



NEWS & APPEAL

FEBRUARY 2017

CALL FOR ACTION

Could YOUR company help support us?

From a one-off donation to supporting a standalone project to organising a fundraising event, every penny raised will help us ensure one less child has to sleep on the street.

The sky's the limit we would love to discuss any creative ideas you may have. Please get in touch and help us make 2017 the year we all make a difference.

contact@compasschildrenscharity.org.uk

Compass Children's charity would like to say a huge "thank you" for the very generous (and amazing!) donations for Christmas presents for the children of Casa Alianza in 2016. Thanks to you we raised over £4,600 a new record for us and for the children at Casa Alianza, the wonderful memories and gifts you provided, are still fresh in their minds and proof that they are valued and loved – a feeling that many of them have never experienced before in their short lives. So, thank you once again for your generosity and for never forgetting our children... Our family... YOUR family.

"Fundación Casa Alianza thanks deeply Compass Children's Charity and their wonderful supporters for all their help to make this great celebration a reality for the children which made them extremely joyful."

A Snapshot of Christmas at Casa Alianza Mexico

MEXICO, Christmas feels more important than it is in the UK; the festivities begin earlier and finish much later. The children gather together to celebrate with games, piñatas and festive food and the first gifts of the season. On the 24th of December, the children attended a Christmas Party. The first activity set on the programme was to choose the winner of the Nativity Set. Each of the six houses made a traditional nativity scene - the winners were the Phase III Girls house, showing the most creative skills. Each house performed a Christmas carol in front of the other boys and girls. On Christmas day, the children had a wonderful meal and played games.

On New Year's Eve, it was time for another celebration, although this one had a rather different slant. The children took part in various games and activities centred on getting rid of negative emotions, actions and thoughts that have not helped them in 2016, and wrote out plans and resolutions for the New Year. When most people in the UK are taking down their Christmas decorations on the 6th of January, in Mexico they're celebrating the Day of the Three Kings, traditionally, the children must send a letter to the Three Kings to ask for something they truly want and the gifts are left under the tree.

Joining them were non-residents of Casa Alianza - special guests, children still living on the streets, who were invited along by the Street Outreach team. By giving resident children the chance to celebrate important dates as they would with a family, the idea is to make them feel safe and loved and experience a sense of normality. And by inviting children currently on the streets, we hope that they see the happiness of the kids at Casa Alianza and get inspired to follow suit, leaving life on the streets behind for good – so that they don't become just a number and statistic caught up in a nightmare like "Karla"

Karla's Story

Sadly, whilst so many of our children were able to enjoy the warmth, safety and celebrations of Christmas, we were painfully reminded of a report, released by WOLA (a leading research and Latin American advocacy organisation), that documented over the last two years, 420,000 migrants that left Central American countries and migrated to Mexico. Tragically over half of these were children and over 90% were fleeing due to violence they faced in their own country. A mere 2,800 had asylum applications processed.

The fate of the rest?

Deported back to their home, returning them to the hands of traffickers, gangs and unthinkable danger. "Karla" explains how she was stabbed twice after refusing to work for a local gang in Honduras. She felt her life was at risk and decided to flee. During her gruelling journey, through the harsh terrain of Mexico, she was sexually assaulted. She was detained by Mexican migration authorities and recounts being quickly deported without the option to seek protection. Karla's story is sadly not unique. We are hearing time and time again similar stories and enough is enough. **Together** we must ensure unaccompanied refugee and migrant children are protected and not further abused as they seek safety.



Juanita looking for scraps and items to sell.



Carlos with his only meal of the day.



Pedro, 10 found wandering the street.



What Life can be like for children who come to Casa Alianza.

This newsletter is an appeal for the street and migrant children who are part of the Safe Paths programme run by Casa Alianza Mexico. Your chance to help more children like “Karla”.

Can **you** help us provide these children with first response care and treatment...? This comprehensive service includes:

- **Access to legal recourse so we can support a child to navigate the complicated legal process;**
- **Post Traumatic Street (PTS) counselling to start to unravel the trauma they faced;**
- **Safe accommodation free from harm**
- **A chance to go to school and start over, building a safe new life free from violence**

Times are extremely difficult, but whatever you are able to give - no matter how modest it may seem to you, it goes a long way and delivers tremendous impact and real change. What your help could provide...

- **£20.00 could pay for medicine for a child**
- **£30.00 could pay for clothes for a child**
- **£50.00 could pay for food for a child for a month**
- **£100.00 could pay for 3 counsellors for a month**

Unaccompanied migrant and street children arrive to Mexico City from wider Mexico and other Central American countries. Many of the children have left home due to violence, abuse and wider violations of their human rights and sadly are subject to further abuse and violence on the streets they are forced to beg, steal or sell their bodies in exchange for shelter or food. Casa Alianza can be their only hope.

Children will have a safe place to live and access to multi-disciplinary services, to support their recovery and positive reintegration back into society, the opportunity to return to school, encouraged to make healthy decisions and will be supported through workshops to improve their self-confidence and their resilience to life's adversities. Through this intervention, children will be able to break the cycle of abuse and violence and with our support, build a bright future.

If you can make a donation today you will make the difference to the life of a child – with your help, together we can save more children from fear and violence. Thank you.

This year we would like to double our supporter base – there's a quick easy way YOU could help us.

Please SHARE our newsletters and e-news with your friends and family, show them our website – tell them WHY you support our work and WHAT A DIFFERENCE THEY COULD MAKE...

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