

Mais de 35 mil adolescentes serão mortos no Brasil até 2016, diz estudo da Unicef

More than 35,000 adolescents will be dead in Brazil by 2016, says UNICEF. These are children between the ages of 12-18 and they will be the victims of homicide. That is an average of 14 children a day until 2016 when Brazil hosts the Olympics. This study was only done in 283 municipalities in a country of 5,564 municipalities.



(Could they be the one of the 14)

What a statistic! Hard to explain how a country with so many natural resources can have 3.5 million of its 50 million school age children not in school. Why only 40% who are enrolled don't even finish high school. How can we explain why hundreds of thousands of boys and girls live in the streets of Brazil and around 100 thousand are sexually exploited? Why are hundreds of thousands of mothers obliged to leave their preschool-age children under the care of their other children, some as young as age ten, who have been removed from school to care for their siblings?



(Who will they grow up to be)

The Brazil of today is the country constructed by the children of yesterday; and the Brazil of tomorrow will be a reflection of the manner that we are treating the children of today.

If Brazil is to have a bright future, we must care for the children of the present and do this in a manner different from that of the past. **We can not continue to lose generations to death, violence, apathy and drugs; having these children stolen by death before they have a chance to decide their paths. We can break this cycle and we are knocking it down with boots on the ground in areas that are greatly impacted with this too familiar cycle of despair.**



(Children of the street)

Jer. 29:11 (NIV)

"For I know the plans that I have for you," Declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

This is the fight that we have chosen to fight and theirs are the lives we will change. Change with you and our partners in the field leaning on God's wisdom and guidance. My parents taught us how to serve and God has given us the people and the will to do the work.

People like Edna and her daughter who work in Sao Bento community; ministering to 100 adults and their families.



(Edna spreading the word)

This work can be dangerous and we saw it first hand. While we were praying for a lady she asked us to pray for her daughter who seemed quite angry to be at the service. We soon realized that her anger was more than mere human anger; it was something supernatural. She looked at us with more hate than any worst enemy could convey and we realized she was full of demonic rage. The Lord knew just the right group of godly people to send with us that day to stand strong, join together and pray until we saw deliverance. She calmed down, hugged her mother and started to cry. Not something you see every day, but thankfully people were present who knew how to get hold of God. Spiritual battles like this are the front-lines as we enter these communities to bring God's word of encouragement and hope.

As the Bible says in Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

There is another special person we have the privilege to come alongside, Thelma and her family. Thelma is a teacher by day and has grown her night ministry from 5 boys on her porch to 300 kids a week in a donated soccer field.



(Thelma, Teena, Victoria & Jodi)

As I said, this work can be dangerous; like last year when we were accosted and robbed by 5 young boys; the youngest 13 and the oldest 17. The story doesn't end there. No, we did not get any of our stuff back and none of the boys were ever apprehended. We did however learn of their fates. Unfortunately, some have become part of this statistic of death. One is missing and three of the five have been killed. I do not know the specifics of their deaths, but ONE life is worth what we do there in Brazil. The one remaining boy has accepted Jesus, his life has been transformed and he is active under the very pastor that he robbed and threatened to kill.

Is this not the very meaning of Easter; that Jesus died for all our sins and resurrected so that all can be forgiven and welcomed into His kingdom? Even children who once carried guns and threatened innocents; so now they carry Bibles and spread the news of hope and love.

