

Expanding Horizons

Eunice dreamed of becoming a nurse one day — until the sight of blood made her want to become a flight attendant instead! Almost all children dream of what they want to become. Sadly, for many, it's hard to imagine anything beyond today's meal or tomorrow's bleak reality.

ICCM is working to change that!



Eunice with her parents in Mexico.

Coming alongside churches, schools, children's homes and pastor's families, we seek to give children a better chance at today and a brighter future tomorrow.

A recent study regarding the viability of international Christian child sponsorship, led by Bruce Wydick, professor of economics and international studies at the

University of San Francisco, indicates that a sister sponsorship program significantly impacts life outcomes for children:

- They stay in school longer than their non-sponsored peers
- They are much more likely to finish high school
- They are much more likely to complete a university education

- They are more likely to have salaried employment and more likely to secure white-collar employment
- They are more likely to become community leaders
- They are more likely to become church leaders

According to Wydick, "One of the key factors in the program's success is that they help broaden the children's aspirations and view of themselves."*

As ICCM's Latin American Regional Coordinator, I get to witness this happening in real life! Local project leaders are helping children recognize their capabilities, develop their potential and shape their aspirations and life goals. Our sponsored children begin to see beyond the norm of not finishing school, for example, and begin to envision how they can fully make use of the gifts they've been given to serve others.

Formerly sponsored children, according to the study, specify two aspects of the program as being the most beneficial: spiritual and character-building. It makes a big difference for children to understand they are made in the image of the Creator, that all humans possess inherent dignity and worth, that we are beings with a transcendent destiny, beings of purpose, reason and creativity and able to make free choices.



Thus, it may not come as a surprise to know that ICCM alumni around the world include not only a bishop and a superintendent, but pastors, doctors, nurses, school directors, teachers, missionaries, a mayor and a member of Parliament.

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Sponsored children in Quito, Ecuador pose with ICCM Director Linda Adams.

And Eunice? As one of eight daughters in a pastor's family, resources were few and it was difficult for her parents to make ends meet. She remembers with great gratitude and fondness her years as a sponsored child. God's Word penetrated deeply in her young heart as she got involved in Bible quizzing. She thrilled at being able to attend church camp each year. Our ICCM program in Mexico takes special care of pastors children and it ministered deeply to Eunice.

In her beloved Mexico, surrounded by godly people and missionaries who were role models for her life, she grew up feeling supported and loved. And she felt inspired to dream. Her thoughts of becoming a flight attendant slowly began to take a different direction.

At the age of 15, God began to call her to serve Him in Christian ministry. She graduated from high school, attended seminary and began serving happily in her local church. God called again, leading

her to further study and she became a pastor in the Mexican conference. A few years later, God broadened her horizon even more, leading her to become the North Mexican Conference's first missionary to Ecuador.

A dynamic and effective leader, Eunice heads up our FM work in all of Ecuador. She pastors a church in downtown Quito and oversees five other churches in the capital as well as three churches in and around Esmeraldas on the coast. Eunice works closely alongside our Ecuador ICCM National Coordinator, María Belén Mejía, to help the program

reach its full potential.

Regularly witnessing the positive, far-reaching effects that Christian sponsorship has on children, I am no longer surprised when a current leader tells me, "I was sponsored as a child."

ICCM walks alongside children, helping them grow physically, academically, emotionally, socially, spiritually.

And ICCM helps children and youth enter the exciting, often uncharted territory, of dreaming together — exploring interests and abilities, potential and possibilities toward a bright future filled with purpose. Just ask Eunice!

*<http://blog.acton.org/archives/51866-does-international-child-sponsorship-work.html>



Pastor Eunice

Chitra (India) and Jean Marc (Haiti) share how child sponsorship impacted their lives in "50 Years of Love in Action" a 9 minute video. Watch it at www.childcareministries.org/media/index.php?type=video&showID=101