



ESPERANZA FOSTER HOME

Esperanza

Teniente Marco Nuñez 886
Asuncion, Paraguay

August 2008

We were very moved last week in the Esperanza Foster Home when 3 year old Jonathan's mother was able to see her son for the first time in 18 months. Their story is a very common one in Paraguay. A young girl of 15 with an unstable family life becomes pregnant. Subsequently the situation goes from bad to worse as the family rejects the young mother who then leaves home, becomes involved with alcohol or drugs, and proves unable to care for her baby. In a country which offers virtually no State support, the majority of young Paraguayan mothers fail to turn their lives around and some disappear altogether. After a complicated assessment and legal process, and if no other family members come forward, the children in care go for adoption. We in Esperanza are hoping that Jonathan will indeed be able to live with his mother again. If so, it will be a first for us in three years of fostering babies and toddlers.

The reason we have been prompted to write to you today is that, far from being defensive or hostile towards those of us caring for her child, Jonathan's mother was tearfully thankful for all that we have been able to provide for her child. We wanted to pass on those thanks to you, fully aware that without your support the Esperanza project couldn't function. We also wanted to keep you informed regarding recent highlights and developments.

- Our two oldest little boys have been able to attend a local preschool since February. It has greatly helped their development to be with a number of other children enjoying all sorts of opportunities as well as excursions and parties.



Pre-school excursion to the Zoo

- At the end of last year, when the law courts have their long holidays in sight and finally get things moving, three of our children went for adoption. This year however we have been so frustrated by the lack of legal developments as we know how important it is for the children's cases to be resolved as soon as possible and the need for foster care places is acute. One of the reasons for these delays is that we are about to have a change of government here in Paraguay after 61 years of rule by one particular party. Since the elections in April, people in public employment have seemingly been paralysed by the thought that they might lose their jobs.



Little Sara with her new family last October

- Despite the complicated political situation, in July we were able to sign our special agreement with the Ministry for Children which will cover the next two years. One of the advantages of this is that they then provide all our nappies, milk and medicines. This helps us to keep our costs down.
- In December, we Metcalfes will be relocating to England. We are delighted that the Esperanza family will continue fostering children under the supervision of local pastor and his wife, Agustin and Teresa Maidana. They have assisted us with leadership from the beginning.



We will still be involved with Esperanza from the point of view of fundraising and reporting back to our donors. If you know of anybody else who might be interested in supporting Esperanza, our leaflet can be downloaded on <http://sams.gb.org/eventsandresources/projects.html> or we can be contacted directly on our email : murraypenny@metcalfes.me.uk

Best Wishes

Murray and Penny Metcalfe



Celebrating Lucas' 2nd Birthday



Celebrating children's day.