Well done everyone! On behalf of all the children who have benefited from your participation and sponsorship, thank you!

Salsa Party

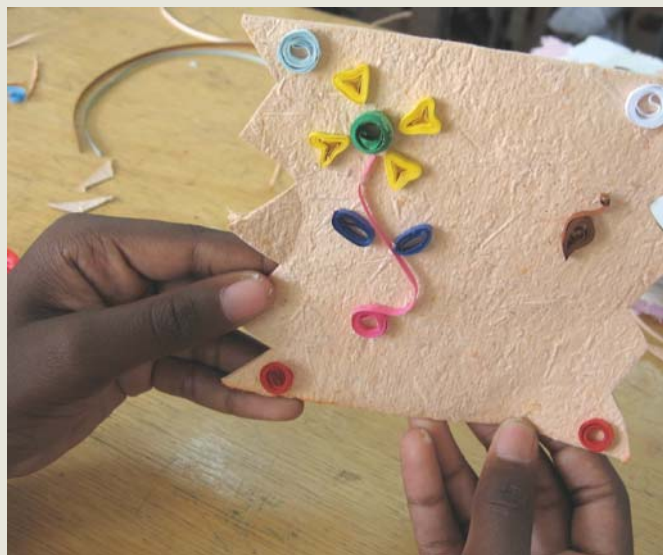
COTA's celebration of Colombian independence in London on 19th July was a fantastic party! The night's entertainment included Colombian folk dance, a salsa lesson, a great raffle and a live performance by Son Real Orchestra and to top it all we managed to raise over £4,000!

A big thank you to the group of dedicated volunteers who make COTA events so enjoyable, which would be impossible for our small team alone.

Top tip: Please email info@childrenoftheandes.org if you are happy for us to contact you by email – this saves us postage costs and is quicker!

Visit our website to find out about the fundraising results of COTA events and our upcoming activities. Look out for information about our **Film Evening in November** and our **Christmas Party**.

Please keep an eye on our website www.childrenoftheandes.org for information about future events



How our partners are helping themselves

One of COTA's aims is to encourage our partners to become self-sustaining in the long term, lessening their dependence on external funding and our support. This is important as changes within government or the local community can disrupt funding sources and potentially jeopardise our partners' vital work with vulnerable children. All our partners are aware of these risks and to mitigate them many have fundraising projects in place. These also help our partners communicate the importance of self-reliance to the children they care for and teach them skills they will be able to use in the future.

Creative fundraising

Our partner Fundamor provides a comprehensive programme of care and protection to orphaned and abandoned babies and children with HIV/AIDS. To help contribute towards the costs of the specialist medical treatment, therapy and education that these children need, the directors of Fundamor have come up with innovative and creative ways of fundraising.

In 1999 Fundamor set up their own small organic farm to produce healthy, chemical free food for the children. They soon discovered that the children enjoyed learning about farm activities and it became a type

of occupational therapy for them. Additionally, Fundamor sells surplus produce at an organic market and a few local stores, including their own little shop. Fundamor's shop sells donated second-hand clothes and delicious home-made biscuits, which they also distribute to local companies, shops and schools. A recycling programme at the Foundation generates further income and teaches the children how to look after the environment.

Skills and training for the future

Our partner the Cer Mujer Foundation cares for young girls who are pregnant as a result of rape and sexual abuse and teaches

these girls the skills they will need to look after themselves and their children after they leave the home. This is essential as the girls often lack the support of their family and community, have low literacy and employment skills and urgently need to provide for their babies. As well as giving them the medical care and emotional support they need, Cer Mujer provides the girls with opportunities to study and learn valuable skills that they can "take away" with them. Skills taught include embroidery, sewing and computer skills, all of which can help the girls generate an income in the future and even support themselves through their studies.



How you can help

Cards for all occasions

Both Fundamor and Cer Mujer raise funds through the sale of cards, which are beautifully designed by the children themselves. Not only does this help our partners cover some of their costs, it also involves the children who have fun designing the cards and, in the case of Cer Mujer, making the cards by hand while they sit and talk together.

Children of the Andes wholeheartedly supports Fundamor and Cer Mujer's income-generating initiatives which foster the creativity and personal development of the children, care for the environment and raise awareness and funds for their vital work. We understand how difficult it is for our partners to raise money in Colombia while working directly with the children, and for this reason we are appealing to you, our supporters, to buy their cards and help disadvantaged children in Colombia.

Alternative gifts

Sometimes it can be a struggle to find the perfect present. Why not give the gift of helping a vulnerable child in Colombia? Making a donation to COTA for any special occasion makes a huge difference to the lives of the children we help. If you would like to make a donation to Children of the Andes as a gift for a loved one simply contact our office. You'll receive a beautiful card that you can sign and send on, or you can write a personalised message online and let us send the card directly for you.

Please visit our website to see our card selection and price list. To place an order please email info@childrenoftheandes.org or call 020 7549 0225. Thank you!

Standing Order Appeal

Yes, I want to help the boys and girls in Colombia.
Yes, I want to be part of a peaceful future in Colombia!

Standing Order Form

Return completed form to Children of the Andes

To the Manager

Name of the Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Account No

Sort Code

Please pay Children of the Andes
Account NO. 22052801, Sort Code: 60-07-02 at
NatWest Bank plc, 14 High Street, Dorking,
Surrey, RH4 1AX

This sum of £ _____

On the _____ day of _____, 20____
This date should be at least one month from today.

And the same sum

monthly quarterly yearly

Name Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

Postcode

Signature

Date

Yes, I do require an acknowledgement (please tick or we will assume you do not; this will help us save on administration costs).

Gift Aid Declaration

I would like Children of the Andes to reclaim tax on any donations I have made over the last 6 years and all future donations until I notify you otherwise.

Signature:

Date:

Please let us know if you change your address or if you no longer pay an amount of income tax or capital gains equal to the tax we will reclaim on your donation (currently 28p for every £1 you give).

For more information about Gift Aid, standing orders, legacies, payroll giving, greeting cards, alternative gifts or fundraising, please telephone our office on: 020 7549 0225

Thank You!

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E: info@childrenoftheandes.org
W: www.childrenoftheandes.org
Registered Charity No. 1075037



Please donate now



Children of the Andes

Building a better future for vulnerable children in Colombia

I would like to make a donation of

£5 £10 £25

£50 £100

£ Other _____

Please make cheques payable to:

Children of the Andes OR

We accept the following cards: Access, Visa, Mastercard, Eurocard, CAF Charitycard.

Please debit £ _____

From my (card type) _____

Expiry Date: _____ / _____

Card No.: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax No.: _____

E-mail: _____

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Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please let us know if you change your address or if you no longer pay an amount of income tax or capital gains equal to the tax we will reclaim on your donation (currently 28p for every £1 you give).

Please see our contact details overleaf

Thank You!

FIELD OFFICE DIARY



Barbara Inglin, COTA's Field Officer in Cali, writes: **"Children need families. A simple idea, but how do our partners ensure that children's families really get involved in their work?"**

ACJ and FNA Manizales are two of our partner organisations who work hard to get children away from work and into formal education.

On recent visits to both projects it was clear that when a parent or guardian is supportive and attends key meetings about their child's progress, the child is much more likely to give up working and begin going to school.

But there are many obstacles to gaining parents' support.

One is summed up by the common belief that "children are born with bread under their arm", sometimes taken to mean that children are seen as breadwinners from the moment they are born. To help parents see how this view might actually limit their child's opportunities it is vital to get them involved in the project.

Our partners are used to trying to see the world from a child's point of view. This time, we tried to put ourselves in the shoes of the parents. What might it be like to be a mother of a child at one of these projects?

She would probably be very tired, fed up with her lot, with several children to look after, without a partner, struggling to make ends meet and having to take care of everything at home. Would she appreciate having to attend a meeting to be lectured about "how to be a good mother", where she might feel judged, where there was little to "entice" her to the meeting beyond, perhaps, a snack?

If we go to such lengths to encourage children to join and stay with the project, shouldn't we also consider how to make the project less intimidating and more attractive to parents? We work with children through games, outings and art. Why not take the same approach with parents?

Perhaps working with parents in a more relaxed way might be better? What if parents were to meet, say, for a hot chocolate and a chat, use the time to knit, sew or paint, as well as discuss different issues related to their children's welfare?

Both partners will be trialling this alternative approach to family support over the coming year. FNA has already started. After just one meeting, parents already seem more at ease and more committed to the project. It's a real privilege to help COTA's partner organisations devise new and better ways to meet the needs of the children and their families. To see that new approach bear fruit is even more rewarding."

CHILDREN OF THE ANDES

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