

BUENA ONDA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD ARGENTINA



WHAT'S INSIDE

EDITORIAL	2
PROJECT UPDATES	3
VOLUNTEER STORIES	5
VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION	7

BIENVENIDOS!

For Children, Kindness Is Impulsive

Yesterday while I was busy doing my housework, my daughter ran up to me and said, "Mommy there's someone at the gate." I told her to ask who it was. It was an old man beggar. I heard my daughter yelling, "Mommy he wants money." For a second I ignored her, but then it hit me what she just said. I found my daughter taking out money from her Dad's wallet. Instead of stopping her, I stood there amazed at her action and the realization: kids give without hesitation and their kindness is impulsive.

Then I murmured a little prayer to myself, "God, let my kids never out-grow such a value and let that value grow on us adults."

Sure, we all want to do kindness acts as much as we can, but let's also be honest -- how many times have we acted on it in reality? How many times have we restrained ourselves from being kind? How many times have we chosen only to be kind to some? As I witnessed yesterday, kindness and generosity requires no thought. Kindness should be impulsive, when you feel it, act on it at that very moment. I know it might sound impossible to be kind all the time, to not think twice, to hold back because in our minds we think kindness should be given to those who deserve it and need it. But really, who deserves and needs kindness? **WE ALL DO. THE WHOLE WORLD DOES.**

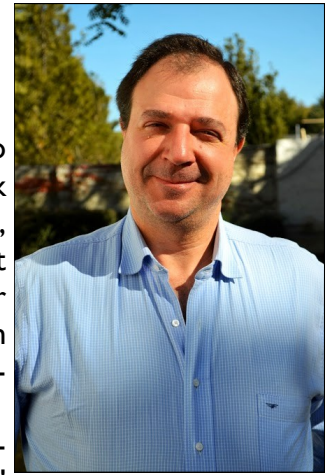
"No kind action ever stops with itself. One kind action leads to another. Good example is followed. A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves." ~AMELIA EARHAR

This story made me think of acts of kindness we can do anonymously, Here is a small list that can help us exercise kindness in our placements and with our host families:

- Leave a bouquet of flowers on a neighbor's front step. Slip a \$20 (or whatever you can afford) bill to a person who you know is having financial difficulty.
- Select some people in your life who you feel need a special lift and send them a gift: flowers, tickets to a special event, or a gift certificate.
- Leave enough money in the vending machine for the next person to get a free treat.
- Purchase a copy of a book about kindness, read it, and pass it on.
- Pay the toll for the person behind you.
- Write something nice about your waitperson on the back of the bill.
- Send a gift anonymously to a friend.
- Get to work before others and leave a piece of candy, brownie, fruit, flower, etc. at every desk attached with a Smile card.
- Place a flower in your neighbor's newspaper.
- Do an art project and leave it around town.

Un abrazo a todos!

Guillermo Cogorno
Country Director



PROJECT UPDATES

CARE MANAGEMENT PLAN

At the end of April Projects Abroad Argentina officially launched the Care Management plan in Argentina. The mission of this plan in Argentina is to provide sustainable educational support, care and protection to disadvantaged children and vulnerable groups to enhance their physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. The plan on how Projects Abroad Argentina plans to do this exactly was shared at two different presentations – one presented to the staff of the care placements that will be directly involved with the plan and the other to the volunteers who will be the ones directly involved in the carrying out of the plan.



In Argentina we have set five goals that we hope to achieve with this plan. The goals are:

1. Increase literacy and numeracy – Projects Abroad aims to achieve this by establishing reading clubs, assisting with homework and creating learning materials.
2. Promote early childhood development – Aims to promote a strong foundation for children during their formative years (birth to eight years of age), so that they are healthy and socially adjusted. Volunteers look for signs of abuse, neglect, learning difficulties and disabilities to provide extra care. They also give resources to support children and their families who are unable to afford them



3. Raise awareness of healthy living, the environment and family planning – Volunteers to conduct educational activities to promote proper hygiene practices to improve overall health. They also facilitate sessions to focus on civil rights, social skills, and emotional coping techniques
4. Increase emotional support and care to children – Ensuring that each child is given one-on-one attention and engaged in activities to increase the amount of emotional support they receive. We also empower local staff by providing English lessons, as well as train volunteers in effective communication skills.
5. Improve the quality of life for those living with disabilities

The volunteers will be briefed on the progress of the plan in their specific placement upon arrival, and will be guided by Projects Abroad staff on how to continue with the plan in the time that they are with us in Argentina.

http://www.projects-abroad.org/_downloads/us/care-management-plan/argentina-care-management-plan-2014.pdf

DIRTY DAY! CLEAN UP AT NEW EQUINE THERAPY PLACEMENT

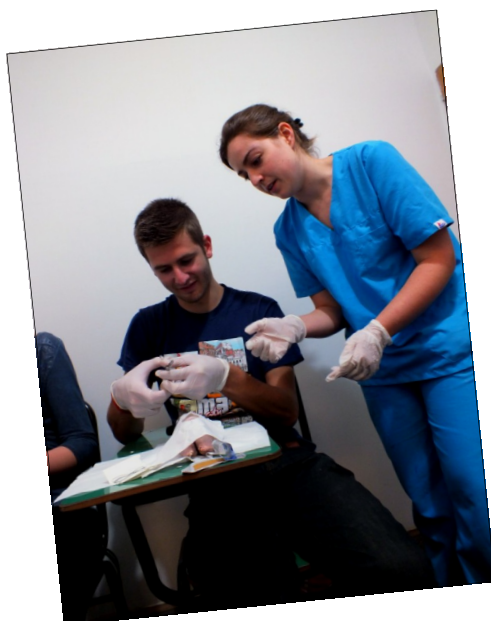
In February we began working with a new Equine Therapy in Córdoba, the Centro Provincial de Equinoterapia. It is a public institution, part of the province of Córdoba and the Córdoba Sports Agency. The center helps children and adults with various mental and physical disabilities to improve their lifestyle by doing therapies while on horseback. Services are provided free of charge to the students, the only requirement is that students are recommended by their doctors or therapists, as the work of equine therapy would be beneficial to their disability. The center receives little funding from the government and depends on the support of the community to keep it running. Projects Abroad stepped in to lend a hand to clean and paint.



We were almost 20 volunteers and quickly upon arrival we divided into groups and got to work. We picked up garbage, cleaned up an abandoned container, painted an old bathroom and helped grease the saddles and riding equipment. We also hired a blacksmith to put new shoes on the

MEDICINE WORKSHOP

Medicine volunteer Eilish Hanna (UK) gave a very practical workshop to medicine volunteers to teach some basic medicine techniques. Eilish is in her last year of medical school in Manchester, and offered to give this workshop to help educate the other volunteers, understanding that many have not yet begun to study medicine. She has done this sort of workshops before, as she has served as a mentor to new medical students at her university, so she is comfortable with the idea of teaching others.



Eilish taught the group how to read vital signs, take blood pressure, and the heart rate. She also taught the volunteers how to suture using a pig's foot as the 'patient'. Who would have thought that the skin of a pig is very similar to human skin and makes a great tool to practice on when learning!



VOLUNTEER STORIES

Frederique De Jong

Holland

Teaching, 9 weeks

My experiences at Sarmiento school have been very good so far! I arrived in Argentina a bit more than a month ago and I'm in love with the country, the people and the culture already! Everything here is so different than at home, but it feels very easy to adapt to the new culture because all the people are very nice and let you feel very accepted! The big cultural differences became very clear at my first day at Sarmiento school. There was a big ceremony going on because of the Malvinas. All the children wore a little flag on their clothes and when I entered the school I got one as well. The national anthem was played, and there were little performances about situations in the time of the war of the Malvinas. Even though I didn't understand it at all, I loved it. I met a few of the teachers I was going to work with for the next weeks and I got my schedule. I experienced that people in Argentina are nicer when they don't know you, than people in Holland. I also saw that Argentineans are proud that they are Argentineans. I really love that!!



The next day was my first real day of working at my project. I was quite nervous actually, and had no idea what to expect. But I mustered my courage and went to the school. The teachers were really nice, and the students as well! They asked me a lot of questions, and did an effort to speak in English with me. At the end of the classes they could ask me some things in Spanish as well, so they could get to know me a bit! It was very clear that the children were quiet excited that I was in front of their class. A person from Europe, a part of the world that most of the Argentinean children don't know that well, who speaks another language and lives in another culture stimulated the students to try to speak English and to try to talk to me at all! The questions were mostly about what life is like in Holland and personal questions.

During the first and the second week all of the lessons were a bit like this. I had to introduce myself to all the students and they could ask me questions. I really enjoyed talking with them, and it was nice to see that they tried hard to speak English with me! The third week was my first

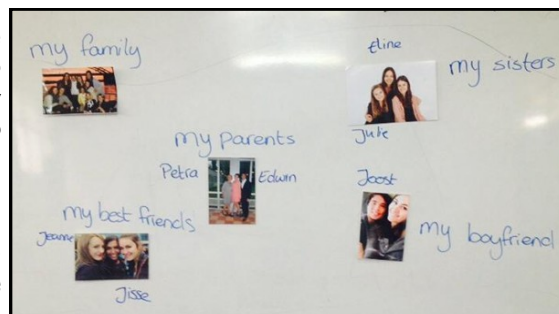
week of actual teaching.

I brought my guitar to all the lessons that week and I sang English songs for the students. They really loved it, and after the song we worked with the lyrics of the song. Depending on the year we did several exercises. I've experienced that the younger classes try harder. I speak English with them and when they don't understand I try to explain in English, when they still don't get it, I explain in Spanish. With the older students it's a bit harder, because normally I have to explain everything in Spanish to them, otherwise they don't understand anything.

The level of English is not very high, but it is very clear that there is a big progress! The younger students are already better in speaking than the older students, and I think that is really good!!

I come up with exercises that are about the same topic as the topic they are discussing at the moment in the classes. I try to come up with things that are a bit different from the things they are used to in the classes so it is more enjoyable for them to learn the new language. So far everything is going very well! All the students are really excited for the next English lessons and they show a big effort! For me working with the younger classes is a bit nicer, because I have the idea that they are actually learning something from my exercises, but I like to work with the older years as well!

I hope in the rest of my time here I can learn them a bit more English and show them my point of view about how the world is like when you're from Europe and when you're raised somewhere else. I hope on the other side, to learn a lot from them. About their culture, their language and their point of view.



Carla Wills

Australia

Teaching, 12 weeks

As an International Relations student I naturally have an interest in different countries and cultures, a thirst for knowledge about differing political structures, linguistics, people and histories. As I came closer to finishing my degree I was presented with a choice by my professor, "either choose a Politics minor or volunteer overseas and write a report on your experience." Naturally, the opportunity to travel grabbed me and I impulsively choose the latter. It didn't take long before I was meeting with the Projects Abroad staff in my country, sitting in a small coffee shop while they presented me with the different countries I could choose to visit and the different projects I could choose to take part in.

South America, definitely South America, I knew that much. To decide where I would need some help from friends that had already travelled to South America...the popular consensus was definitely Argentina and after some internet research I decided to settle on Cordoba.



After 40 tiring hours travelling through Dubai, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires I finally arrived in Córdoba and was greeted by my coordinator, Naty, at the airport. We were going straight to my new home in the village of Unquillo. I sat in the taxi, eyes wide, observing my new city from the window, watching men riding horses on the streets and children playing, until I finally arrived at my house. My new host mum was waiting for me in the front yard, her eagerness to meet me was adorable, she had the biggest smile on her face and said "Hola Carla" as I stepped out of the taxi.

I started my teaching placement in a village nearby called Rio Ceballos, at the Espiritu Santo School. At first I was nervous, teaching teenagers can be a daunting experience at first, but the student's attitude towards me was really refreshing.

With varying levels of English in the class the children were eager to show me what they did know, flooding me with a myriad of questions about Australia, my job, what I do on the weekend, can they add me on facebook? One of the most rewarding aspects of working with the students was their "zest for life", although hyperactivity does not make for the most productive students, simply conversating with the students in English helps them a lot (and I should know, I do the same in Spanish every day).

I think my relationship with the students at the school has been the most rewarding aspect of my time in Cordoba. It is an enriching experience to be able to help young people learn a skill. I can see a lot of myself in the students as well; as they challenge themselves learning English I feel the same way about my daily challenges learning another language. From the beginning of my trip, I was aware that my experience in South America would be made richer the more Spanish I knew. Learning a new language is difficult, there are days when you feel you have progressed a lot and other times where you feel completely exhausted and defeated but one thing is for sure, Cordobese people are always keen to help, making animated gestures to show you what they mean and if you still don't understand, they will just keep talking like you do, giggling at your confused face. There is certainly no better way to progress with a language than to be constantly surrounded by people speaking it.



My time in Cordoba has been such a rewarding experience, the friendships I've made, the culture I've observed, the food, the people, the nightlife...everything. The staff at the Projects Abroad office are all so lovely and are such an asset when acclimatizing to a new country, not only that, but in Cordoba I've made friendships that I know will extend outside of my time in this country; I will never forget the students at the school and the wonderful English teachers that have assisted me. My experience here in Cordoba has been truly wonderful and unforgettable.

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

