

Here Today, in Children of Hope School Tomorrow

by Paul Healy

Sometimes the decision about which children to take in can be difficult for our staff. But having an asset like our Children of Hope School makes things easier, and allows us to take some risks, and to know that the children we take in will be given acceptance, understanding and the best possible chance to learn.



Teacher Cris saw lots of potential and expressed eagerness to bring Andrew to Children of Hope School.

Andrew came to live at CSC recently. He had been in a public school where he previously lived, and had been struggling in his learning. Our teachers did an assessment, let him spend a few days in the class of Teacher Cris, and observed his learning style and classroom demeanor. While he was certainly behind for his age, Cris saw lots of potential and expressed eagerness to bring him to Children of Hope School and give him lots of attention and extra help. We believe that he will make great progress in the months to come.

Because our school is designed primarily for the needs of our CSC children, we can be flexible in admitting and working with new students like Andrew. For one thing, we can enroll them in school as soon as they are admitted to the shelter. Andrew was ad-

mitted on a Thursday and began school on Friday. In public and private schools here he would have had to wait until the next school year to begin.

Andrew discovered very quickly that our school is a bright and happy place, where students are met at their point of need and ability. Teachers are loving and encouraging, and there are lots of books,

computers and visual aids to help make school a fun place to be and a great place to learn. And because we have a great ratio of teachers to students, we can immediately offer a student like Andrew individualized instruction and extra help where needed.

CSC is all about changing lives. We take in children who need love, attention and someone to believe in them. We build them up physically, emotionally and spiritually. And we work together as counselors, child care workers, house parents, social workers, therapists and teachers to help them reach their potential in life.

Education is always a huge component of this task. Our Children of Hope School's inclusive nature provides immediate

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*Every child
deserves a
family.*



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CSC doesn't feel like a big organization. That's part of what I love about us. We're this tight-knit place where people gather together to love up needy children. There's a familiarity here. We're still sort of "mom and pop."

And yet, did you know we have 127 employees? It takes a lot of staff to make CSC go. The number 127 means it's not just the kids who depend on us. There are a lot of families relying on livelihoods earned at CSC. The number gives me a heavy sense of responsibility.

Every so often someone will ask how we can justify having 127 employees to serve 90-95 children. It's a fair question. The answer has to do with having our own school, a full staff of teachers and three shifts of childcare workers. Add to that the counselors, social workers, house parents, facilities crew and clothes washers. We're at 127 for a reason!

If we wanted to cut corners I'll confess that we wouldn't have to be at 127. We could get by with 115, or maybe fewer, but we owe it to the children to have as many as we do.

This picture says it better than I can. This



is an average morning in one of our homes. The older kids have gone off to school and our "aunties" are investing time in the younger kids. Look at all the one-on-one investment there. These children need the individual attention they're getting. It can help them attach to loved ones for the rest of their lives.

I suppose CSC isn't so little anymore; 127 certainly isn't a small number, and it represents a world of difference to some precious kids.



CSC is Home:

Rescuing, Caring, Placing and Welcoming Back

For many of our current and former CSC residents, "home" has lots of different meanings. Home before CSC might have meant a place on the street,



or a shanty in a Cebu slum area. For some, their first home was a place of sickness, despair and fear.

For some, CSC was the first real home that they knew. It is a place of love, understanding and hope, where good food and medicines are dispensed by caring workers who become their substitute family.

Most of our children go to adoptive homes, where they have a second chance at life in a family. These families might be small or large. Some children are adopted in the Philippines

or go to families in North America, Europe or Asia. Adoption is the hope of just about all of our children - a longing for a family of their own.

And home takes on a very special significance for former residents who want to return to the Philippines to experience the country of their birth, and, in some cases, to try and reconnect with birth families. In returning to CSC they find staff and workers who



remember them, who cared for them while they were here, and who will always consider them a part of the CSC family. In spite of being separated by years and miles, this is home!

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quality education for children like Andrew, and helps build self-esteem and confidence. And it also helps prepare them for whatever will come next after CSC.

For the past 15 years, CHS has been a great tool in enabling us to say "yes" to many children whom we might otherwise have not been able to take in. What a blessing to the ministry and to the children whose minds have been opened and blessed there.

*You can sponsor a Day of Hope at our Children of Hope School.
For details go to our website at www.cscshelter.org.*

Our Philippine Partners in Child Welfare



The Philippine Inter-Country Adoption Board is the central authority for the placement of all Filipino children through inter-country adoption. The Board is the policy-making authority for inter-country adoption and sets guidelines for selecting and matching prospective adoptive parents and verifies that a child is qualified for adoption. The Board makes the final decisions on adoption applications and matching proposals.

ICAB works with adoption agencies from many different countries around the world, and with child-caring agencies throughout the Philippines. Someone from CSC goes to the ICAB offices in Quezon City to select families for our children from their roster of approved homes, and to meet with the matching committee to justify our choices and establish a priority family for each child. CSC has placed nearly 500 children through inter-country adoption.



The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the government agency that licenses and accredits our programs and services in the Philippines. We work both with the Regional Office in Cebu City and the National Bureau of Program Management and Standards. CSC has been a licensed agency in the Philippines since 1985.

Throughout our history we have worked with the DSWD for legal matters relating to our case management, and for consultation on complicated cases. The DSWD's Program Management Bureau handles local adoptions, so we go there to participate in local adoption matching conferences. DSWD also processes the abandonment cases involving our children.



The Philippine Department of Education (DepED) licenses our Children of Hope School. Our school has been licensed by DepED since 1999. All public and private schools in the Philippines are under the Department of Education and must have a license in order to operate. DepED conducts occasional inspections of our school, and will often send representatives to speak at our graduation ceremonies. They also hold workshops and continuing education opportunities for our teachers and school administrators.

CSC has always had a commitment to working within the system and following the rules and regulations of government agencies as we go about our ministry in the Philippines.

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CSC's ministry to homeless children in the Philippines is greatly enhanced by our partnership with many non-government organizations (NGO's). These agencies make and accept referrals of children, provide technical assistance to our social workers and nurses, and, in some cases, provide Christian fellowship and inspiration to our staff and children.

Christian child-caring agencies like Sonshine Corner, Christ for Asia, Happy Horizons and Rainbow Orphanage have taken in children that CSC can not admit or continue to care for. CSC also receives referrals from a large number of NGOs, including the Franciscan Sisters, the Sisters of Charity and other Catholic agencies in Cebu and surrounding islands.

One agency that has been a blessing to CSC over the years is Glory Reborn, a birthing center in Cebu City founded by David and Hilary Overton. They are an amazing Christian couple who help hundreds of women every year, particularly those who are impoverished and could not afford to give birth in a decent medical facility. They occasionally refer babies to us when mothers are unable to care for them.

*God bless our partners in
ministry to children in
Cebu City!*



The Association of Child Caring Agencies (ACCAP) of the Philippines was first organized in 1991 as the Child Care and Placement Sector of the National Council of Social Development. In 1992, its members saw the need to form a group among child-caring and placing agencies to advocate for the welfare of the abandoned, neglected, and abused children and those with special needs.

CSC is a charter member of ACCAP, which has a membership of 70 child-caring and placing agencies nationwide, and several foreign adoption agencies as associate members. Its work is being carried out by member organizations that are licensed and accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development to operate as child caring and placement agencies. Mitch Ohlendorf, Cebu Executive Director, has served on the ACCAP Board of Directors.



JULIET is six months old. She arrived at CSC when she was six weeks old. She is a happy, content and beautiful baby girl who loves to eat! Juliet loves to interact with everyone. She is

very popular with all the older kids in her home because she loves to smile, giggle and babble with them.

MARK VINCENT

is ten years old. He arrived in late November. Mark Vincent lived a very difficult life before coming to CSC. He has good reason for his struggles with trusting people. We did not see a genuine smile from him for nearly a month. Mark Vincent has learned that he can trust us to meet his needs, and now he smiles on a daily basis. He has also become quite fond of hugs! He has changed so much in the four months he has been with us, and we are excited to see him relax and learn to enjoy life as a ten-year-old boy.



JOHN PAUL was six days old when he came to live with us in January. He is a very handsome little guy. He is exceptionally alert and aware

of his surroundings, he seems to be watching and learning even at his young age. He was our first child admitted in the year 2013.

MARY is two months old. She came to us when she was two weeks old. She has been healthy and is growing fast. She's obviously trying hard to keep up with her friend Juliet.



ANDREW is our newest family member. He moved in on March 14th. He is seven years old and has lived all his life in a small orphanage on another island. We are excited about the potential that we



see in Andrew. He is excited to have all the opportunities that he sees others getting here at CSC. He has jumped right into all the playground activities and has been cooperative in school.

We are anxious to get to know Andrew better and look forward to watching him grow and develop!

JHAYCOB is five years old. He came to us as a severely abused and malnourished three-year-old. Jhaycob has learned that life can be something to enjoy. He had no idea how to play when he came to us, and would flinch and expect pain whenever there was fast movement around him. He is now playing and even



being silly at times. He loves to have a toy to carry with him or while aboard on one of our many riding toys. He struggles with cooperation and with simple academic challenges in preschool, but he has learned that he is loved and cherished at CSC! We are confident other progress will come.



Our **SUPER SEVEN** have been with us for three years! **Margie** (14), **MaeAnn** (12), **Manny** (11), **Marco** (10), **Merry Sheila** (8), **Mark Anthony** (6) and **Madelyn** (4) are a group of amazing kids. Margie is a great big sister. MaeAnn is a very diligent prayer warrior. Manny is a whiz at chess. Marco has leadership potential. Merry Sheila does very well in academics. Mark Anthony loves to sing and entertain us. Madelyn is convinced that she is 14 years old...not 4. A few of the kids have some areas of struggle but overall are progressing well in all aspects. They pray for an adoptive family every night, and they also pray for their birth mother to be cared for while they are not there to help her. Amazing kids!

Pray for us as we look over our long referral list and decide who to admit now, who to place on our waiting list and who to refer to another child caring agency. These decisions are life-altering ones for the children.

CSC TOUCHES THE WORLD



During the past 18 months CSC children have been placed in seven different countries, joining families in the United States, Canada, Finland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Australia and the Philippines. Nine other countries have CSC children as well, making a total of 16 nations around the world. Our former children speak many languages and participate in various cultures and traditions. We rejoice in how God has opened up the whole world to our children, from the Arctic Circle of Norway to the beaches of Australia and New Zealand. May they bless their families, their communities, their churches and their Lord.

Jill Grasley Joins Stateside Staff

A lot of special people make CSC happen, including people who give, people who care for the children and people who pray. Some are right there in Cebu while others give of their time from far away, including those who serve in our U.S. office in Minnesota. Without them, the care in Cebu could not happen.

In less than 10 years, CSC's budget has more than doubled--growing from \$915,000 to \$1,890,000. CSC has expanded programs, but much of the growth has been needed to counter-balance the devaluing U.S. dollar. We simply need more dollars to keep doing what we do in Cebu.

The U.S. office that manages those dollars has consisted of two full-time employees and one part-timer for more than 10 years. The time has come for someone to focus full-time on the fund development that provides our children with a home.

Enter our newest team member: Jill Grasley. Jill has joined CSC as Development Officer. We are thrilled to have her on the team and have been praying for the position for many months. Jill is an answer to prayer!

In just her second week of work, she hopped on a plane to Cebu with her husband Michael to take part in life at the shelter and engage in meetings with the field staff, Matt Buley and board member Gordie Dean. She and Mike had a wonderful time!



Jill was employed at Crossroads Adoption Services in Minnesota for over 12 years. She assisted families through the adoption process, including several CSC families. Jill has focused the last several years on fundraising, through event management, grant writing, donor cultivation and social media. We're looking forward to having her skills and background at CSC.

Jill received her bachelor's degree in social work from Cedarville University in Ohio and her master's degree in social work from the University of Minnesota. She and her family are involved in Grace Church of Roseville, MN. Jill is a youth volunteer and their family is active in a small group. Mike and Jill have three girls- Calli (12), Miranda (10) and Brooklyn (1). We are so excited to welcome Jill and her family to the CSC family!

Annual Banquet

The CSC Annual Banquet will be on April 20 at Bethel University in Arden Hills, Minnesota. Seating begins at 6:00 with the festivities starting at 6:30. The evening will include updates on the ministry in Cebu, a video from Cebu, introductions of adoptive families, great music featuring former CSC residents, and good food, humor, surprises and fellowship. The theme is "This is Home." There is no charge for the banquet, but an offering will be taken for the ministry. Reservations are required and can be made at www.cscshelter.org, or by calling the CSC office at 651-493-1551.

Adoptive Families Party

Friday, April 19 is the night for our Adoptive Families Party in Shoreview, MN. This will be a night of reunion and fun for former CSC residents and their families. There will be snacks, recreation opportunities, and lots of CSC friends to share experiences and catch up on developments in their lives. Please make reservations through the CSC office.

Benefit Dinner

The Cebu Children's Shelter Society of Canada will be holding their Annual Benefit Dinner for CSC on Friday, May 3 at 6:00 in the Bakerview MB Multipurpose Centre (gym), 2285 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC. The theme this year is "Forget-Me-Not." CCSSC is an all volunteer organization in Canada that has been supporting the ministry in Cebu for more than 20 years.

Our CSC Circle of Prayer

Prayer

1. Pray for our house parents, who have difficult jobs and lots of responsibility.
2. Pray for Jill Grasley as she begins her new job at CSC.
3. Little Carl John continues to struggle health-wise. Pray for wisdom for his doctors and our medical team.
4. Pray for families for our children who continue to wait.

Praises

1. For Jacob and Ginda, two of our residents with special needs, who have both been healthy and happy lately in the Duterte Home.
2. For families for a couple of our sibling groups who have recently left.
3. For Brad and Kirstin McAuley, CSC volunteers in Cebu, who make videos for our website and Facebook page.

Website

The CSC website is a great place for news, blogs, pictures and videos for those who desire lots of information about the ministry in Cebu. Go to www.cscshelter.org to see what is going on right now at CSC. We are also on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cscshelter.



P. O. Box 247, Cambridge, MN 55008

Change Service Requested

President: Matthew Buley

Field Director: Paul Healy

Cebu Executive Director: Mitch Ohlendorf

Medical Director: Marlys Healy

Child Development Director: Sandy Swanson

Outreach Director: Ruth Ohlendorf

School Consultant: Shari Reasoner

Teacher: Amy Luck

Teacher: Tammy Vosika

Asst. Director: Joel Reasoner

Child Development: Lindsay Hoeft

Development Officer: Jill Grasley

US Office Manager: Roger Anderson

Administrative Assistant: Brenda Leaf

Editor: Paul Healy

Cebu Address: Box 178, Cebu City

6000 Philippines

Cebu Children's Shelter Society of Canada

P.O. Box 141, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z5

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Phone: 651-493-1551

E-mail: cscusa@cscshelter.org

www.cscshelter.org

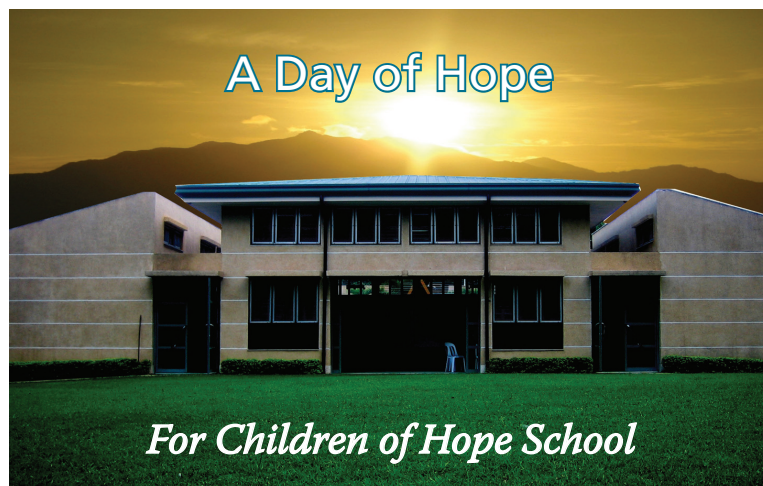
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Children of Hope School has been an important part of the ministry of CSC since 1998. We provide quality education to our children and others from the community. To help us fund this amazing school we are offering our friends an opportunity to underwrite a day of school operations - a program we call **A Day of Hope.**

For a gift of \$350, individuals, families, church groups, civic organizations or former CHS students can support the school program for a day, paying the salaries for our teachers and therapists, electricity and other utilities, and school materials. We announce the sponsorships on the CSC website, and send a certificate to the person being honored by the gift, should the donor choose to recognize a significant person with his or her sponsorship. We send the sponsor a special recognition from Cebu.

Check out the CSC website at cscshelter.org, under "School" for more information or to make a Day of Hope gift, or call the CSC office at 651-493-1551. The donor(s) may specify a particular day for the sponsorship, on a first-come-first-served basis.