

QUITO PROGRAM

OSSO began in Cuenca in May 1999 and expanded to Quito in March 2001, and we've had volunteers there year-round since then. We work with over 150 children housed within four orphanages and one hospital in and about Quito. There are 13 long-term volunteers and the Project Directors (and their family) living in a home referred to as the OSSO House.

Angel (pronounced ON-hel) and Jenny Chicaiza, from Ecuador, are the Project Directors. They are wonderful people who have been involved with OSSO since 2001 providing transportation, and since February 2004 as Project Directors and are LDS. They have three children, Grace who was born in 1998, Jared who was born in 1999 and Maibe who was born in 2005. They're involved on a daily basis with the program and the volunteers. Click here to view a picture of them: www.orphanagesupport.org/information/Chicaizas.JPG.

We also have an Assistant Project Director for Quito who also lives in the OSSO House, is from the U.S. and is also LDS. Her name is Ashley Nilsen, and she's been involved with OSSO since November 2004. She did two stints with OSSO as a Sites Coordinator (a volunteer leader position), worked in the Rexburg office for a year as the Volunteer & Travel Coordinator and then moved to Quito to work for us there in June 2007. She has guardianship of a little boy that she's in the process of adopting. She's involved on a daily basis with the program and the volunteers.

ORPHANAGE DESCRIPTIONS (the real orphanage names are not put here for privacy reasons)

Orphanage "A": We've been working in this orphanage since 2001. This orphanage has 25-35 infants and young toddlers and is run by Catholic nuns. This is our main site and we give the most service here (number of hours we spend here). Our volunteers provide care here six days a week, from 7 am to noon and from 2-6 pm, as well as taking turns working 13-hour night shifts every night of the week. When children are too ill to be cared for at the orphanage, our volunteers do "hospital shifts" so the sick child has someone with them 24 hours/day. There are also around 50 children ages 2-19 here that are divided up into "families" and live in separate Casas (Homes) (all within the orphanage grounds). Our volunteers give extra help with the youngest of this group four afternoons a week.

Orphanage "B": We've worked at this orphanage since 2002. This orphanage is for about 35-45 children (infants up through high school age) and is run by Catholic nuns. The children are divided up into "families" and live in five separate apartments (all within the orphanage grounds), each with a "mom." Each apartment has a range of ages of the children in that "family." Our volunteers go here two to three times a week to do activities with them, read to them, play outside with them and give them much needed love and attention.

Orphanage "C": We've worked at this orphanage since 2001. This is an orphanage (a nonprofit organization directed by a Catholic priest) of two separate houses for moderately severe but mobile handicapped children. Both houses are outside Quito's city limits. Each house has around four children and our volunteers go a couple times a week to each house to give the workers a reprieve as well as to do therapies and activities to stimulate and interact with these precious children.

Orphanage “D”: We’ve been working at this orphanage since 2001. This orphanage, run by Catholic nuns, is home to only a handful of girls, but they have two other homes that house a total of around 50-70 girls, and many of these girls come to the home we visit for school and for us to do activities with them. Most of the girls are between ages 5-19 and many were previously living on the street. Our volunteers go once or twice a week to teach these girls and do activities with them as well as providing them with good role models and the love and attention they deserve. This orphanage tries very hard to support itself by making cute handmade paper cards (see our website under Products).

Orphanage “E”: This is a free children’s hospital very close to OSSO’s house where we often help out at, whether it’s sending volunteers to be with children whose parents can’t stay with them or who have been abandoned or providing funds to pay for urgent medical tests and procedures (often life-saving). We also occasionally send volunteers here to do activities with the children to raise their spirits despite their serious medical conditions. The care is free to the children and makes it possible for them to receive medical care. (This is the hospital referenced under Orphanage “A.”)

In addition to the volunteer support described above, OSSO also provides varying levels of monetary support and physical donations to each of these orphanages. Physical donations are things such as food, clothes, educational supplies, diapers, etc., and monetary support goes toward things like paying for extra childcare workers; social workers to get the children’s paperwork done (so they can hopefully be adopted sooner), orphanage building improvements/repairs, teachers/tutors, etc. Items purchased or collected by OSSO are distributed by OSSO to the orphanages based on first-hand evaluation of need and first-hand accounting of appropriate usage, which is also applicable in evaluating the need for monetary support.