

CHILDREN IN CRISIS MINISTRIES

# FOCUS

Bringing help, healing, and hope in Christ to vulnerable children

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## HOPE IN THE HILLS

**HIGH IN THE HILLS** of Bogotá, Colombia's capital city, is the poverty-stricken barrio of Ciudad Bolívar. The *Pacto en ACCION* ministry center, located in the center of the barrio, helps meet the needs of at-risk children and youth through food, education, health, protection, Bible classes, discipleship, and more.

ACTION field worker, Pastor Javier Riaño, grew up in Ciudad Bolívar without a father. At age 12, he attended an ACTION Christmas party in the community, which led him to the newly launched *Pacto en ACCION* ministry. He accepted Jesus as his personal Savior two years later and soon began working with children himself. After completing high school and military service, he dedicated his life to full-time service to God. Today, he oversees all of *Pacto en Accion's* ministries.

Javier understands the challenges that Ciudad Bolívar's children face, like 8-year-old "Mark," who attends *Pacto en ACCION* with his two brothers. Their father was never present in their lives and their single mother, struggling with addictions, abandoned the boys at their grandmother's home. Mark's grandmother struggles to support three children, so *Pacto en ACCION's* feeding program is a great help for them. It provides much-needed nutrition, but it also gives emotional and spiritual nourishment to help their hearts heal from the grief and trauma of abandonment.

Although Mark has struggled with learning and behavioral problems, he has found a new path in Jesus. He and his brothers have learned a lot about the character of Christ,



are growing in their understanding of God's love for them, and they always attend the Bible classes with a big smile. Who knows? Perhaps one day Mark will lead the ministry!

To learn more about *Pacto en ACCION* or to contact and encourage Javier, contact:

<https://www.actioninternational.org/project/Colombia-El-Pacto-en-ACCION-Ministry>

# The Faith of Children

**I LOVE DOING THE** “Kids’ Corner” during church services. I never know what children will say, and although their comments can be very funny, they are often quite insightful. Recently, as I was sharing with children about how they can shine for Jesus for a lifetime (like a tall candle), one boy raised his hand, eager to share. When I finally called on him, he emphatically declared,

“Kids have a lot of faith! Adults need to have faith like kids.”

His comment caught me completely off guard, and I realized that this boy, no more than 8-9 years old, had just preached a sermon. Our children can have deep faith in God.

Jesus also recognized children’s faith. When the disciples tried to keep children from coming to Jesus, he became angry and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:14,15). The children modeled humility, trust and

abandon, lessons every believer could take to heart as we grow in our relationship with God.

God is working in children’s lives, including the children at risk served by Pastor Javier and other ACTION field workers. When we take the time to listen to them, we might be surprised by their faith and lessons God may want us to learn from them.

Would you like to join the team ministering to vulnerable children? Or would you like to get this newsletter via email? Contact us at: [info@actionintl.org](mailto:info@actionintl.org).



*Sheryl Grunwald is a global trainer of children's ministry workers and ACTION International's Coordinator of Children in Crisis Ministry.*

## Find out more!

Contact us through any of the following:



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