

Welcome to the SFAC newsletter

Someone once said "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish and he will eat for a lifetime." When we give children the opportunity to experience a loving family home, we not only meet their immediate needs but introduce them to family values that can last a lifetime and help them become better parents.

SFAC believes the time is right for organisations to consider more seriously the need for orphaned, abandoned and neglected children to be placed into local substitute families. It is no longer acceptable to simply think about 'housing or accommodating' children, rather we need to emphasise care, love, and nurture, giving children respect and the opportunity to develop as individuals. By training organisations how to recruit, assess and support local families to become foster carers SFAC is showing a more appropriate way of caring for disadvantaged children that will impact for a lifetime to effect future generations.

Save the Children report 'Facing the Crisis' puts it this way - "There is now ample evidence that almost all formats of residential care, especially for young children and in situations where a period of many years is spent in a residential home, have extremely poor developmental outcomes for children. By contrast, placement with a family potentially offers the individual care and love from a parent figure, opportunities to learn about the roles within the social structure of the family and community and to be involved with normal activities within the community and wider culture. These all make it more likely that the child will enter adulthood better equipped to cope practically and emotionally with independent life".

Mick Pease – Director SFAC

You Can Help SFAC

Deliver Professional Social Work Training and Consultancy in Developing Countries:

By spreading the word and promoting the importance of our work amongst friends, churches, groups and businesses. If you know of anyone who may be interested in financially supporting the work of SFAC we can send out information or give a presentation. Maybe you could distribute some newsletters, we can post some to you if required (Companies and those who are self-employed can offset their giving against tax.)



Mick & John with some boys from Retrak programme in Uganda. Retrak www.retrak.org is a professional Christian social work organisation aiming to find long term sustainable alternatives for street children. Reuniting them to their families is the preferred option but failing that they try to find foster families. Although not an easy task they have been successful in pioneering the work in Kampala and looking to expand. Retrak is also extending its work into Ethiopia and Kenya.

Children in crisis

- Between 120 and 150 million children worldwide suffer from disabilities. The majority live in developing countries and in cultures where they may be shunned, hidden from view, abused because of their disability or abandoned on the streets.
Source: World Vision
- An estimated 2 million children are currently enslaved in the commercial sex trade.
Source: UNICEF State of World's Children 2005
- An estimated 150 million children live on the world's streets.
Source: UNESCO Education for all Week

The Challenge is: To defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed..... Psalm 82:3



The delegates in Kampala with Mick & John

SFAC in Africa – Uganda

"I have waited 15 years to see this day," said Bishop Zac Niringye of Kampala Diocese as he gave his closing remarks on the first ever 'advocacy day' in Uganda promoting foster care. His desire is to see the church in Uganda mobilised and rise to the challenge of developing foster care. Such remarks were confirmation, if confirmation was needed, that SFAC has a significant role to play in the development of foster care, bringing hope through family based care to abandoned and neglected children.

Mick & John, as representatives of SFAC had been invited to Uganda by Andy Williams CEO of Retrack & Andy Sexton, International Director of Oasis. The purpose was to facilitate a five day training course on foster care, a press conference and finally the advocacy day on fostering in Uganda. The programme was largely sponsored by The British High Commission in Kampala. The theme was; Foster Care – A way forward for Uganda?

The 5 day residential training had 22 participants with representatives from 5 Eastern African countries; Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Kenya. Throughout the training, there was a genuine enthusiasm from the delegates to learn and develop an understanding about how fostering could be a positive alternative to institutional care for the children of Africa. By the end of the training there was a real sense that the delegates would return to their respective projects with a desire to promote and develop foster care in a way that would be professional and sustainable. It was also very encouraging to witness the different organisations and projects beginning to network and share ideas and experiences.

Along with a foster carer in Kampala, Mick was interviewed by BBC World Service for a report they were compiling on foster care in Uganda. The transcript for that report can be found at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6320995.stm>

John Ellerington

News on Casa Lar Novo Rumo

Pedrinho and Noemi continue to faithfully work with the children in Sao Paulo, Brazil. From Christmas through to February is holiday and carnival time so they took the children for a camping holiday to a coastal resort. The children always love that experience as some have never seen the sea before. On this occasion when they arrived at their 'little shack' – purchased some years ago - it had been burgled of most electric and household goods that had to be replaced. Noemi was undaunted. "The show must go on," she said "The children are looking forward to their holiday!"

Noemi has started a social work degree at university; Pedrinho hopes to obtain a bursary to study psychology. Such qualifications will help them greatly in their work with the children. It will also give them recognition amongst local council workers particularly when it comes to decision making for the children.

If you would like to support this work you can do so via SFAC. We also have a fund set up to purchase a house for the children in Sao Paulo.



SFAC in Colombia

Walter & Elaine Young, Directors of Team Fostering in UK – an independent foster care agency - Mick Pease and some of the boys at 'Fundacion Pacto Belen' in Bogota.



Walter & Elaine comment: "When Mick asked us to go to Colombia with him and work with Fundación Pacto Belen to help them put together a project proposal for foster care, we had no idea what to expect or that we would be working with such a strong and committed group of people.

Fundación Pacto Belen work with street children, some as young as seven, who need help to get away from drug misuse and the dangerous lifestyle that living on the street has led them into. The organisation does what it does very well, running two residential projects as well as regular outreach programmes on the streets of Bogota. They could teach us a great deal about engaging with the most marginalised people, the socially excluded and homeless. What they don't have is experience about foster care – that's where SFAC comes in. What was striking for us was the fact that, for all the cultural and political differences between the two countries, the fundamental problems and the answers to those problems are very similar. We found a great deal of common ground and we also met some remarkable and inspiring people.

Training with SFAC helped us to realise the value and timeliness of the work that Mick and others are carrying out, filling the gaps in people's knowledge, helping them to take their ideas forward whilst promoting the concept of foster care so that children can be placed into families."

SFAC News

- It's a new look for SFAC! The logo had to change to accurately reflect our expanding involvement in different regions - hope you like it. Thanks to Rob Ellerington for the design. Thanks also to Martin East of AHC Ltd for the graphic work with letterhead and newsletter.
- Confirmed training venues for this coming year are Croatia, Sao Paulo & Recife (Brazil), Kyrgyzstan & Tajikistan (Central Asia), Armenia and Nepal. Diane & Arlene will be representing SFAC once again in Nepal and are hopeful that may include work in India. We are also in dialogue about the possibility of helping a network of child care organisations in Cambodia.
- The SFAC foster care training manual 'Challenge to Care' is now completely updated and in PDF format.
- We have recently updated the SFAC web site. Every visit raises SFAC's profile on the search engines. So if you haven't visited it in a while give it a try.
- We have updated our web site forum page and believe it can be an extremely effective way of communicating SFAC services, developing contacts and is a superb opportunity for organisations in developing countries to network their experiences. This forum has been developed and hosted free of charge for SFAC but it can only be effective if people visit and post comments. SFAC will regularly monitor the forum and respond.
- The SFAC pamphlet is presently being updated to reflect developments with SFAC since we started the work in 2002. We'll include a pamphlet in our next newsletter but if you would like one sooner please e mail us and we can send out when printed.
- Mick's email address will be changing soon so please use – mickpease@sfac.org.uk for future contact.
- Mick & Brenda thank all who partner with SFAC in various ways; we really couldn't do it without you!
- If there is a change to your details or you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please inform us at info@sfac.org.uk

"I have come to realise more and more that the greatest disease and the greatest suffering is to be unwanted, unloved, uncared for, to be shunned by everybody, to be just nobody to no one."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

SFAC Information

Registered charity no: 1095091

31 Gotts Park Avenue, Armley, Leeds LS12 2RW

Account name: Substitute Families for Abandoned Children

Bank: HSBC **Sort code:** 40-27-10 **Account number:** 81246216

On line donations can be made at: www.sfac.org.uk. As a registered charity we benefit from Gift Aid on donations from UK taxpayers.

Please contact info@sfac.org.uk for further information or inform us of changes to your details.