

June 2011

This an excerpt from Brazzil Magazine called "Amid Poverty and Decaying Neighborhoods the Drug Business Is Thriving in Brazil" It highlights two of the most important reasons for a work like Maanaim's and its partners. One the children and youth and two what can be done to solve their problems.

(waiting for something better)



***The Southern Region of São Paulo, Paraleiros is in southern Sao Paulo, has become famous for its high crime rate and also for its high drug activity. It is possible to buy drugs in the area, 24 hours a day even at broad daylight. The police are unable to control criminal activities and the government has long stopped investing in rehabilitation centers. The state has also failed to provide assistance to those families who have lost their children to drug addiction.



(Where to Go)

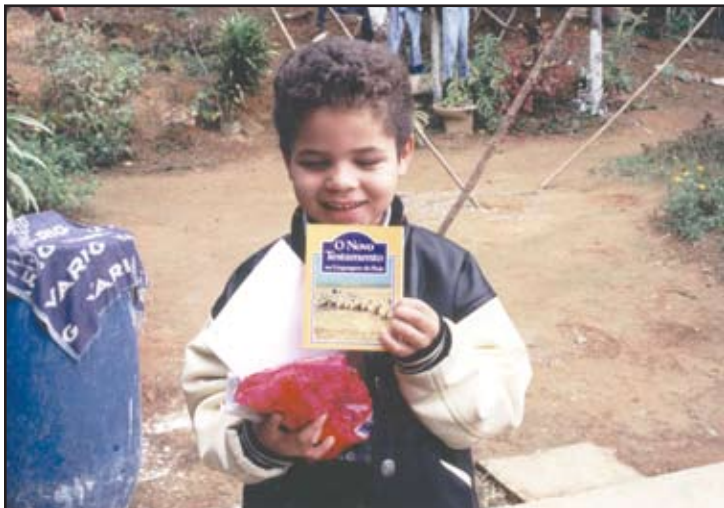
Many children start their drug addiction problems early at school since many public schools lack social work support. Meanwhile drug dealers have been able to fulfill that space, promoting parties where many minors can buy and enjoy drugs. (insert pic: Brazil still has 16.5 million people living under extreme poverty condition. The majority live in low quality shanty-towns, (favelas), without even a basic sanitation system. In many of these areas a large number of children do work, relying on drug trafficking as a way to survive, as the business does generate good profits. In May 2011, the federal government cut approximately 4 billion dollars of its housing program called Minha Casa Minha Vida - My Home My Life. The average income for most poor families in São Paulo state is about US\$ 400, which is far from being perfect in a high inflationary city such as São Paulo. Rents in the poor areas of the city can be as high as US\$ 350 per month. An ordinary citizen can barely survive with one regular job. Youngsters find alternatives to unemployment or lack of proper education by selling drugs at the "biqueiras" or little shops. Last December, daily newspaper Jornal da Tarde revealed that 55% of the crimes committed by teenagers in São Paulo are related to drug trafficking. Between December 2005 and June 2010, 62% of the incarcerations in Rio de Janeiro alone were related to drugs.***

(Where is she to play)



This is but one of the problems we have fought against for all these many years.

(Giving them something better)



We have lost some, yes, but the victories are oh so sweet and I am about to tell you about one of greatest and her name is Camila.

(Camila)



Brought to us by her aunt when she was 4; shy, would not even look anyone in the eye and always wore a hat to hide her face and hair. Embarrassed by her appearance, it was how she saw herself, abandoned by most of her family and living with an aunt who really didn't care if she was there or not. Maanaim was good place for her aunt to leave her because she would not have to worry about her and knew we would take care of her. She stuck with us and through all her battles with family and herself, she found a joy in life: **Art**. She was good in other things, computers, teaching, but art is where she shined and came alive. She would amaze me with her creativity and ability, even though she never talked much, only through her art. When we became aware that she wanted to attend college in Visual Arts and knew she didn't have the finances, we were more than happy to pay for her college. During her studies she helped in the office as a way of paying back for her school. She has rewarded us by never getting in trouble, graduating this year and finding a good job at a museum. She recently sent a note where she thanked all her teachers, everyone who supported and believed in her and especially wanted to thank Billy Joe and Josephine Hart. We are very proud and wish her God's best for her career and life. **(Camila at work with her friends)**



She never had a father at home; so this work and its supporters became her father and family. What a father's day present she has given us. These children are the reason, the seeds, and their lives are the fruit. Some are bitter, some not so pretty, but some are beautiful, flower and produce year after year. But we must sow, cultivate, love and nourish each seed. That is what your support is doing and that thanks that Camila gave belongs not only us but to each of you.

Please continue to pray for Edna; her health has gotten worse and the family is in great need of support.

Jer. 29:11 (NIV)

"For I know the plans that I have for you," Declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."