

SNAP-SHOTS

Over the summer we've been working to help families prepare for the start of the new school year. Although education in Mexico is compulsory for children up to age 18, truancy rates in Tijuana remain high at around 15%. Public education is "free," however many low income families still struggle to cover the costs of uniforms, supplies, enrollment fees, etc., making their children the more likely ones to miss out. Sometimes desperate parents feel they have no choice but to prioritize the "right now" needs like food, water and shelter over education. However, to rise up out of poverty children *need* education, so this time of year in particular, our focus is on assisting parents and encouraging kids by helping with some of their school needs. Supplying backpacks, supplies and uniforms is a great way to help send them back to school on a positive note.

Thanks so much for your most important help with this these past few months!



MUCHISIMAS GRACIAS!



And let us consider
how we may spur one
another on toward love
and good deeds, ...
... encouraging one
another - and all the
more as you see the
Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24-25



These are pictures of *just a few* of the many happy and excited faces resulting from your support, prayers and efforts with us over the summer, as we helped around 200 kids.



Some families need extra assistance to get their kids back in school. We've been working with several families this summer whose kids didn't attend school at all last year. Displaced by fires in their neighborhood, lack of permanent housing, learning difficulties, bureaucratic hurdles, overcrowded and under resourced schools in poor areas, all contribute to the problem. Building relationships and trust with parents is important. Often due to lack of schooling themselves, and without transport, it can be very difficult to navigate the system. Fear of authorities can also play a part. We're happy to report the family above (and others), are now receiving the help they need.

A FEW MORE PICS FROM THIS MONTH...

RIGHT: Celebrating birthdays with the kids at SIMNSA Childrens Home.
BELOW & BELOW CENTER: Kids coloring in their "Plan of Salvation" Activity Books at Ejido Lazaro Cardenas.
BELOW RIGHT: A dollar earned for a lost tooth! (A Pastor Von tradition :)



This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us...
 ... let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:16-18



As we close out this month, we **thank you again** for your loving actions that brought so many smiles to so many faces, in so many ways this summer! May God bless you richly, as we enter into this new and beautiful season of Fall!

On behalf of us all
 at VSO,
 Joyce & Philip.