



TWINNING

LASALLIANS OF NORTH AMERICA & AFRICA

Walking Together in Solidarity

CHILD DISCOVERY CENTRE

NAKURU, KENYA



ABOUT THE MINISTRY AND STUDENTS SERVED

Child Discovery Centre (CDC) serves street and very poor children in Nakuru, Kenya. CDC currently serves approximately 50 children, with most residing at CDC and the rest living with families or boarding at or near universities or other schools. CDC enrolls the children in school, pays school fees, and buys uniforms, books and other supplies. Since the CDC program started in 2000, it has served more than 500 children. In 2017, CDC welcomed eight new students. Three were enrolled in primary school and five in secondary school. One of the students received a scholarship to a local high school based on his academic achievement.



HOME AND SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS

Each year, CDC completes home and school assessments during which CDC staff members visit the homes and primary/secondary schools of the children. They meet with the students and teachers to assess each student's performance, discipline, involvement in extra-curricular activities and any ways the student needs support. These assessments allow the CDC staff to help students where needed, such as assisting with studying or offering counseling to deal with peer pressure or low self-esteem. Home visits allow the staff members to interact with the guardians of the children and assess how well the guardians understand the services CDC provides and their capability of supporting the children once they leave CDC. It is also a chance for CDC to gain a better understanding of the background of each child. Some issues they find in the homes include inadequate food (one meal or no meal each day), no clean water, no electricity, and elderly grandparents who care for children.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

Borehole drilling was a major achievement for CDC in 2017. For many years, a lack of water had been CDC's biggest challenge. CDC had to purchase water, which was very costly. Insufficient water supplies and a lack of rainfall made growing food nearly impossible. CDC had to buy vegetables after its kitchen garden dried up. The borehole is helping to solve water-related problems and saving money on water and food. In 2017, CDC planted maize, vegetables and beans. Despite inadequate rainfall, the crops did fairly well. CDC did not face the challenges with livestock in 2017 as it did in previous years. The goats and chickens did well, including having some chicks hatch in a newly acquired incubator, which supplied the center with eggs throughout the year.





HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017 (CONTINUED)

The children and staff at CDC had a number of visitors in 2017, including Brother Superior General Robert Schieler, FSC, who spent time talking with them, learning more about the work of CDC, and sharing encouraging words. CDC also had a number of volunteers, charitable groups and friends visit, who brought donations and shared in celebrations.

Celebrating the feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle was unique in 2017 because it was the first time that parents/guardians and representatives from the schools the children attend visited CDC for the celebration. It included Mass, entertainment, speeches and lunch. CDC also participated in the Day of the African Child by joining representatives from other children's homes for a walk that ended at the government offices.

Around campus, repairs were made to the girls' dorm and landscaping work was done. CDC painted its name on the walls of its two compounds in order to make it easier to locate and to increase awareness. Previously, people would knock at the gate to ask what the center was, but with the name on the walls, it has stopped. In terms of security, CDC installed a new electric fence and hired a new security firm.



Brother Superior General Robert Schieler, FSC, visited CDC in 2017.



HOPES FOR 2018

CDC has many plans for 2018, which include strengthening its local and international networks, such as its relationships with its twinned ministries in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN). CDC is already taking steps to reach that goal by increasing communication and interacting over Skype.

Other plans include:

- Using water from the borehole for farming and other uses,
- Getting a greenhouse in order to grow vegetables for the year,
- Increasing the number of young people it serves,
- Following requirements to have children properly documented through the courts,
- Awarding students for achievements, such as most disciplined, most organized, most improved, etc.,
- Organizing a meaningful Founder's Day celebration,
- Increasing the athletic and creative activities it offers,
- Reaching out to alumni to see their progress and learn from them,
- Connecting with Lasallian schools to exchange ideas, and
- Addressing shortcomings and challenges presented in 2017.



Students at St. John's College High School in Chevy Chase, DC, and CDC talk over Skype. Each ministry provided pictures.



CONTACT CHILD DISCOVERY CENTRE

Administrator: Brother Paul Anderson, FSC
Email: childdiscoverycentre@gmail.com
pakamu2005b@yahoo.com



In Their Own Words

Get to know some of your Lasallian brothers and sisters served at Child Discovery Centre as they share their stories.

Irene Wangui, 13



My name is Irene Wangui. I am the fourth born in a family of eight. My father got an accident and died on the spot when coming home from casual labor. My mother was a stay-at-home mum. With his death, it meant a difficult life ahead. With eight mouths to feed, my mum was forced to work. She started a green grocer kiosk, which has not been doing so well. Meeting all our basic needs alone was very challenging. We would stay at home for lack of school fees. A plate of food on our table was a very big luck. I used to go to school with slippers, as she could not afford school shoes. My mother's friend referred us to CDC and, together with my brother, we were taken in by Brother Paul. I attend Madaraka Primary School. I am average student, and during my free time I like singing. CDC has provided me with school requirements that I could not afford at home, like shoes and fees. I have also been provided with food and shelter. In the future, I want to be a banker. It is my dream to change the life of my family members, and with the support I am getting here, this is possible.

Sarah Wanjiru, 15



My name is Sarah Wanjiru. I am the last born in a family of 10. When I was born, my father and mother were working at a sisal farm. During the 2007-2008 post-election violence, my father was killed and our whole family displaced. We were taken to the camp for the internally displaced persons. At the camp, my life was very hard as there were very many people. Getting food rations and other necessities was very hard, and sleeping in the cold was a daily routine. A good samaritan came and took us to a children's home. I beat all odds to be at the top of my class. The home could not support us for long, and we were back at the camp. My brother met the director of CDC, Brother Paul, who offered me and my brothers a place. I attend Hillcrest Secondary School. I am an above-average student. Here at CDC, I have been empowered through community service. All my needs are met, and I like dancing a lot. I want to tell my story and that of other children who are victims of wars and other crimes, like myself, to society, and that is why I want to be a journalist.

Simon Gikunga Waweru, 16



My name is Simon Gatimu Waweru. I am the third born in a family of five. My family lived in Nakuru, and we were displaced during the 2007 post-election violence. Before the clashes, we were doing well as my parents' small-scale business was meeting our needs. Then we moved from one place to another as my parents were trying their luck in business to make ends meet. Life was very challenging and we relocated to a rural area. Due to the stress our family was going through, my father started drinking alcohol as a way of forgetting what we were going through. His drinking habit led to constant fights with mum as he never provided anything. My mother struggled with casual labor to pay our fees. Since he never changed, they separated. I performed well in my primary exams, and with no hope of joining secondary school because of a lack of fees, I just stayed home. My brother met the director of CDC, and he took me in. I attend Hillcrest Secondary School. I am an average student in class work. My hobby is listening to music. CDC has helped me have hope for the future. I have a large family of brothers and sisters. I feel at home and I have been taught a lot of life and social skills. My dream is to be an engineer.

Elijah Njoroge, 16



My name is Elijah Njoroge. I am the first born in a family of three. I was abandoned by my mum at the age of one and a half years, after which my uncle took me in. My uncle tells me that my mother developed meningitis and, as a result, dropped out of school. The meningitis affected her to a point of becoming mentally challenged. She often slept outside, and finally she found her way to the streets. Being alone, she was raped and gave birth to two girls. No one has ever traced her, and I don't even know my other sisters. My uncle and aunt are casual laborers. They have seven children and are very poor. They tried their best to see me through primary education. I beat all odds to become the best boy in my school. My uncle could not afford my fees as he struggles to see even his own children through secondary education. A well-wisher narrated my plight to the director, Brother Paul, and he admitted me at CDC. I attend Hillcrest Secondary School. I am an above-average student. CDC is a dream come true for me. It has helped me grow physically, mentally and spiritually. I have learned moral values here, and I feel very much at home. My hobby is cycling. Being an accountant is my choice of career. I also hope to reunite with my family.

Cynthia Kirigo, 19



My name is Cynthia Kirigo. I am the second born in a family of four. I have two sisters and one brother. I come from Manyani slums in Nakuru. We live in a rented house. My father is a casual laborer who works at construction sites. My mother was a business lady, but she can no longer tend to her business of selling second-hand clothes because of her ill health. She is HIV positive, and her health has been deteriorating every single day. She is in and out of hospital, most times because of the infections associated with the virus. The cost of buying her drugs and providing her with a balanced diet is an uphill task for my father. He gets too little from his casual work to cater to our basic needs, like paying rent, buying food, and paying for school fees. I passed my primary education exams despite the challenges I was facing at home. I was enrolled in a day secondary school, but due to mum's ill health, I was in and out of school for the two years I was there. Since my father could not afford school fees, I had to drop out. I came to CDC and was received by Brother Paul, who offered me a place and took me to school. I attend Hillcrest Secondary School. I work hard and am an average student. My hobbies are singing, reading, and riding a bicycle. At CDC, I have enough time to study. I eat and sleep well. I have learned a lot through community service that I do at the centre, like cooking. I have developed social skills as I have met different people. CDC has given me a chance to turn around my life, and slowly I can see my dream of becoming a fashion designer coming to pass.

RELAN SCHOOLS TWINNED WITH CDC

- Central Catholic High School
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Christian Brothers Academy
Syracuse, New York
- Christian Brothers High School
Memphis, Tennessee
- De La Salle Blackfeet School
Browning, Montana
- De La Salle Elementary at Blessed
Sacrament
Memphis, Tennessee
- De Marillac Academy
San Francisco, California
- La Salle Academy
New York, New York
- Ocean Tides School
Narragansett, Rhode Island
- Saint John's College High School
Chevy Chase, DC
- San Miguel High School
Tucson, Arizona

