

Families and Violence



It's common to hear about violent episodes in diverse scenarios: sports, public spaces, centres of education, neighbourhoods and the family environment; serious situations where physical injuries, including death occur.

One of the biggest difficulties we face when analysing these situations, is to decontextualize the violent behaviour from its cause and effect. The phenomenon of an "act of violence" tends to be presented as something isolated from the context in which it happened. Violence doesn't exist iso-

lated from space and time, it doesn't appear out of nowhere, it is not a gene, an impulse, nor a mere reflection of learning. If anything, violence is more a dynamic than an act, more a dynamic spiral than a definite fixed point (Piñuel, Oñate, 2007).

Having said that, it's important to distinguish between violent happenings that take place daily and those situations that constitute a crime and put people's lives at risk. Both are equally relevant but require different forms of intervention and

generate different opportunities to protect individuals and to transform the way people relate to one another.

Violence that unfolds in the family environment doesn't have just one cause and therefore we will not find just one exclusive solution.

The first step requires recognition that abuse of power is based in a patriarchal and adult-centric culture, that places men above women and adults above children and adolescents, and establishes a hierarchical order between human beings. It is

*"Hate begets hate;
violence begets
violence; toughness
begets a greater
toughness.
We must meet the
forces of hate with
the power of love"*

Martin Luther King

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Violence and Childhood...

immersed in our daily lives and in all families, without differentiating between socio-economic status, neighbourhood, or place of work. This way of thinking means that we relate to one another in a way that naturalizes the abuse of power of one over another.

It is clear the damage violence causes in people's development, it leaves emotional effects that translate into the repetition of abusive behaviour towards others when resolving differences, conflicts and problems that arise. At the extreme end it results in serious consequences in the psychological and physical structure of people, including death. As well as general effects, the cycles of violence go on repeating themselves

in different scenarios, reproducing a cycle of violence and exclusion.

As an example, the same child that suffers violence in the home, in school, will reproduce this way of interacting with others (being either he or she who abuses power or who is abused) and that can result in situations of exclusion. And like this, it repeatedly happens in different scenarios.

In front of these situations, it is necessary that the state and civil society work together, taking different but complementary roles, in order to generate solutions to these situations and stop children, women and adolescents continuing to die at the hands of their closest family. For the state, it is a great challenge, to build and

strengthen the response systems as much as the care systems, as well as to improve the practices and access to a judicial system that gives guaranteed protection to the victims and sanctions to those who commit a crime. All violent acts based on an abuse of power and that produce damage (emotional, physical and / or hereditary) to another person, represent a violation of human rights and affect the development of people and society.

Mariela Solari Morales M.A.

La violencia no es el remedio, tenemos que hacer frente al odio con el amor.

Martin Luther King



Graduation of JUCONI families...

In January, JUCONI graduated 25 families that had taken part in the therapeutic process in the Child Worker Programme.

After having had 4-5 years of support, today each family is building their own life plan.

Between tears of emotion, children, mothers, and fathers expressed their thanks to the team of counsellors

and the Foundation for the positive changes that their families have achieved in this time.

We give our sincere thanks to each of the families for having allowed us to be a part of their life during these years. Each struggle, sacrifice, and obstacle overcome made them stronger and gave us all an example of life. Thank you!



Families who have graduated from the JUCONI process 2014

JUCONI methodology in the management of Children's Homes



Psychologist Martha Espinoza, Executive Director of JUCONI, training Children's Care Home Staff in the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion.

In 2013 JUCONI signed up to a "Cooperation Agreement to Strengthen and Develop the Family Reintegration Process" in Children's Care Homes in Guayas Zone 8 (Department of Special Pro-

tection in the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES)). This includes the development of a training programme for the Technical and Tutorial Teams from the Children's Care Homes and also for

the NGO's that have agreements with MIES like: Proyecto Salesiano Guayaquil, Fundación Kairós, Hogar Inés Chambers, Aldeas infantiles SOS. Technical staff from the

Specialised Services of Special Protection and Family Planning are also participating.

Throughout the training process, workshops and international seminars with experts invited by JUCONI have taken place, such as, a workshop on "Therapeutic Intervention with Families", given by Dr. Janine Roberts and a talk on "Roots of violence in interpersonal relationships" by Dr. Patricia Crittenden, among other topics.

In this way, our Training Centre is facilitating this process of development through various phases, from training in thematic areas relevant to children and families, to accompanying the children's home staff in situ in order to strengthen interventions.



JUCONI making impact

As part of the Agreement of Lending Services, signed between the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) and JUCONI, a group of organisations, including JUCONI, have joined together in a Government initiative to form part of the campaign "Give Dignity" that looks

for an Ecuador without begging and without child labour.

One of the principal achievements has been the reduction of children and adolescents in the streets of Ecuador, begging during Christmas and New Year.



Tania Gpnzalez, Coordinator of Zone 8, MIES; Merli López, Manager of Child Workers Programme JUCONI; Martha Espinoza, Executive Director of JUCONI.

JUCONI at International Events...

From 4 - 8 of March, Merli López, Manager of the Child Worker Programme, participated in the **XXIII World Family Therapy Congress**, organised by the International Association of Family Therapy (IFTA), held in Panamá. The objective of the event was to help heal hurting couples and families in various cultures, and brought together National and International Professionals.

The experiences gained

from the work shown by Merli during her presentation on JUCONI's Process of Care was applauded and appreciated, as much by the organisers as by the attendees.

Events like this contribute to the training of staff, and promote research, international cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and ideas that support the health and wellbeing of families and people throughout the world.



Merli López (2nd from the left) together with speakers and attendees

Professional Training

In March, Doctor Janine Roberts, visited JUCONI and trained professionals that work with highly vulnerable children.

Doctor Roberts, an expert in

family therapy, has collaborated for more than 10 years with JUCONI in México and Ecuador, Profesor emeritus of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She was president the American Fa-

mily Therapy Academy, and is associate editor of Family Process. Author of several publications, she has more than sixty articles and chapters of books, and a book of poetry. She received a Fulbright Scholarship and has taught frequently in Latin America and Spain, making more than 200 national and international presentations.

The team of JUCONI counsellors, accompanied by teams from other public and private organisations addressed two relevant themes to their management, between them "Therapeutic Intervention in Families" and "Rituals to intervene in the processes of separation".

Our deep thanks go to Doctor Roberts for generously sharing her knowledge, we are sure that the support to the technical teams will be reflected in the quality of care shown towards the most vulnerable children and families.



Teams during the workshop.



Working together for a Socio-Educational Culture of Good Treatment

On Wednesday 26th March, in the Magna Conference room of the Catholic University of Guayaquil, the **International Seminar: Working Together for a Socio-Educational Culture of Good Treatment—Challenges for Good Living**, was held with almost 400 participants, including entrepreneurs, civil servants, educators, community leaders, and technical staff from social organisations and youth groups.

The event was organised by a group of public and private organisations, including Fundación Junto Con Los Niños (JUCONI), Intervida, Plan Internacional, Fundación Voces del Silencio, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) and the Ministry of Education. The objective was to sensitise about and promote good treatment within the socio-educational culture of the family and the community.

National and foreign experts addressed themes about violence, focusing especially on childhood and adolescence, reflecting on the forms of violence that affect children in their development and their rights.

Doctor Patricia Crittenden (USA), spoke on “Roots of violence in interpersonal

relationships”; Mariela Solari, M.A. (Uruguay), gave a talk on “Constructing ways out of the situations in which children and adolescents live”; Doctor María Amelia Viteri (Ecuador), presented her paper on “Speaking of violence in plural: Context and social structures of gender”; and closing the day, Gregory Garay, Delegate from The Ministry of Education, spoke about: “Violent Situations in Schools: Programmes and Public Policy”

At the end of the seminar, a panel discussion was held with the speakers and representatives of the organisations involved in this inter-institutional collaboration, responding to questions from the audience.

In this way, the hope is to strengthen the diverse work that is being carried out in the area of Special Protection in order to coordinate strategies of prevention of and response to violence, which is one of the goals of the campaign for the formation of a culture of Good Treatment for Good Living.



Dr. Patricia Crittenden; Héctor Plaza, Presidente JUCONI; Vilma Torres; Martha Espinoza, Executive Director de JUCONI; Fernando Sinchihuano, Intervida; David Alvarado, Director of Plan Internacional



Martha Espinoza, Executive Director of JUCONI; Dr. Patricia Crittenden, speaker; Mariela Solari, speaker; Sylvia Reyes, Director of Methodology, JUCONI.

