



# FT News

Jan – Mar 2020



## Football Training

The sports programme started back on the 11th February after the end of year break, when schools were on holiday. Children from 2 local schools, and from the local area were invited to join the football training sessions. This year there has been an average of 40 children attending the sessions, aged between 7 and 15 years old. They started playing in a local league with 5 teams in the following categories – under 7s, 9s, 11s, 13s and 15s. Bible studies take place each week with each age group.

Unfortunately the training sessions had to stop at the end of March when the government quarantine rules started



## Providing vital health care in the community

The health centre continues to be a beacon of light in the community for those in need of essential healthcare at an affordable cost, especially in the area of ENT, which FT is well known for, both in the city and further afield.

A new video otoscope was acquired by the health centre in January, and this allows the patient to be able to see on the screen what's inside their ear, while an ear examination is being carried out. This new equipment provides a better diagnosis and a greater satisfaction for patients who can see what the doctor is doing.

At the start of the year, all the FT workers and their families worked together to paint the outside of the health centre building, and they then shared a special lunch all together as a thank you for their hard work

There have been some recent additions to the health centre staff. A new pediatrician, Dr Miguel Cespedes, joined the medical team in January, to support with the high demand for pediatric appointments, and Andrea Callisaya Mamani also started work at the health centre at the beginning of March, as a speech and language therapist, providing much needed evaluations and treatment for both children and adults who need help and support with language delays and difficulties.

In February a screening project (supported by CBM) started to provide hearing checks in neonatal units in the local children's hospital and in different schools around the city. The healthcare team also started giving health talks to parents and teachers as part of their community education programme.

All the health programmes are currently on hold until workplaces are allowed to re-open

# Covid 19 in Trinidad-Beni

As instructed by the national authorities, we had to temporarily close our doors and cease all healthcare provision at Fundación Totai on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, when the president declared a total lockdown throughout the country. All work was reduced to only the emergency services, so we had to cancel all our activities, to protect the health of our workers, their families and people who attend the health centre and our children's programmes.

Public and private transport has been suspended and nobody is permitted to leave their homes (not even for exercise), except for buying essential food once a week, and only on a specific day, depending on the number on your ID card. If you leave your home on a day that isn't your designated day, you can be sent to jail for 8 hours and receive a \$70 fine.

For many families in Trinidad, and in Bolivia as a whole, this has been an incredibly difficult time as it is a country where the healthcare system is definitely not set up to deal with serious cases of Covid-19 (there are only 4 ventilators in the whole city of Trinidad). As well as being scared and unsure as to what the future holds, a lot of families are living together in one room and it is common to live from day to day, on what they make per day/week at work. Since they are unable to work, even when they are allowed to go out and buy food, many families don't have any money to do so.

## Discipleship, Bible Classes and Homework Support



The Community programme started up mid-February and it ran for a month before they had to suspend classes. Over 20 children attended the homework support class on Thursdays and Carla, the director of the community area, highlighted the importance of this class, both for children and for parents, who really appreciate the support given to the children. Some children don't have textbooks of their own, but they can get pages photocopied from their friends' books at class, and they have a safe space to work on their homework and get help to do investigation work on the computer, which they have no access to at home. On Mondays Carla runs a discipleship class with 5 teenagers, who are really keen to continue working through 'The Purpose Driven Life' to learn about God's plan for them

The Bible classes for children are taught on Wednesday and Fridays using presentations, puppets, and songs and the children were coming faithfully each week up until lockdown.

## PRAYER POINTS

- We have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and we continue to pray for the current situation with Covid-19 and for you and your families, that you may be safe and well. We greatly appreciate your donations and your prayer support at this difficult time.
- Please pray for safety and health for all the staff, patients and children who attend the community and sports ministries at this worrying time, when all activities have been cancelled until further notice.
- For Bolivia, and those in power, who are making critical decisions to protect the health of the population.
- For financial stability and the economic situation of FT – which is made so much harder with the current Covid-19 pandemic, and the lack of income from health appointments.

