

Ehlers Family Letter



August 2011

On The Kids' Floor

I (Jess) am halfway done a three week stint on the kids' floor. I'm in the room from kids 6 months to 3 years, and absolutely enjoying having up to 10 kids to play with.

As I look at these kids, I can't help but imagine the way they will grow up, compared to my own son. Most of them live in one or two room houses, made of combinations of wood and tarps. They go with their moms to work, watching cars, washing cars, or selling things on the streets. Some have seen others abused, and been abused themselves. Some have parents who are still struggling with addictions. And I know that as I want to provide the best for my own child, the mothers that come to class here want the same for their children...the struggles that they have to overcome are just much bigger.

I can't imagine having nothing in the house to feed my child, having only one blanket when the cold winds blow, or the guilt of knowing that my children see and learn from my addiction and pain. The journey that the women are on is long and very difficult. I've developed a respect and admiration for them and their journey by watching them as they interact with their children over the past two weeks.



El Jordán students in a crochet workshop.

Home Visits

This past month, there were two teams visiting from Canada, and each team split up to visit women who come to El Jordán. We went along so that Sam could translate for the teens (us plus 2-3 other Canadians).

The first woman we visited was Katty, who we wrote about in our last letter. It was great to meet her boyfriend and see her house.

The second family we visited was Adela and her children and boyfriend. She is in the cooking class and Bible study at El Jordán, and she was happy to tell the teens about her favourite meals to cook. Adela lived on the streets until she had her third of four children, and at that point she realized she wanted her life to change. She has lived in her house for three years, and asks for prayer to talk kindly to her children and not yell at them, as she still struggles with her temper.

Life & Work in Bolivia

We're still waiting to hear whether our visa application was approved, but at least the application is in and we are no longer paying the fine. We are pretty confident it will be approved.

Last month we gave good news about Mariela's 13-year-old son, and this month unfortunately he hasn't been living at home. We don't know the details, but if you would be willing to pray she would appreciate it.

The new men's workshops are still in progress, and Sam has been working over there with the construction crew the past few days, and was asked to continue to work there indefinitely.

After a rough few weeks where Miles didn't want to go to the kids' room, he has been happily going every day for the last couple of weeks, and even goes early to read by himself and wait for the other kids to arrive.

We celebrated our six-year (wow, time flies!) anniversary on August 20th with our first date here -dinner at a traditional Bolivian restaurant!

Avant is holding a fundraiser in Winnipeg with information about El Jordán on October 4th. We'll send out an email in a couple weeks with more information. At the fundraiser, Jess' mom will be selling crafts made by the women at El Jordán. Following the fundraiser, El Jordán will launch a small online store so that you can purchase items made by the women, in Canada! They make beautiful purses, cards and jewellery, and we'll send the link once the store is up and running.



Miles and Sandro playing foosball.

How to Support our Ministry

We were extremely blessed to look at our Avant statement and see that our visa costs have been more than covered. Thank you to everyone who supported us financially, and for everyone who is praying for us and praying that the funds would come in.

Donations may be sent to:

www.avantministries.org/give

Or mail payment to:

Avant Ministries
2121 Henderson Hwy
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2G 1P8

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Please pray...

The men's workshop has its inauguration set for October 19th. Please pray that construction will stay on schedule.

This month is an international fair that El Jordan goes to, to sell items that the women here make. Please pray that we'll get a good spot, as the women rely on the income they make to help support their family.

Jess' grandma, who has cancer, had positive news that her tumours have not grown or spread. Please pray for her health, that she would sleep and have energy each day.