

February 26, 2010

Haiti Earthquake Relief Update

Now that we are six weeks into the relief efforts, reality is setting in more and more for everyone. This week there are 386 people in residence at the camp. The numbers vary as some people come, stay for a few days and travel on, while others settle in for longer residence. Most of the children have settled into local schools, some without complete supplies as yet, but still the rhythm of life has started again for them. This week we've had two separate teams here who've worked flawlessly together to help meet the needs. The first group was sent by FAVACA (Florida Association for Volunteer Action) who responded to Caleb's stated need for Creole speaking counselors. They sent down the first of several trained trauma counselors to begin working with the camp refugees regarding stress counseling and how to deal with all that has happened around them. This has been especially helpful to the children and teens who have seen unspeakable things and need help to deal with everything. They've been doing individual and group counseling sessions throughout the week. As they leave this coming week, they will be followed by a second group of Creole speaking counselors who can continue this beginning. How grateful we are to have these folks come and volunteer their time to spend and invest in the healing of our camp residents.



Lori, Hardy, and Natasha,
trauma counseling leaders sent by FAVACA.



Also joining us this week is the second team from Fellowship Bible Church, Memphis, TN. Their fearless leaders, Soup Campbell (really!) and Sydney Payne are showing what a difference two retirees can make when they put their minds to it. They are leading this group to build shelters for the camp residents. They've also spent a lot of time cleaning up the camp and helping establish more structure. The team spent one day traveling overland to visit Port au Prince and see what all of us are facing and came away even more convinced to do all they can to help. Part of the team members are leaving tomorrow and a second group is coming to continue the work. We are grateful for all

the ways they are reaching out to love on the folks here. Between helping the counselors in sessions and facilitating art therapy with the kids, to picking up trash and laying building foundations, playing some great soccer and basketball; their care is very evident to all. They've reminded us once again you don't have to be specially trained to serve and love others! Thanks ya'll!



Besides the starting of school, the day to day running of the camp is keeping our staff pretty busy. Imagine having 350 (on average) for each meal. I was told this was costing right at \$400 daily for three meals a day. We are also going to continue food distribution to families in the area, especially those who have taken in the homeless. Caleb made two trips to Port au Prince this week to distribute more supplies and flew to Miami this weekend for some meetings. We all know this is going to be a long haul to help folks get resettled. Caleb is currently planning on several different outreaches to help folks get on their feet again. He is developing some exciting strategies and we should have them ready by early next week! While we are facing years of rebuilding homes and lives, it is encouraging to begin to see signs of healing. We appreciate your prayers!

Blessings from Haiti, Debbie for all

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