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### Short-term Mission; Long-term Impact

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# Short-term Mission; Long-term Impact

BY GLENN RUSSELL

During the Christmas holiday, 15 volunteers worked, played, and worshiped at the *Hogar de Niños* (Children's Home) operated by REACH International near Santa Barbara, Honduras. Sent out by the Pioneer Memorial Church (PMC), the team was comprised mainly of students from Andrews University and Andrews Academy. The team conducted a FLAG (Fun Learning About God) camp for about 73 children at the orphanage and day care center. FLAG camp includes interactive classes, worship, games, music, prayer times, service activities, and lots of smiles and laughter.

Was it worth it? Did it make any difference? Here are some answers from a few of the team members.

**Joshua Chung, Andrews University senior:** "This Honduras trip meant a lot to me. It let me see what God's love can do in this evil world and showed what I can do in the future to do God's work."



Joshua Chung bonds with his unit of boys at the Children's Home in Honduras.

**Glenn Russell, team director and Andrews University religion professor:**

"It is an awesome privilege to spend this time with Adventist young people who have taught me so much. The Children's Home children are our special friends. It was a joy to baptize Yasenia, a young woman at the Children's Home. I am inspired by the dedicated REACH staff who are doing a marvelous work for Christ!"

**Dyana Coon, Andrews Academy senior:**

"Jenny is a girl who is HIV positive. Her thirst for human touch and love really sticks out in my mind. She always had to be with one of us, holding our hands, giving us hugs. She couldn't get enough love."



Erica Russell enjoys time with a child from the day care in Honduras.

**Erica Russell, Andrews University sophomore,** served as a student missionary at the Children's Home last year. She was so excited about going back: "Those children are just like family to me. This was all I wanted for Christmas."

**Kristi Witzel, Andrews University student:** "I spent a lot of time playing with the children, but I was also able to help them with their chores, go on trips with them,

teach them things, and help put them to bed at night. Through spending time with them, I learned to love them."



The Hogar de Niños (Children's Home) in Honduras is one of the many orphanages REACH International sponsors around the world. The orphanage children are wearing T-shirts donated by PMC Pathfinders.

**Scott Schalk, team co-leader and business professional:**

"The children's smiling faces and boundless energy made all the sacrifices of time, money, and being away from our own families well worth it. It was a special joy to see Christina and Ioana, two girls from the REACH orphanage in Romania who are now young women serving as staff members in Honduras."

**Tania Gainza, Andrews University senior:**

"A little girl named Daysi had fungus on her feet which she had scratched until blisters had formed. I held Daysi as she screamed that she couldn't stand it any more. It broke my heart as I whispered to her quietly, "Just a little bit more." She looked up and gave me this wonderful smile through her tears. I then realized the value of what we were doing. Our being there relieved a little bit of those orphaned children's pain. We brought a little bit of happiness to help carry them through harder times and to give them the hope of God's love."

To learn more about REACH International, call (269) 471-7460; or visit their web site at [www.reach.org](http://www.reach.org)

Glenn Russell, Andrews University religion professor, was the Honduras mission team director.