

CALENDAR

October 10, 2011

Nilce receives city's greatest honour...



Nilce Campos, our Pedraviva Director, was this month awarded the title of Honorary Citizen of Belo Horizonte by the city's house of representatives. It is the highest honour someone born outside the city can receive, in recognition of how she has committed her life to rescuing girls from prostitution in the Pedreira favela. Congratulations Nilce, you deserve it!

December, 2011

Merry Christmas!



The girls at Pedraviva House were treated out to a Christmas Banquet and each received a gift. This was such a special night for everyone involved! Check out the photo gallery of this evening and the sparkle in the girls' eyes on our website....

February 22, 2012

Dean travels to Brazil to visit the Pedraviva Safe House, and to travel to Medina and other towns along the BR 116...

Pedraviva Centre:



This month we opened our Pedraviva Centre at full capacity for the first time. Pedraviva works in a notorious favela in Belo Horizonte with girls who have suffered exploitation or abuse, or are at risk of involvement in child prostitution. In the mornings we are doing an intensive work with 25 girls who are in urgent need, and whose parents have accepted they take part in the project. The afternoon is open for any girl to come and take part in activities, and is the time when we reach out to girls who may not yet have accepted help. Among the activities are street dance lessons and percussion lessons with professional teachers, extra-schooling to help them do well in class, art and craft workshops and group sessions with psychologists. We also provide breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Last week we finished painting the house bright pinks, yellows and reds, and at the moment the dance area on top of the building is being refurbished with a new floor.



REPORT FROM MEDINA

By Matt Roper:

Director: The Dean Brody Foundation
International Director: Meninadanga

Earlier this month a team from Meninadanga visited Medina, the small town on the BR-116 where we plan to start our first motorway project. Rita, who will be coordinating the work, took us to visit the homes of some of the girls involved in prostitution there. Among them was 12-year-old Luana, who had been selling her body - with her mother's consent - to truck drivers since she was ten. Truckers who knew about her would actually leave the motorway and park on the narrow road next to her house. Luana, we found out, was pregnant and had run away with the truck driver to Porto Alegre, a city on the coast - Rita was devastated, she doubted she would ever see her again.

We learned that there is a turf war in Medina between two poor districts, controlled by drug gangs. It means that any project would need to be situated in a 'neutral' area, so girls from both sides can

attend. We were even told that girls from each district would have to be separated into different times to avoid fights - but we believe that one of the consequences of our work should be to break down these rivalries, as what has happened with the Pedra Viva Centre in Belo Horizonte.

Before leaving Medina we met with the mayor of the town. Amazingly he told us he and his social work secretary had discussed how to reach the girls involved in prostitution just that morning, and had come to the conclusion that they needed outside help! He was really enthusiastic about our proposals and offered to help us, even mentioning that he may be able to give us a piece of land in the town to build our centre. The support of the mayor is vital in a small town like Medina. We left there feeling optimistic that, within the next six months, our dreams of starting a Meninadanga centre to reach out to the lost girls of Medina will become a reality.

The irony of Medina: the region is one of the poorest in Brazil, yet underground they mine more precious stones than anywhere in Brazil. By night children sell their bodies on the motorway for 10 reals, by day it's where the precious gemstones are sold for more than 50 reals each....



Next week Matt will be returning to Medina with Dean Brody to continue the planning process - please keep praying that God continues to open doors and we'll keep you informed of all new developments.