



Kenya Children's News

www.kenyachildrencentres.com

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We would like to sincerely thank everyone that has raised funds for the children in recent months.

These are just a few examples:

Cool Water

The customers of the wonderful Memsaab Restaurant in Nottingham raised over £12,000 to fund a new water harvesting system at Ngoingwa. The large roof on each building collects gallons of water during the rainy season.



Now we can use it to provide essential water during the drought each year and protect the health of the children with a clean supply for drinking and washing.

Warborough Festival

Every year in July the Warborough Festival in South Oxfordshire provides



four days of music and entertainment. This year they selected Kenya Children Centres as their charity and raised £1500.

Miracles do happen

A message from Alice Jukes:

When I started the "Centre for Good Future" ten years ago with just four orphan girls, I wanted to improve their life chances but I never imagined that one of them would become a lawyer! Nevertheless courage and determination has borne fruit for one little girl who had a dream.

Since she came into our care at 8 years old, Jerusha has always said that she wanted to become a lawyer. At first, I thought she didn't know what she was talking about but I encouraged her to do her best in school. When she was due to sit her primary school exams, I asked her what she wanted to do with her life and she told me again "I want to be a lawyer"! Jerusha worked really hard at Secondary School and earned good marks – and she still insisted that she wanted to be a lawyer. Finally she passed her "A" levels and won a place at Nairobi University Law School. Her dream was realized when a generous donor offered to pay for her tuition fees, accommodation and living expenses. I can't quite believe what she has achieved - but it's convinced me that miracles really do happen!

Here is *Jerusha (holding green and white jumper) leaving for University helped by Josephine (one of our social workers), Ruth and Margaret*



Fly Little Birds

Emma Greaves is a young film director. She worked at Ngoingwa for 6 weeks in the summer filming a documentary.. Here are her reflections on the trip.

This year I was awarded a small amount of funding to make a film in Kenya, with the aim of promoting 'an alternative view of the developing world.' Having previously made films with young people, the prospect of making a film at the "Centre for Good Future" with the older girls was a thrilling challenge. Before arriving in Kenya I had already decided that I wanted to make a film, not about African orphans, but about young people and the universal challenges they face. Jerusha and Alice, the two "stars" in the film made this challenge much easier than I ever thought it could be.

The thing that astonished me the most (and what you discover within just a couple of nights of staying there), is that these girls really are just normal kids. This probably sounds obvious - but I can't emphasise it enough. They love Beyonce and Rhianna; they do each other's hair, talk about clothes, celebrities, boys, bodies, what they want to do in the future. The discussions I had with them were almost identical to chats I have had with young people of the same age in the UK. Some girls are more confident, some quieter and as expected the ones aged from 13-16 are generally the most stropky, exactly like their UK counterparts! The centre has a great, if somewhat hectic vibe about it. Always noisy, always chatter, music and laughter. At times it made it a difficult place to film - try recording a conversation whilst 15 girls are running through echoing corridors in the background! But it was a delightful sign that the centre really is a warm and joyful place to be...and perhaps most importantly, that these girls, despite their often unimaginably tragic pasts, have transcended their difficult start to life and are behaving as normal teenagers and children should do.

A Wonderful Wedding Gift

David and Nicole Mickey were married in September and held their celebration at a smart club in Hove. They decided that they would ask their guests to make a donation to Kenya Children Centres rather than receive wedding gifts themselves. More than £1,500 was given towards the cost of fitting out another family unit for 10 girls at Ngoingwa.

Christmas at Ngoingwa

The girls had a great Christmas. Santa Claus turned up to give the girls their presents. The each received a £10 gift and a Christmas card from their sponsor and then were taken to the market to spend some of it. Among other things, they each received a new pair of pyjamas and some slippers from two of our supporters.



You can see some of the little ones in their new nightwear in the photo.

Would you like to help us educate the girls?

Education is the crucial factor in giving the girls a positive future. In Kenya everyone has to pay for school fees, uniforms, books, food and transport to and from school.



It's the best investment we can make but we rely on "Patrons" to help us to meet these costs by making a regular monthly donation. It would be wonderful if you could support the girls in this way. Any amount however small would help to secure their future. Sign up online at: www.kenyachildrentcentres.com/page4.html

I stayed at the centre for two and a half weeks and then Laura the camerawoman came out to join me for the final three. We often tried to imagine what an experience of making a documentary would be like in a children's centre in the UK. We decided it would be markedly different. None of the girls at Ngoingwa were ever aggressive, rude or even particularly naughty. I am sure that children in the UK, living in care would not have been able to show the same amount of respect and kindness that these girls showed to us and to each other. This is an achievement that the staff, KCC Trustees and supporters should be immensely proud of.

My film, titled FLY LITTLE BIRDS, is almost finished and with any luck will be hitting this year's film festival circuit and hopefully with some success! An exploration of femininity, adolescence and the challenges girls face as they 'come of age' in Kenya, the film is a testament to how well adapted and inspirational young people like Alice and Jerusha are. I cannot thank them, the other girls and staff at the centre enough for showing such kindness towards us and for so generously allowing us into their lives.

Here is Emma being introduced to Kenya's Birthday Cake eating ritual at Ann Njeri's Birthday – it looks quite dangerous!



A visit from the Bank of Africa

Mr. Samuel Maina Kariuki, the manager of Bank of Africa, visited the Centre with his marketing team in October. They presented us with sacks of maize and rice, gallons of



oil and a selection of other food and essentials. Asked why he chose to support our Ngoingwa Centre, he said that in his role he is aware of most activities around Thika and he knows of several similar organizations. He said "We chose to support Kenya Children Centres because we were so impressed by the quality of your work ..."

He also gave the girls some advice "the most important thing you will inherit from KCC is education – and that is the key to your future success"

Fruits of the Soil

Here are the girls picking cabbage leaves for dinner. Nguigi, our gardener, has planted a wonderful variety of vegetables and fruits for the girls, including pumpkins, melons, bananas, spinach, onions, greens and tomatoes. The older girls are very



good cooks (ed. I can vouch for that!) and now they use fresh home grown vegetables to supplement our food supplies. Nguigi plans to start a gardening club for the younger girls so they can learn how to grow their own food. We've also got several rabbits at the Centre – they are fattening up nicely and will probably be joining the vegetables in the pot soon!

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Thanks to all our Sponsors and Patrons for your support. Wilf Eaton

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