

The PAZAPA Report 2012

The mission of PAZAPA is to provide treatment and education and foster development of children with disabilities and to integrate them into their community. PAZAPA was established in 1987 and has been registered as a Haitian NGO since December 1997. All services are offered free of charge including medical, educational, and social-economic services.

I want to take advantage of this report to thank all the volunteers who dedicate their time and passion to the children of PAZAPA. We enjoy your visits to the Center and hope to have you among us regularly!

A special thank you goes out to Global Fund For Children for their support, visits, training and more specifically for allowing us to meet and learn more about their partners in Haiti!

Orthopedic and Medical Services



PAZAPA continues to provide clinical evaluation, orthopedic, neurologic and plastic surgery, occupational and physical therapy, and rehabilitation for physically disabled children. A total of 114 children benefited from these services this past year. Dr. Kaye Wilkins continues to hold regular clubfoot clinics at the Center.

Local medical and international volunteers provide all treatment for the children with foot, knee and hip deformities. Twenty-five surgical patients were treated over the course of 2012, in part by joint team effort lead by Dr. Fred McGlynn (Salva Vida) and Dr. Kevin Latz from Kansas City; other children were treated by Dr. Rozan, a local orthopedist.

Cleft palate and hydrocephaly are few and are sent to Healing Hands Haiti upon diagnosis for immediate treatment. The staff nurse, Dr. Rozan, and the staff physiotherapy technician provide pre- and post-operative care to ensure best results during and after treatment.

PAZAPA provides, free of charge, medication to control epilepsy, arthritis, and infectious bone disease as prescribed by local and international volunteer physicians. Currently no children are receiving medication for arthritis or infectious bone disease. The last neurology clinic was held by Dr. Chris Miller in April 2012 for 30 patients. A total of 43 children are on anti-seizure medication.

The nurse is also available for educating families and senior students about sexuality and STDs, hygiene, birth control, immunization, reducing endemic problems of malnutrition, parasitic infections, HIV, and diseases caused by unsanitary conditions.

CBM donated 500 cholera hygiene kits in 2011 and refill kits in 2012 followed by informative sessions for parents and students on prevention and proper hygiene to reduce children's chances of infection.

Special Education

The Special Education Program and the School for the Deaf activities continue to date under temporary shelters. Construction of the new building began in (date). The funds jointly collected by CBM, Plan Haiti, Team Canada Healing Hands, and UNA Shropshire will cover Phases I and II. Further funding is needed to build a cafeteria for the students, a kitchen, a storage room for the food, a room for the guardian, and ideally a guest house for the visiting volunteers. Currently, the temporary shelters are in poor condition due to severe damage caused by tropical storms Isaac and Sandy.



The PAZAPA Center is currently providing special education and therapy to a total of 133 children with developmental/mental challenges from infancy to late teens. The school provides four levels of education: Early intervention (0-3 years) focuses on working with mothers and other caregivers to ensure that stimulation therapy and socialization techniques are learned and carried out in the home. The early school level (4-10 years) emphasizes motor, language, and social skills while helping children develop confidence in their abilities. A

kindergarten level sign language class is offered to 11 children with severe language or hearing impairments. The senior class continues the academic program, assisting those students who can manage a regular school curriculum to be "mainstreamed" in an afternoon public school program. Senior students who have achieved the maximum academic level are taught life skills, cooking (for home and commercially), sewing, carpentry, and other skills either at the center or through an apprenticeship arrangement. Six hearing-impaired young girls are learning sewing at a local professional school.



Thirteen children with multiple, severe handicaps who are unable to attend the school are enrolled in the Home Visit Program and are seen in their own homes and community by PAZAPA teachers and visiting volunteers. Many of these children face poverty and hunger, which are major obstacles to their proper physical development. Requests for funding were submitted to Feed My People and approved for a monthly dry food distribution for the Home Visit children. We are

happy to say that with now the most vulnerable children of PAZAPA have gained weight and subsequently are making much progress in their development.

PAZAPA subsidizes boarding school for one visually impaired child at Ecole Saint Vincent of Port-au-Prince.

The Special Education Program benefited from various distributions of clothing, food, backpacks, and school supplies as well as visits from individuals and organizations. The Center also benefited from visits from Team Canada Healing Hands in the fall and spring. They spend a week at a time and provide speech/language therapy and physiotherapy support to the children at the Center and in the outreach locations. The PAZAPA staff also greatly benefit from TCHH's visit because it is always an opportunity to learn and increase their knowledge (physiotherapy for spinal cord injury patients, individualized speech and physiotherapy plans for student, etc.). The special education teachers started off the year greatly benefiting from a one-week inservice training offered by special education staff from the Northville (Michigan) Public Schools. The PAZAPA teachers were trained on best practices and were assisted with planning, using donated school materials for lessons, implementing concepts learned, and behavior management training.

CASS and CBM donated funds for a Christmas party, which was held on December 20. There were enough funds to buy presents for all students and staff members (who are most often overlooked). The children and their parents had a nice meal. There was a DJ, lots of music, and the kids put on a great show to end the year on a positive note.

School for the Deaf

Currently 30 children attend the School for the Deaf from junior kindergarten to grade 6. The major challenge has been finding professional or vocational training, especially for the boys who have graduated. No professional schools will accept them locally because of their impairment.

Last year, for the first time in the history of Jacmel, deaf children participated in the Flag Day parade! This was a true example of how integration is possible and should be embraced. Rose André, our 6th grade student at the time, was their leader and she did an amazing job leading the group with her enthusiasm and her signs! They were a small group with a big message.

Family Support Programs



The staff at PAZAPA believes that the health and development of a child is closely related to the family's economic status. Often the mother, obliged to be the sole caregiver for a disabled child, is unable to work outside of home. Therefore, PAZAPA has facilitated small independent commercial ventures through business loans to families of PAZAPA children as well as to senior students. A total of 22 parents and graduates are currently benefiting from these loans. With the help of CBM, the micro-loan project will double in size this next year,

allowing parents from the outreach areas to participate. These loans will be offered concurrently with workshops on developing economic skills and long-term financial planning for all participants. Previous programs have included a solar fruit-drying project; courses in sewing, pattern-making, and cooking leading to a government recognized diploma; literacy and bookkeeping classes.

The preparation of goods such as peanut butter, jams, and other baked goods for sale continues at the Center. The income goes directly to the parents and graduated students who are part of the project. There continues to be a steady flow of goods being prepared and sold at the Center. PAZAPA was present at Jacmel's Agricultural May First Fair to display and sell goods prepared by this project. The next step is to make enough stock to sell the produce at the local hotels, stores and offices.

Outreach

Currently the Outreach Program has a total of 119 children registered in the Jacmel rural areas. PAZAPA recognizes that this is the tip of the iceberg. With a population of close to one million in the South East, approximately 70 percent live in isolated rural areas. Rural children who are educable are not accepted in local schools; children with operable or treatable orthopedic problems, such as clubfeet, are obliged to live with a disability often limiting their potential to earn a living; those with cleft lip/palate must suffer a grievous disfigurement; deaf and blind are treated as burdens to their families.

PAZAPA is in a position to overturn this situation. With support from CBM, PAZAPA has been re-energizing the Outreach Program by holding medical and triage clinics in outreach locations. Thanks to the diagnoses of the pediatricians from the First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, Dr. Chris Miller, and the rehabilitation specialists from Team Healing Hands Canada, we have identified more candidates for surgery, seizure medication, birth control, etc.

Through our outreach initiative, PAZAPA can, with the support of the community, offer solutions for children with disabilities. Solutions will vary depending on local resources and how isolated the areas are. PAZAPA now has a total of five outreach locations with monitors and one assistant to the outreach coordinator.

Meetings and training sessions for the monitors have been held in all of the outreach communities. The monitors have been trained on topics such as family, psychosocial prevention, mental disabilities, and challenges, pre-natal and post-natal prevention, and leadership. Throughout the summer, the monitors held small forums to educate parents on the rights of their disabled children.

The monitors have worked closely with the parent groups and have identified and registered those children in their locations in need of PAZAPA's intervention. Due to this awareness, the parents of the disabled children have been motivated to support each other and organize activities in their respective communities; for example, starting small community projects incorporating both parents and challenged children to generate income (fruit and vegetable growing, goat farming etc.). PAZAPA strongly encourages these types of projects because disabled children who take part in income-generating projects are more appreciated and respected by their families and communities.

Conclusion

PAZAPA has been a source of hope and help for disabled children and their families since 1987. It has operated continuously for 25 years through changes of government, provided special funds in the aftermath of devastating hurricanes and earthquakes, and kept its doors open during embargoes, political violence, international isolation, and neglect. In spite of—or perhaps because of—these challenges, PAZAPA is recognized by supporters and by members of the government as a successful model in Haiti.