Theology News & Notes

Fuller Seminary Publications

Fall 2005

Theology, News and Notes - Vol. 52, No. 03

Fuller Theological Seminary

Kara Powell

Douglas McConnell

Pamela Ebstyne King

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/tnn

Part of the Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons

Fuller Theological Seminary
Fall 2005

THEOLOGY
NEWS & NOTES

The Church's Mission to Children at Risk

The Church's Mission to Children at Risk

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Lk 2:7)

EVEN WITH the most vivid theological imagination, few among us could actually construct such a dissonant scenario. The one who "did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited" (Phil 2:6) accepted the lowly state of a baby, thereby, through the event of the incarnation, adding a glorious new dimension to the dignity of the human race created in the image of God.[1] The fact of the Christ child calls us to once again look carefully at our understanding of the place of children in the kingdom.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the population of the world was 1.6 billion people.[2] By the close of the century, the population had grown over 3.5 times to 6.03 billion people and 5 years later it stands at 6.54 billion.[3] The reductions in infant mortality and spikes in the fertility rates in the Two-thirds World are changing the face of the earth and, more specifically, the context of world mission.

Along with the dramatic growth of the global population, these demographic changes have inevitably impacted children. There are so many horrifying statistics that the magnitude leaves one numb. Take just four areas as examples:

- Over one billion children are suffering from one or more forms of extreme deprivation (UNICEF, 2005).
- 246 million children are child laborers (*Facts on Child Labor*, International Labor Organization, 2003).
- 250,000 children and young people are infected with HIV/AIDS every month (*State of the World's Children*, UNICEF, 2000).
- 300,000 young people under 18 are exploited as child soldiers (UN Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, 2003).

If one-sixth of the world's population are children at risk of at least one form of extreme deprivation, our agenda for the Church and missions is due for a radical overhaul. Toward this end, Patrick McDonald was used by God to form Viva Network, an international movement of Christians committed to assuring better care to more chil-

dren.[4] This group of dedicated, young, well-educated people began by challenging the ignorance and lack of resources they found, and God has mightily used Viva Network to raise awareness and impact the evangelical missions agenda.

As Viva Network grew, they began to convene conferences to address areas of pressing need. In 1998, a conference in England began work on a curriculum to "train the trainers." The curriculum developed at the gathering has been implemented in the new concentration on Mission to Children at Risk in the School of Intercultural Studies. In September 2005, twelve members of the Fuller community will attend the Cutting Edge Conference 2005 in the UK.

In an attempt to grapple with a biblical basis for work with children at risk, Viva Network gathered a working group to identify central biblical themes. The intent was to overcome a tendency by evangelicals to draw exclusively from key passages, especially those found in the synoptic gospels (Mt 18:1–6; Mk 9:33–37; Lk 9:46–48, and Mt 19:13–15; Mk 10:13–16; Lk 18:15–17). Though such an approach at least turns to the Scriptures, the Bible is rich with potential evangelical responses that are ignored. Three faculty members and four doctoral students representing all three schools of Fuller Seminary and the Center for Youth and Family Ministry will participate in this group.

There are other efforts underway that deal in depth with the theological and biblical considerations of children. The Child Theology Movement has drawn scholars to four international conferences, producing very helpful papers dealing with a range of theological considerations.[5] Another effort is being lead by Professor Marcia Bunge of Valparaiso University. The first book edited by Bunge, *The Child in Christian Thought*, was part of the Religion, Marriage, and Family series published by Eerdmans. The second volume will include a chapter by Fuller's Marianne Meye Thompson.

In this issue of *Theology News & Notes,* we chose biblical, missiological, and psychological introductions that provide the foundations upon which we are building our approach to the issue of children. Kara Powell gives a helpful review of Jesus' teaching on the role of children in faith communities. In it she has captured the primary areas of concern and then brought our attention to the need for a review of our own

church practice. Then an article by Pam King introduces the new field of "positive youth development" with its emphasis on developmental assets.

Having established some theoretical frames, the remaining articles are focused on areas of significant risk. In the first, a team from World Vision provides an introduction to the impact of HIV/AIDS on children. Building on outstanding work in this area, the team identifies the impact on children and an outline of responses. In the next article, Mark and Christa Crawford tackle the disgusting world of human trafficking, with its increasing focus on children and teens. Writing from Southeast Asia, where they serve in a holistic ministry to victims of trafficking and prostitution, their article provides significant insights into this global crisis.

Psychologist Cynthia Eriksson writes of the problem of child soldiers, drawing on her work in Liberia and recounting traumatic experiences as a way of describing the magnitude of a problem that goes far beyond the shores of the African continent. Dave Scott, a member of Viva Network and a Fuller doctoral student, then provides a solid introduction into the global problem of street children. Reviewing the problem and Christian responses, Scott provides a helpful overview with important lessons for the involvement of churches and missions.

The last article, by Jude Tiersma Watson, is an insider's view into the streets of one of the world's major cities—Los Angeles. Tiersma Watson commutes to her office on the Fuller campus from her home in the inner city. Known for her passionate insights into urban ministry, she provides a front row seat to the risks facing the kids in U.S. cities. No stranger to violence, she portrays the dignity and challenge of being a youth at risk. Her conclusion reminds us that these are our children, and a responsibility we must embrace.

We hope that you will be informed by our work in this emerging field and challenged to review your own involvement. We welcome others to join the network of practitioners and scholars dedicated to ensuring that we obey Jesus' command: "Let the little children come to me" (Mk 10:14). ■

ENDNOTES

1. Jürgen Moltmann, *On Human Dignity: Political Theology and Ethics*, trans. M. Douglas Meeks (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 20.
2. "Global Population at a Glance: 2002 and Beyond" (March 2004) http://www.census.gov/ipc/prod/wp02/wp02-1.pdf (accessed July 29, 2005).
3. David Levine, "World Population Clock," http://www.ibiblio.org/lunarbin/worldpop/index.html (accessed July 29, 2005).
4. See: www.viva.org.
5. See: www.childtheology.org.

A Scriptural Look at Children: A Tale of Two Tables

I REMEMBER the Thanksgiving it happened: At thirteen I was the oldest of fifteen grandchildren, and I was promoted to the Major Leagues in my family—my grandmother invited me to move my plate from the "kids table" in the family room to the "adults table" in the dining room.

At our holiday gatherings we had two tables because all of the kids and adults couldn't fit in one room. Yet looking back on this family "tradition" of two tables, I can't help but wonder: given how infrequently all of the aunts, uncles, and cousins gathered together, what were we missing out on when we ate separately?

We could probably ask the same question not just about holiday dinners, but about our churches, too. Many churches and Christian communities in various cultures have made similar decisions to segregate children from adults, at least to some degree. I realize that there are developmental differences between three-year-olds, thirteen-year-olds, and forty-three-year-olds. But perhaps in our well-intentioned efforts to meet various age groups' specific needs, we miss out on the richness that comes from being together.

If your community fails to include and appreciate children in the midst of your life together, what will you be missing?

This question is perhaps even more significant in the context of children at risk. Many churches and Christian communities, while desiring that children at risk be exposed to the gospel, have assumed it should happen in settings outside of their congregations (i.e., through parachurch and mission organizations). The irony is that the children we designate "at-risk" often lack ongoing relationships with parents and other caring adults. Thus, the children who are least likely to be included in our intergenerational community gatherings are perhaps the same children who could benefit the most from them.

My goals in this article are twofold: first, to discuss Jesus' teachings about the role of children in faith communities, and second to provide snapshots of how children at risk can be better appreciated and integrated. It's quite possible that we miss out on opportunities far more rich than gathering together for meals when we fail to welcome and embrace children at all risk levels in our communities.

An Exploration of Select Gospel Texts

Because of the multiple accounts of Jesus' interactions with children, this article will focus the bulk of its attention on those gospel accounts. While many of us are somewhat familiar with the most often quoted passages describing Jesus' interactions with children, a closer examination of their context and their complexity makes Jesus' teachings all the more revolutionary.

The View of Children in the Old Testament

To better understand the context underlying these New Testament texts, we need to start by examining the Old Testament view of children. In the Old Testament Jewish tradition, children were viewed as a divine gift and sign of God's blessing. An abundance of children was equated with an abundance of blessing and joy (Ps 127:3–5; 128:3–6). Childlessness was wretched and Old Testament Jews took drastic and unusual measures to overcome it (Gen 30:1–22; 1 Sam 1; Deut 25:5–10). Children were a central component of God's promise to Abraham to bless him and make him a "great nation" by providing him with descendants as innumerable as the dust of the earth and the stars of the heavens (Gen 12:2; 13:16; 15:5).[1]

There are some negative references toward children in the Old Testament, such as Elisha's calling down a curse on children who were jeering at him (2 Kgs 2:23–24) and the reference to the "folly" which is "bound up in the heart of child" (Prov 22:15a).[2] However, in general, children were so esteemed that Jews could fathom that the long-awaited messiah would be born as a baby (Is 7:14).[3]

The View of Children in the First Century

At the time of the writing of the Gospels, in many ways the cultural pendulum had swung toward a more negative view of children. In the Greco-Roman world, children were among the least valued members of society. Harsh discipline, abandonment, and infanticide were allowable practices if they were the wishes of the child's father.[4]

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, "The law-giver of the Romans gave virtually full power to the father over his son, whether he thought proper to imprison him, to scourge him, to put him in chains and keep him at work in the fields, or to put him to death."[5] Likely more common than this type of extreme treatment of children was the view that childhood was a training ground for adult life, not a significant stage of life in itself.[6]

Jesus' Entry as an Infant

In the midst of these mixed messages about the value of children, the Messiah entered the world as a newborn. Perhaps twenty centuries later, the radical nature of Jesus' entry as a baby has been somewhat obscured; yet, the fifth century patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, was so struck by the implications of this that he wrote, "I deny that God is two or three months old."[7]

Indeed it is difficult to imagine the fullness of the creator God contained in the smallness of a newborn. It becomes even more unfathomable given how children were viewed in the culture into which Jesus was born.

Jesus' Link between "Greatness" and Children

The radical nature of Jesus' birth is echoed in his radical perspective on greatness. In Luke 9:46, an argument breaks out among Jesus' disciples about who would be the greatest. The timing of this dispute makes sense in the overall context of Luke 9:28–43. In Luke 9:28–36, Jesus takes three disciples (Peter, James, and John—often referred to as the three closest to Jesus) up a mountain to pray. Perhaps the selection of those three and the exclusion of the other nine fueled feelings of jealousy and insecurity in those left behind. The fact that those who were left behind were unable to heal a demon-possessed boy likely made them feel even more inferior and resentful (Lk 9:37–43).

Knowing about the disciples' argument over greatness, Jesus takes a little child and has the child stand beside him. Then he teaches, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is the least among you all—he is the greatest."

Thus Jesus has placed two figures before the disciples: himself, whom they greatly respect, and a child, who would probably hold little intrinsic value in their eyes. The good news for the disciples is that greatness can be pursued and possessed. The bad news for the disciples is that greatness does not come in a manner familiar to them. It does not come from comparison with others, as they had assumed. It comes by welcoming a child, who, in being the least, somehow becomes the greatest. As Jesus often did, he shows that the kingdom of God is an upside-down kingdom with upside-down values.

In Greek, the verb Jesus uses for "welcome" is *dechomai*, which was often used in the context of showing hospitality to guests. Thus, it carries a certain connotation of servanthood. What makes this teaching all the more remarkable is that in the first century, taking care of children was a task generally fulfilled by members of the culture who were viewed as different, and even inferior, to the male disciples: women and slaves.[8] Thus Jesus was asking the disciples who had just been arguing about their individual greatness to take on a role requiring utmost humility.

Jesus' Link between Receiving the Kingdom and Children

It seems that the news of Jesus' good will toward children had spread, for in Luke 18:15 people bring babies to Jesus to have him touch them. Parents probably equated Jesus' touch with an act of blessing and they were eager for their children to receive that favor.

Apparently the disciples did not approve of this, as evident by their rebuke of those who had brought children to Jesus. Jesus, however, saw the situation quite differently. He calls the children to him and says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (Lk 18:15–17).

In Jesus' response to the disciples, he makes two important points. First, children are eligible to receive the kingdom. Second, they are not only eligible, but they are *models* of what it means to receive the kingdom. Of course, that begs an important question that Jesus doesn't explicitly answer: what does it mean to receive the kingdom of God like a little child? Some possibilities include a child's openness, willingness to trust, freedom from hypocrisy or pretension, conscious weakness, and readiness for dependence.[9] While the exact answer cannot be pinpointed, what is most relevant here is that chil- ▶▶

SYNOPSIS

Churches and ministries serving children at risk often overlook the benefits of intergenerational relationships. Yet Jesus' teachings and examples of ministries worldwide evidence the unique and valuable ministry contributions of children to the community.

Kara E. Powell, PhD, serves as assistant professor of youth and family ministry and executive director of the Center for Youth and Family Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary. Previously she was assistant professor of youth ministry and practical theology at Azusa Pacific University. In addition to her roles at Fuller Seminary, Kara volunteers in student ministries at Lake Avenue Church in Pasadena, CA. She has authored a number of books including *Help! I'm a Woman in Youth Ministry* (Zondervan, 2004), and *Mirror, Mirror* (Zondervan, 2003).

dren were most certainly an example for others who want to grow in their faith.

Jesus' Link between Worship and Children

While not generally as well known as the previous two Lukan texts, Matthew's account of Jesus at the temple sheds light on one reason to involve children in our faith communities. When Jesus enters the temple area, he drives out all who were trying to make a profit from temple worship and sacrifices. He overturns the tables of the money changers and the benches of those who were selling doves (Mt 21:12). He warns them, "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers'" (Mt 21:13). As Jesus heals the blind and the lame who have come to him, some children in the temple area start shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David" (Mt 21:15). The chief priests and teachers become indignant about the children's cries, possibly because they did not believe Jesus deserved such acclaim.

The religious leaders ask Jesus, "Do you hear what these children are saying?" (Mt 21:16a). Jesus answers by quoting Psalm 8:2, "Yes, have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'" (Matthew 21:16b). While it's possible that the children gathered did not fully understand the meaning of their shouts of praise, they are nonetheless validated and encouraged by Jesus' affirmation of the value of worshipping children. Those who had great religious training failed to see what children ably recognized: Jesus was the Son of David, and thus deserved great praise.

Snapshots of How to Fully Welcome Children at Risk into Faith Communities

Whether children are viewed as a way to welcome Jesus, as models of receiving the kingdom, or as valuable contributors to our worship, we cannot escape the underlying message of all three texts: Jesus values children and therefore we should too. In order to understand practical ways that we can begin to embody and communicate the importance of children at all risk levels in our community, we will turn to several sources (including Scripture), the relevant insights of other child-friendly organizations, and the contemporary experiences of churches worldwide.

Children Are Ministers, Too

Scripture is bursting with examples of the important ministry of children and youth including David, Esther, Josiah, and Jesus' own mother. While these are important illustrations of the powerful ministry of children, few of the children at risk you and I know will be kings, queens, or parents of the

Savior. So, is it possible for the children in more "ordinary" circumstances and positions to have a powerful impact in our communities?

We can answer that question with a resounding "yes" because of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, which stems largely from Paul's writings about first-century church community. In his letters, Paul uses the Greek term *ekklesia* for "church." Many of us today equate an *ekklesia* or a "church" with a physical location or building in which we gather for worship services—a concept foreign to Paul's view of *ekklesia*.[10] When Paul writes of a church, he means *people*, not locations.

An important element of these gatherings of people was their mutual ministry to each other through their spiritual gifts (described in Rom 12:1–8; 1 Cor 12:1–31; and Eph 4:1–13). Crucial to this article is the observation that not only does Paul not limit the spiritual gifts to a certain group of "leaders," but he also never limits them to believers of a certain age or maturity level. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that children at risk possess spiritual gifts. The gifts may be nascent, undeveloped, or blocked by the position of children in a society, but since children possess these gifts, they can (and should) be allowed to make valuable ministry contributions in our community.

Children Minister through Their Actions

This paper presents two practical ways for children to minister in and to their community. The first is through their actions. One way we've already seen that children's actions are an example of ministry is through worship. Whether it be by worshiping the Lord in song, art, dance, or music, the way that children praise the Lord is an important part of the way a community praises the Lord.

In addition to worship, children's prayers are another important way that they minister through their actions. According to C. Fuller, children's prayers are characterized by the following:

- a childlike faith that views the impossible as possible;
- hearts of incredible grace, compassion, and care;
- trust in God's faithful provision;
- forgiving hearts that keep short accounts;
- simple prayers that are direct and honest;
- a desire to be a participant in effecting positive change;
- hearing God speak without the barriers of spiritual jargon or adult rationalizations.[11]

An example of the powerful ministry of children's prayers can be seen in the description of Sim, an at-risk Cambodian child who has HIV:

Sim watched her parents die and, although she was sick

herself, she wanted to pray with others every day and attend church each week. She was five years old when she died, yet she had touched many people with her love and faith.[12]

In addition to their prayers and worship, children also help guide our faith communities by their advice and input. Whether it be through informal discussion with children or the formal inclusion of children on committees and leadership groups, children have a unique perspective that often goes unsolicited and unheard.[13] One particular method of involving children at risk is to seek their input as communities are designing, monitoring, and evaluating their programs and ministries.[14] Since these children will be affected by this work, they undoubtedly have input that could greatly maximize its effectiveness and impact.

One final action of children at risk that ministers to the community is their sharing of stories. Unfortunately, we have tended to act as if "children should be seen and not heard." Nathan Franbach from Wartburg Theological Seminary writes that, whether it be a conscious decision or a subconscious response, "Often we want to see a lot of kids running around our churches, we just don't want to hear them. . . . This sends a powerful message to kids—particularly when what so many kids want and need is to be heard."[15] Opportunities for children at risk to process their experiences and observations with adults are important not only for the community, but for the children themselves.

Children Minister through Their Being

Not only do children minister through their actions, they also minister by their very being. Merely including them can transform the tone of any community. For example, the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children (UNGASS) in 2002 included large numbers of children as official members of various delegations. Kofi Annan described the effects:

The children's presence transformed the atmosphere of the United Nations. Into our usually measured and diplomatic discussions, they introduced their passions, questions, fears, challenges, enthusiasm and optimism. They brought us their ideas, hopes and dreams. . . . And they contributed something only they could know: the experience of being young in the 21st century.[16]

Perhaps part of what changed the United Nations is described by the German preacher and theologian Freidrich Schleiermacher as children's "pure revelation of the divine." According to Schleiermacher, a child is "altogether in the moment . . . the past disappears for him, and of the future he

knows nothing—each moment exists only for itself."[17] Maybe the power of children's being also relates to what Roman Catholic theologian Karl Rahner calls children's "infinite openness."[18] While these theologians have different interpretations of what children uniquely bring to the community's pursuit of God, they agree that children's intrinsic attitudes are a source of powerful growth and change.

Finally, the presence of children ministers to the community because of the many ways we can learn deep theological truths as we observe and engage with them. We get a glimpse of the allure of sin as we watch children at risk wrestle with whether or not to obey the adults who care for and nurture them. We understand more about our deep dependence on God as we realize how much children at risk are dependent upon others for their very survival.

Conclusion

It's time—or rather past time—for all who are God's sons and daughters to gather and minister to each other in the midst of sharing life together. While at times it will be necessary, and maybe even recommended, for children and adults to be separate, many communities might want to consider greater cross-generational communication and integration. Just like when we eat dinner, at times it might be a bit more chaotic, but it's likely that we'll all walk away feeling more full and satisfied. ■

ENDNOTES

1 Judith Gundry-Volf, "To Such as These Belongs the Reign of God," *Theology Today* 56, no. 4 (2000): 470.
2 Ibid.
3 Robin Mass, "Christ as the *Logos* of Childhood: Reflections on the Meaning and the Mission of the Child," *Theology Today* 56, no. 4 (2000): 458–459.
4 Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, *Let the Children Come* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2003), 96–98.
5 Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Rom. Ant.* 2.26.4, as quoted in Judith M. Gundry-Volf in "The Least and the Greatest," in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 33.
6 Gundry-Volf, "The Least and the Greatest," 34.
7 Keith White, "Rediscovering Children at the Heart of Mission," in *Celebrating Children*, ed. Glenn Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2003), 192.
8 Gundry-Volf, "To Such as These Belongs the Reign of God," 475–476.
9 John Nolland, Luke 9:21–18:34, Word Bible Commentary 35B (Dallas: Word, 1993).
10 Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 35.
11 C. Fuller, *When Children Pray* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1998), as quoted in Josephine-Joy Wright, "Exploring and Releasing Children's Strengths, Gifts and Potential," *Celebrating Children*, ed. Glenn Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2003), 137–138.

A Missional Response to Children at Risk

EMMA WAS standing with her hands on the sides of the doorframe. A petite five-year-old can just touch both sides with a little stretching. "Emma—standing there, you look like Samson," her grandmother observed. With a bright smile she replied, "Hey, I know that story." After a moment of reflection, Emma continued, "Nanna, is that in the New Tournament or the Old Tournament?" Accustomed to such statements from her firstborn grandchild, she replied, "The Old Testament, Emma." Again a brief time of reflection was followed by another critical question, "Nanna, which is better, the Old Tournament or the New Tournament?"

Perhaps the greatest challenge for any scholar is to find the right questions. When it comes to the missiological issues surrounding children at risk, the questions are everything. And true to form, our little Emma is helping to clarify a long quest for us. When it comes to children, how do we understand their place in our theological framework? For if we are going to respond appropriately to the myriad of concerns raised by the subject of children at risk, we have to get the questions right. Emma's two questions will help in a missiological response. The first question is how do we find an appropriate response to the issues of AIDS orphans, trafficking of children, child soldiers, and street children in the Scriptures? Secondly, is there a particular response that more adequately engages our biblical understanding missionally?

SYNOPSIS

The pattern of care offered by the family of God is an expression of the transforming power of the gospel. The Church must embody the message of eternal hope in response to the life-threatening realities faced by children at risk.

Looking to the Scriptures

One must look no further than the first chapter of Genesis to find the presence of children in the design of humankind as male and female (v. 27). God gave the clear command to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28a). By the fourth chapter of Genesis, the command to humankind as male and female had begun. The story of the beginning of humankind reveals as Gunton puts it, "To be in the image of God is therefore to be in necessary relation to others so made."[1] With no alternative and no apology, the presence of children helps define the nature of humanity.

Beyond this statement of procreation, we find a mandate for the fabric of society given by design to all human beings. Known as the cultural mandate, God sets out the basic pattern for family (marriage and procreation), for work (subdue the earth), and for governing (dominion or rule). Taken together, these three aspects of the cultural mandate are a call to "all men and women to participate in the work of civilization."[2] Our understanding of the mission to children at risk, therefore, begins with the cultural mandate.

Immediately following the record of the creation of humankind with its cultural mandate we find the Fall (Gen 3). The heartbreaking account of the misuse of something designed for good—in this case the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—is too familiar to anyone who has worked with children. In this account, we look in horror as our common ancestors rebelled against the one whom they were created to worship. Although the picture does not yet include the degradation of human behavior by or toward children, it is latent in the very act of rebellion. As Wright puts it, "All derivative relationships are correspondingly debased, by spirals of jealousy, anger, violence and vengeance (Gen 4), until the whole race is characterized by wickedness and evil (Gen 6:5)."[3] In the aftermath of the fall we see both the judgment of God on humanity proclaimed as fallen and of creation as cursed. The presence of evil in all its manifestations creates not only a missiological context for mission to children at risk; it permeates all of our responses.[4]

Douglas McConnell (PhD) is dean of the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary and associate professor of leadership. He served with his family for 15 years as a missionary in the South Pacific and 5 years as International Director of Pioneers International. Prior to that assignment, he taught and chaired the Department of Missions/Intercultural Studies at Wheaton College Graduate School. In addition to his other responsibilities, McConnell established the concentration on mission to children at risk in the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller. His publications include *The Changing Face of World Mission* (coauthor, 2005), and articles in *Missiology*, *The Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, and *The Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission*.

It is out of this state that God called Abraham. In the call of God to Abram, we again see the role of procreation with the promise that he will be "a blessing" (Gen 12:2) and "a father of many nations" (Gen 17:5). A covenant people emerge from their father Abraham whose role it was to be a blessing. Returning to the cultural mandate, the fullness of this covenant is seen not simply in the special relationship of the people of God (i.e. "I will make you a great nation" Gen12:2), but also in the more general promise, "so that you will be a blessing" (Gen 12:3). From the outset, the people of God were to be blessed and to be a blessing to the nations. Galatians 3:8 clarifies this point even further, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.'"

In the Abrahamic covenant we observe a pattern of calling out and sending in, which is important to our missiological understanding. The writers of the Lausanne Covenant expounded on it this way, "He has been calling out from the world a people for himself, and sending his people back into the world to be his servants and his witnesses, for the extension of his kingdom, the building up of Christ's body, and the glory of his name."[5] This pattern is also essential to the core of our mission to children at risk. While we call out children who may be both victims and perpetrators (as in the case of child soldiers) embracing them as the Church and seeking their salvation, we also work for the transformation of the very society from which they come. Again the pattern is seen in Jeremiah 29:7, "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."

The manner in which this transformation must be pursued is again part of the revelation of the plan for the people of God. God calls Israel to hear, to recite, and to remember their faith and to pass it on through the generations (Deut 6:4–9, 20–25). As the people of God left Egypt for the land God had promised, they were given the *Torah*, setting out the manner in which they were to live as God's people. One particularly revealing statement of this covenant helps to reveal God's heart for the marginalized and alien:

> For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deut 10:17–19)

In this we again see the pattern of behavior expected of God's people prescribed as an extension of God's concern for the world. This carries forward to the new covenant, as seen in Jesus' statements in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:17ff.). As Wright notes:

> In this, as in so many other ways, Christ and the kingdom he proclaimed and inaugurated "fulfill" the Old Testament, taking its socio-economic pattern and transforming it into something that can be the experience not just of a single nation in a small slice of territory but of anyone, anywhere, in Christ.[6]

Given the deep love of God for the orphan, the widow and all who are marginalized, we begin to see the foundation of our missiological concern for children at risk. Our concern goes deeply into the plight of children at risk, caring for them because it is part of our care for Christ (Mt 9:37).

The teaching of Jesus on the kingdom of God provides the frame of reference for further understanding our mission to children at risk. The kingdom transcends the geographic borders and limits of ethnic identity. The people of God "are to face outward to the nations, proclaim the presence of the Kingdom by word and deed, and issue the call to conversion."[7] Not only is the entire earth our field, the kingdom brings an eternal dimension to our temporal concerns for children. We can approach children as those who may receive the kingdom (Lk 18:16) with all that it means both in this age and the age to come, or the already and the not yet.[8] The hope brought by the gospel transcends the circumstances of this present age with a promise that we will be with Jesus in the kingdom where "they will hunger no more, and thirst no more . . . and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev 7:16–17). What a picture for children left on the rubbish heaps of life: for the sex slave and the AIDS orphan, for the street child and the child of war.

Add to this picture the promises of the already of the kingdom: that lives crushed by circumstances may be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, forgiven and accepted. Trusting in Jesus, "who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age" (Gal 1:4) brings a realization of the age to come. More than platitudes of religious fervor, the transforming power of the gospel brings the presence of God the Spirit into the life of the believer. Jesus did not leave us alone, but sent the Holy Spirit to give us his peace (Jn 14:25–27). Too often the emptiness of abuse and the desperation it engenders leave children scarred, clinging to even the most painful circumstances. The gospel is not a panacea for this horrendous condition. It is a promise of the presence of God and—for those who believe—provides a path for renewal and even the possibility of reforming the broken pieces.

One has to be gripped by the question, "How?" *How* can this happen without the intervention of something tangible, relational, and physical? The answer is that it can't (or, at ▶▶

least it is unlikely barring some miraculous intervention). However, it is precisely at this point that the Church intervenes—those who have received the kingdom and among whom this gospel is lived out. Ladd states it this way: "The church is the instrument of the Kingdom."[9] Therefore, the Church is the local expression of the kingdom rule with the power to do the works that Jesus did, to seek justice, to show mercy, and to humbly seek the *shalom* of the place to which God has called her. As the Church lives within the community as salt and light, the impact of this transformation can take place.

In considering children at risk, we must be reminded again of the Abrahamic covenant. The Lord chose him, "that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice" (Gen 18:19). The family of God is an image that carries throughout Scripture, giving us another important insight into the nature of the Church. As those who belong to Christ, we are part of the covenant family of Abraham (Gal 3:29). As children adopted into the family of God, we receive our identity and name through Christ (Eph 3:14–15). And even more significantly for children at risk, the church is the family of God in each locale. It is the familial relationship that begins to resonate with those who are on the margins, the widows, the orphans, and the resident aliens.

In the midst of horrific conditions, the great need is for families to provide identity and security. The household with its structure and nurture becomes a critical focus for any long-term efforts to impact children. In the absence or dysfunction of the birth family, the extended family of God becomes a central part of the mission of God. As we look at the nature of the trauma and the danger, a wonderful realization dawns. Throughout the world, there are family members who know the customs and culture of the context and can reach out with the love of God at the precise location of need. Clear evidence of this is seen where the HIV/AIDS pandemic has devastated regions of sub-Saharan Africa.[10]

Our Missiological Response

As we have tried to demonstrate, the nature of our missional response is set strongly in the efforts of local churches responding in a manner that reflects the values and the presence of the kingdom of God. Beyond strategies and methods is a consistent realization that God has local custodians of the gospel of the kingdom with the capacity and the responsibility to impact the world in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. While I walked on the coast of southern Wales with Patrick McDonald, founder of Viva Network, he related his concern over the sheer magnitude of the problem. As we talked, we realized this amazing plan of God to use his Church to impact the world of children. It has ever been so, but for the two of us it came as a profound new truth. The church is the ideal human structure in the world to tackle, with any hope of sustainablity, the issues facing more than 1.5 billion children at risk in the world. From that date until this, we have continued to keep our focus on awakening the Church to its responsibilities for the children.

Based on the patterns and mandates of Scripture, local churches must move beyond the education model for children. Children are able to receive the kingdom *as children.* As the largest group of human beings in the population, children must be seen as precious in the sight of God—the Church must view them with love that demands advocacy for justice and invitation for belonging. As someone has said, children are human *beings*, not human *becomings*. A sensitive response that engages the whole Church is the least we can give to those who are targeted by emissaries of the worst kinds of depravity. The call to the Church today is a call to wake up to this God-given responsibility before it is too late. In the words of Jesus, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me" (Lk 9:48). ■

ENDNOTES

1. C. E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 208.
2. A. F. Glasser et al., *Announcing the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 39.
3. C. J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 215.
4. For examples, see the articles on AIDS, Trafficking, Child Soldiers, and Street Children in this issue of *Theology News & Notes*.
5. *The Lausanne Covenant*, Article 1, Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1974, http://www.lausanne.org/Brix?pageID=12891 (accessed on July 27, 2005).
6. Wight, *Old Testament Ethics*, 196.
7. Glasser et al., *Announcing the Kingdom*, 187.
8. G. E. Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 26.
9. G. E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 269.
10. For an example, see the article by Stephenson et al. in this issue of *Theology News & Notes*.

The Hopeful Lens of "Positive Youth Development"

A S THE CHURCH responds to the demand of serving and empowering children at risk in the United States and around the world, it is imperative not to draw only upon theological and missiological resources, but psychological ones as well. Emerging perspectives on children at risk are to be lauded for holistic views, recognizing that children who have experienced severe neglect, abuse, and/or trauma have acute spiritual, physical, and psychological needs. Current theory and research within the social sciences offer a hopeful lens through which to better understand how the Church can respond in an effective manner to the young boy who has been orphaned by the ravages of war or the young girl who has offered her body as a source of profit and survival in the sex trade.

A new perspective has evolved: *positive youth development* (PYD)—a vision theoretically linked to developmental systems models of human development that emphasize the potential for promoting positive change throughout life and considering the whole person within the systems in which their life is embedded (Lerner et al., 2005). Scholars who have begun to elaborate the positive development model (Benson, 1997; Catalano, Bergland, Ryan, Lonczak, and Hawkins, 1999; Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2004) insist that all youth have the potential for positive development, and that this potential means that young people may be regarded as resources to be developed, and not as problems to be managed (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, and Foster, 1998).

A developmental systems approach makes two important contributions to understanding how to serve and empower children at risk. First, this perspective emphasizes that all children have the potential for growth and change, providing the opportunity to focus optimistically, but not naively, on opportunities for positive development rather than pathology and problems. Secondly, such approaches understand that the potential for change stems from the interactions between the individual and the environments in which they live. A systems approach takes an ecological perspective focusing on the relations between the child and the contexts in which they are embedded. Such systems might include their family (or lack thereof), peer group, community, economic, political, or religious systems. Instead of limiting one's view of youth to preventing or fixing their problems, this new paradigm emphasizes the strengths, competencies, and contributions that young people can make, emphasizing ways to align their strengths with appropriate resources and support within their environment to maximize healthy development.

Although children at risk often experience what psychologists identify as the most severe risk factors (e.g. lack of family support, violence, sexual abuse, lower socioeconomic status, and poor nutrition) a developmental systems approach gives hope for the future of these children by emphasizing opportunities for growth and positive change. This perspective focuses on the need for healing wounds as well as for growth and eventual thriving.

One of the significant contributions of positive youth development is that it promotes an optimistic view of young people. This approach aims to not only minimize risk and suffering among children, but intentionally nurtures strengths, competencies, and potentials that eventually enable them to make important contributions to their world (Damon, 2004). A thriving young person is one that makes the most out of their personal and environmental circumstances. They experience personal satisfaction and meaning while contributing to their society. Such an understanding of thriving provides room for much variation—for example, a thriving young person in Pasadena, California, might look very different from a thriving young person in Malawi with HIV/AIDS. ►►

SYNOPSIS

In psychology's last 15 years, a new vision of child and adolescent development has emerged. "Positive youth development," which provides a hopeful lens for caring for and empowering all children, promises hope for children facing even the greatest risks.

Pamela Ebstyne King, research assistant professor of family studies in the Center for Research and Child and Adolescent Development in the School of Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary, is ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA). King researches and teaches in the areas of positive youth development, spiritual and moral development, and theological perspectives of development. She received a MDiv and PhD in family studies from Fuller Theological Seminary and did her undergraduate and postdoctoral work at Stanford University. Pam is a coauthor of *The Reciprocating Self: A Theological Perspective of Development* and coeditor of the *Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*.

However, both can *thrive*. Thriving is based on an ability to positively adapt to circumstances in a way that promotes personal and social well-being. For example, thriving youth are often described as being hopeful about the future. In addition, thriving youth have positive values, are resourceful, have a sense of faith, and work at fulfilling their own potential. In addition, they find a constructive way to give back to others—whether that be their family, school, or community.

The second point of developmental systems approaches emphasizes the significance of the interactions between an individual and the many contexts in which he or she lives. From a systems perspective this is a dynamic relationship where the individual influences environment, just as the environment impacts the individual. These are "bi-directional" influences. For example, a local economic decline may affect the economic well-being of a family, which in turn causes a child to prematurely enter the workforce. In this example, the surrounding economic system impacts the child by causing him or her to enter the labor market. On the other hand, a particularly resourceful young person might rise in leadership in a gang because of his or her leadership skills. Here the individual qualities of the person impact the gang "system." When these "bi-directional" interactions between the youth and the context are positive—to the benefit of both the individual and the system—then the young person is said to be thriving.

Most children at risk exist in severely difficult environments with little chance of thriving without direct intervention. Such children are often too powerless, too broken, or without adequate vision to understand how to identify or motivate the resources within their environments to put them on a path to a hopeful future. In many cases, their environments are so depleted that without intervention from relief workers and caregivers, such resources are not available to promote thriving in young people.

Positive youth development identifies resources that are associated with healthy outcomes and intervention strategies that are focused on strengthening the ecological infrastructure supporting youth within their community (Lerner et al., 2005). Search Institute provides a helpful framework to help identify what particular resources may be accessed to promote thriving in children at risk. Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets that serve as the building blocks to healthy child and adolescent development. Previous research conducted by Search Institute has demonstrated that the presence of these assets are positively related to indicators of thriving (Scales, Benson, Leffert, and Blyth, 2000) and negatively related to the presence of dangerous and problem behaviors in youth (Benson, Leffert, Scales, and

Blyth, 1998). Developmental assets may be internal to a young person (e.g., positive identity, personal values) or may be external and embedded within the community (e.g., a caring adult, boundaries). Based on hundreds of thousands of North American youth, Search Institute's research suggests that when it comes to such assets, "more is more." The more assets a child reports, the more likely their chances of thriving and reducing risk and problem behaviors in their lives. Although most of their data is based on U.S. children and adolescents, the 40 developmental assets provide a helpful framework for those serving children at risk.

The 40 assets are broken down into 8 categories. Four categories are considered external to the child: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time. These are resources that a child or adolescent might have access to through family, school, neighborhood, employment, or other activities. The 4 internal categories of assets include commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. They include personal attributes, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that promote healthy development. Healthy developmental outcomes

EXTERNAL ASSETS	INTERNAL ASSETS
SUPPORT	**COMMITMENT TO LEARNING**
Family Support	Achievement Motivation
Positive Family Communication	School Engagement
Other Adult Relationships	Homework
Caring Neighborhood	Bonding to School
Caring School Climate	Reading for Pleasure
Parent Involvement in Schooling	
EMPOWERMENT	**POSITIVE VALUES**
Community Values Youth	Caring
Youth as Resources	Equality and Social Justice
Service to Others	Integrity
Safety	Honesty
	Responsibility
BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS	**SOCIAL COMPETENCIES**
Family Boundaries	Planning and Decision Making
School Boundaries	Interpersonal Competence
Neighborhood Boundaries	Cultural Competence
Adult Role Models	Resistance Skills
Positive Peer Influence	Peaceful Conflict Resolution
High Expectations	
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME	**POSITIVE IDENTITY**
Creative Activities	Personal Power
Youth Programs	Self-Esteem
Religious Community	Sense of Purpose
Time at Home	Positive View of Personal Future

are more common when there is an integration of social and personal resources (Eccles and Gootman, 2002). Positive youth development emphasizes the importance of promoting a broad-scale developmental infrastructure where deficits in one area may be compensated for by assets in another area. (See table.)

Although at first glance this list of assets may seem irrelevant to the children we are addressing in this issue, many of these assets are crucial to effective intervention and care delivery for children at risk globally. Although such resources may be implemented differently for street children in Mumbai, India, than for youth in a suburban after-school arts program, they provide important insight into how to intervene and care for children at risk. For example, when serving girls involved in the sex trade, the asset framework suggests that adult support outside the family is important to the healthy development of young people. Given that girls involved in such work have been mistreated by adults due to the nature of their work, a youth worker serving such girls would need to pay special attention to the need for positive adults in the lives of these girls. In addition, these relationships would most likely need to be same-sex relationships and nurtured very carefully in order to engender trust with an adult outside the family. The assets indicate that a positive identity including a sense of personal power and sense of future are important. Young women who have been sexually abused are often suffering in these areas. Adults serving these girls might give special attention to creating opportunities for them to build a positive sense of identity and personal empowerment.

The assets also provide a helpful perspective in dealing with youth involved with gangs. Again, taking into consideration the role of adults outside the family, it is important to consider who might be the adults most often found in the lives of youth involved with gangs. They are often older members of the gangs. The asset framework suggests that effective adults need to be positive influences—not just any adult will do to promote positive development. An adult who is supportive and who promotes rules and positive expectations will promote thriving in young people. Often gang members, especially gang leaders, have many personal resources, such as leadership, resourcefulness, and motivation. However, these strengths are often misused and manifested in deleterious activities. The asset framework provides a helpful perspective to those working with such youth, emphasizing the need for having positive values such as integrity, honesty, caring, and restraint. Encouraging the ability to resist dangerous activities and promoting a sense of character and noble purpose in a young person may be important qualities to nurture in gang-involved youth.

Positive youth development is a quickly growing movement in both academic and applied circles. Practitioners were the first to realize that focusing on youths' problems was not an adequate approach to encouraging young people who were capable of contributing to society. Although efforts to reduce violence, teen pregnancy, and delinquency have indeed decreased those issues in youth, such an emphasis has not promoted contribution to society. In the words of Karen Pittman, "problem-free is not fully prepared" (Pittman, Irby, and Ferber, 2001, p. 21). Scholars and even policymakers have caught on: Focusing on problems is not an adequate means of serving our young.

For the Church to effectively serve and empower children at risk globally, the Church needs to view them as young people capable of thriving. This perspective does not minimize the trauma and abuse that they face daily; however, it challenges the Church to look beyond their brokenness towards healing and growth. It calls the Church to ensure that these children do not merely survive, but that they thrive and become all that God intends. ■

ENDNOTES

P. L. Benson, *All Kids Are Our Kids: What Communities Must Do to Raise Caring and Responsible Children and Adolescents* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997).

P. L. Benson, N. Leffert, P. C. Scales, and D. A. Blyth, "Beyond the 'Village' Rhetoric: Creating Healthy Communities for Children and Adolescents," *Applied Developmental Science* 2, no. 3 (1998): 138–59.

R. F. Catalano, M. L. Berglund, J. A. M. Ryan, H. S. Lonczak, and J. D. Hawkins, *Positive Youth Development in the United States: Research Findings on Evaluations of Youth Development Programs* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999).

W. Damon, "What Is Positive Youth Development?" *The Annals of the American Academy* 591, (2004): 13–24.

J. S. Eccles, and J. A. Gootman, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (Washington D.C.: National Academy Press, 2002).

R. M. Lerner, *Liberty: Thriving and Civic Engagement among America's Youth* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004).

R. M. Lerner, J. V. Lerner, J. B. Almerigi, C. Theokas, E. Phelps, S. Gestsdottir, S. Naudeau, H. Jelicic, A. Alberts, L. Ma, L. M. Smith, D. L. Bobek, D. Richman-Raphael, I. Simpson, E. D. Christiansen, and A. von Eye, "Positive Youth Development, Participation in Community Youth Development Programs, and Community Contributions of Fifth-Grade Adolescents: Findings From the First Wave of the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development," *Journal of Early Adolescence* 25, no. 1 (2005): 17–71.

K. J. Pittman, M. Irby, and T. Ferber, "Unfinished Business: Further Reflections on a Decade of Promoting Youth Development," in *Youth Development: Issues, Challenges, and Directions* (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 2001), 7–64.

J. Roth, J. Brooks-Gunn, L. Murray, and W. Foster, "Promoting Healthy Adolescents: Synthesis of Youth Development Program Evaluations," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 8 (1998): 423–59.

P. Scales, P. Benson, N. Leffert, and D. A. Blyth, "The Contribution of Developmental Assets to the Prediction of Thriving among Adolescents," *Applied Developmental Science* 4 (2000): 27–46.

HIV/AIDS: Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

THE IMPACT of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on children in developing countries is devastating. In many countries, HIV/AIDS is reversing the progress in child health and welfare achieved over several decades. HIV/AIDS is orphaning children in unprecedented numbers. Globally, it is estimated that more than 15 million children under the age of 18 have lost either one or both parents to AIDS. The pandemic has left millions of other children highly vulnerable, including children living with HIV, children whose parents live with HIV, and children in households that have absorbed orphans.

The number of orphans due to AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to reach 18 million by 2010. Put in perspective, 12.5% of all the children in the region are orphans. While the crisis is most acute in Africa, where 90% of the pandemic's orphans live, the situation is worsening in Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. The proportion of children orphaned in most countries will not peak until well after 2010.[1]

SYNOPSIS

The devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on children, their families, communities, and nations presents the Church worldwide with a challenge and opportunity. This paper explores the issues facing children affected by HIV/AIDS, and the Church's response to them.

The Church and HIV/AIDS

The Church has struggled to make sense of HIV/AIDS, but while it wrestles with difficult questions around suffering, free will, and the consequences of sin, God calls Christians to be servants, bearers of his love, and bringers of hope. He is especially concerned that we reach out with the whole gospel to serve the poor, the orphans, and the widows (Is 58: 6–12). This "integral mission" combines spiritual and social action, which includes speaking out with and for the oppressed on unjust policies and practices.

The overwhelming size and consequences of the HIV/AIDS pandemic compel the Church to act. Churches in areas hit hard by HIV/AIDS are facing sickness and death at a scale never seen in the modern era. Entire congregations and communities are being decimated, leaving pews empty. Slowly, the pendulum is swinging from judgment to compassion as the Church across the world reaches out to those suffering from the impact of HIV/AIDS—including the children.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on Children

HIV/AIDS takes a terrible toll on children. They face challenges for survival as they lose parents and extended family members. The distress caused by the loss of loved ones, increased responsibility for siblings, the need to take on the role of provider and caregiver for sick parents, and stigma and social isolation can lead to severe trauma and depression. Children affected by HIV/AIDS are at high risk of dropping out of school, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, and the loss of their land and inheritance. Despite their resilience and ingenuity, children are often ill-equipped to cope with these demands.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Social Fabric

Within communities, HIV/AIDS claims the lives of the very people who can best protect and provide for children, among them doctors, nurses, and teachers. Infection rates among professionals are equal if not higher than in the general population.[2]

The responsibility to care for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS falls increasingly to the older generation. In much of Africa, older people often care for their sick and dying sons and daughters. When their children die, not only do they lose their income and social support, but they become the guardians of their grandchildren. In Tanzania, out of 146,000 children orphaned by AIDS who were cared for by their grandparents, only 1,000 attended secondary school. Most of the rest couldn't afford the fees.[3] The extended family system is severely strained by the impacts of HIV/AIDS.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education

Schooling can act as a "social vaccine" to prevent HIV infection. Children and young people are more likely to become infected the less formal schooling they have.[4] In Zimbabwe, only 1.3 percent of girls between the ages of 15–18 years who were still enrolled in school were HIV positive. Girls of a similar age who dropped out of school were 6 times more likely to be infected.[5]

School systems across the developing world are in crisis. In AIDS-affected countries, overburdened health systems and the death of teachers conspire to divert human and financial resources away from education. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, levels of primary education enrollment have dropped significantly, and secondary schools cannot adequately serve even the decreasing numbers of primary school graduates. In Uganda, out of 485,703 students graduating from primary school in 2002, there were only 179,305 secondary school spots available in 2003.[6] Governments cannot train teachers fast enough to replace those who are sick or dying.

The effects of HIV/AIDS on both individual children and education systems as a whole are devastating. In Malawi, one-third of children surveyed in one study reporting missing school to care for the sick (a percentage that grew to over 60% for children who had lost both parents) and 6% of children missed school for funerals. Also, children who had lost both parents dropped out at nearly twice the rate (17.1%) as children with both parents living (9.5%) during the 2000 school year.[7]

Even those children affected by HIV/AIDS who *do* attend schools are less likely to do well. The combined impact of poverty and malnutrition, discrimination, and psychological stress faced by orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) affects their ability to concentrate in class.

Responses to the Crisis

These challenges seem insurmountable given the inadequate economic growth, corruption, and lack of basic services in countries with large numbers of children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS; however, there *are* signs of hope.

At the local level, many families and communities are responding with resilience and determination. Uncles, aunts, grandparents, and neighbors continue to open their homes to orphans and to provide love and support. Eldest siblings are taking on the heavy burden of heading a household with remarkable dedication. Many communities are joining together to support these children.

Access to low cost, anti-retroviral drugs and therapy (ARV/ART) would dramatically increase life expectancy and quality for those infected by HIV/AIDS. Policies that block the distribution of such drugs are an affront to human dignity, preventing the most effective support strategy of all: the love and care of parents who can continue to work.

The international community is beginning to wake up to the crisis of children left behind by HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS and other leading international agencies now recognize that care for these children is an integral part of an effective and comprehensive HIV/AIDS response. Based on more than 20 years of learning in the field, UN agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and governments have reached agreement on five key strategies to ensure care and protection for orphans and other vulnerable children:[8]

1. Strengthen the capacity of families to protect and care for OVC by prolonging the lives of parents and providing economic, psychosocial, and other support
2. Mobilize and support community-based responses
3. Ensure access for orphans and vulnerable children to essential services, including education, healthcare, birth registration, and others
4. Ensure that governments protect the most vulnerable children through improved policy and legislation, and by channeling resources to families and communities
5. Raise awareness at all levels through advocacy and social mobilization to create a supportive environment for children and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

It is widely recognized that orphanages and other institutional approaches are not a viable solution to this enormous crisis. It is simply not possible to build enough orphanages to accommodate the many millions of children orphaned to date and the millions more who will become orphans in the years ahead. In addition, support for family and community care is much more cost-effective and is the only way to achieve large-scale reach and sustained impact.

In recent years, donors have begun committing more funds to care for children affected by HIV/AIDS; however, current responses do not begin to measure up to the challenge, and far too little of the funding reaches the children, families, and communities who need it most and can use it best.

Support to Faith Based Organizations (FBOs): The Church's Role and Capacity to Respond

Churches and other FBOs play a crucial role in care for HIV/AIDS-affected children in many areas. A recent study commissioned by the World Conference of Religions for Peace[9] in 6 countries in East and Southern Africa found that the 238 congregations surveyed fielded more than 9,000 volunteers supporting a total of 139,409 children. More than 80% of these congregations were Christian.

The report barely told of the actual response across the African continent. The survey sample represented only 0.25% of the more than 150,000 congregations in the study countries alone. Most of these initiatives were small-scale projects combining material, spiritual, educational, and psychosocial support to OVC. The study found that congregations were ▶▶

less willing to tackle issues related to prevention. They may be reluctant to talk about sexual practice or address traditional patriarchal attitudes toward gender within the church—which may lead to increased infection among women who don't feel empowered to determine sexual behavior.

Because the work of congregations is small and difficult to measure cumulatively, funding agencies tend to be drawn to larger development organizations. The challenge that churches and small FBOs face is how to access support that complements their work, rather than increases their dependency on external aid. Their strength lies in their local connectedness and their deep commitment rooted in their calling. But their full potential is too often unrealized due to lack of external linkages and limited capacity in proposal writing and reporting.

Some Christian development and relief organizations are working intentionally with churches and other faith-based organizations across Africa, engaging and equipping them for HIV/AIDS response with a focus on children. Among them, World Vision and World Relief actively link North American churches to community- and faith-based initiatives caring for orphans and vulnerable children in Africa.

These organizations also mobilize donors and churches to advocate for change in unjust policies and practices that increase the vulnerability of children and their families to HIV/AIDS. Pressure from civil society, including churches, influenced the recent commitment made at the G8 Summit meeting in Scotland to universal access to treatment by 2010.

Listening to Children

In the rush to help children affected by HIV/AIDS, caregivers often neglect to listen to what the children feel is important to them. Despite their vulnerability, children have clear views on what their needs are. In a recent workshop in Zimbabwe, OVC made several recommendations to caregivers including:

- involving children in day-to-day decision making at home;
- creating a group of children to act as representatives in their communities who will help to make decisions that affect children;
- equipping children to help sick relatives;
- training children in care of the home, budgeting, and other life skills in preparation for when they must assume these responsibilities.

Conclusions

The numbers of children left behind by HIV/AIDS are rising. They will continue to do so even after prevalence rates in a country start to decline.[10] This is a human tragedy *and* a socioeconomic crisis. It is also a profound challenge to the Church—to heed God's call to "look after orphans and widows in their distress" (James 1:27).

Churches and other FBOs are increasingly active in community care for children affected by HIV/AIDS and their families. Institutional care is not a viable option—community-based solutions *must* be found, and many Christians are pioneering the way in care for these vulnerable children.

Churches and other FBOs in areas heavily affected by HIV/AIDS are increasingly taking up this challenge. To strengthen and expand their efforts, they can

- encourage religious leaders to dispel myths and judgmental attitudes towards those affected by HIV/AIDS;
- raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in the communities, and mobilize congregations and communities to reach out to OVC;
- listen to OVC and build effective responses based on their perspectives;
- build coalitions and networks to expand coverage, share knowledge on best practice, and gain leverage for funding;
- partner with agencies that can strengthen organizational capacity; and
- participate in national policy and budgeting processes to advocate resource provision to fulfill the rights of OVC.

Churches and other FBOs in North America, Europe, and others wealthy parts of the world are also called by God to respond. They can and must reach out in solidarity with their sisters and brothers in HIV/AIDS-affected areas through advocacy, support, and care. Time, talents, resources, and prayer are all needed to help children, their families, and communities cope with the mounting impacts of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. ∎

Resources

Area Development Program Toolkit for HIV/AIDS Programming. (2003). World Vision International. For all World Vision resources, contact bard_luippold@wvi.org.

Building Blocks: Africa-wide Briefing Notes. (2003). HIV/AIDS Alliance, UK. These books cover education, economic strengthening, health and nutrition, psychological support, and social inclusion. Available in English, French, and Portuguese. Download from: www.aidsalliance.org.

Channels of Hope: A Training Manual for Faith-Based Organizations Responding to HIV/AIDS. (2005). World Vision International.

Children Affected by HIV/AIDS. (2001). By Corrine Grainger, Douglas Webb and Lyn Elliott. Save the Children UK.

Children on the Brink. (2004) UNAIDS. See UNAIDS website.

Footsteps, Issue 61: *Children and HIV/AIDS.* (December 2004). Tearfund UK. For all Tearfund resources go to www.tilz.info.

Guide to Mobilizing and Strengthening Community-Led Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. (2005). World Vision International.

HIV and AIDS; Taking Action ROOTS 8. (2004). By Rachel Blackman. Tearfund UK. Available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Living Positively: A Community-based Approach to Combat HIV/AIDS. (2004). Mothers' Union. See: www.themothersunion.org.

Responding More Effectively to HIV and AIDS: A PILLARS Guide.

Human Trafficking: Children and the Sex Trade

Malee's Story

MALEE will turn 17 this month. She has a high IQ, leadership aptitude, and looks like a young, Asian version of Jennifer Garner of the "Alias" TV show. If she lived in Pasadena, she might be valedictorian, class president, or even homecoming queen. But life is different for Malee. Unlike most American teenagers, Malee has been sold multiple times and been a victim of sexual slavery and torture—all for the pleasure and profit of others.

Malee was first sold at three months of age by her birth mother. She became the property of a "mother" who views Malee as a both a commodity and a daughter. When Malee was two, this "mother" sold her to a family in a neighboring country who loved Malee and raised her as their own. But at age six, Malee's nightmare recurred when her "mother" broke in and stole Malee back.

When Malee entered puberty at 13, her "mother" tricked her into a hotel room with a foreign tourist. Malee fought her way to escape untouched, but the forces of greed and lust continued to press against her until she was crushed. When Malee was 14, her "mother" convinced her to go work in a wealthier neighboring country where a friend promised her a job at a restaurant. A government official drove Malee across the border.

The restaurant had only one item on the menu. That first night, Malee's virginity was sold to a Chinese businessman for nearly $1000. He believed the investment well worth it for the luck, prosperity, and long life he would receive from sleeping with a virgin. Malee did not feel lucky. The brothel owner had to beat Malee into submission, tie her up and gag her in order to give the man a good time. But that was not Malee's final customer that night. The owner sold her to several men willing to pay extra for the "first night." Within several days, Malee's market value dropped to $5 per customer. To make up lost profit, the owner forced her to have up to 10 customers a day. In her weeks in the brothel before being rescued by Christians, Malee had over 100 customers. She received no payment, was kept in slavery-like conditions, and was beaten regularly by the owner to keep her in line.

What Are "Trafficking" and the "Child Sex Trade"?

Our friend Malee was a victim of child trafficking and the sex trade. International law defines trafficking in persons as recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring, or receiving people through force, threats, abduction, deception or fraud, abuse of power or vulnerability, or payments to others for the purpose of exploitation.[1]

Across the world, America included, children are trafficked for many exploitative purposes—forced and hazardous labor, slavery and slavery-like practices, begging, illegal adoption, child soldiers, sexual slavery by military troops, and even for their organ parts. But most are trafficked for sexual exploitation. The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), also known as the "sex trade," consists of pornography, prostitution, sex trafficking, sex tourism, and child and forced marriages.[2] However, children trafficked for non-CSEC purposes, especially domestic laborers and beggars, are also subject to sexual exploitation.

Trafficking occurs domestically *and* internationally, often in the context of labor migration. When people travel from a poor country to a wealthier one, or from a rural to an urban area, in search of work, they find themselves deceived or forced into exploitation, often through debt bondage. Traffickers may be sophisticated, organized criminal networks or relatives and neighbors acting informally. ▶▶

SYNOPSIS

The Crawfords, whose work assists women and youth in and at-risk of trafficking and prostitution in Chiang Mai, Thailand, outline the realities of commercial sexual exploitation of children: who suffers, how they suffer, and what the Church ought to do.

Mark Crawford and Christa Foster Crawford have worked in Thailand for four years addressing issues of trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls in the Mekong sub-region. Mark is a graduate of the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary, where he began his study of effective ministry to people in prostitution. Christa is a Harvard Law School graduate and authored/edited the publication, *Combating Human Trafficking in Asia: A Resource Guide to International and Regional Legal Instruments, Political Commitments and Recommended Practices* while working for the United Nations in Bangkok. They are founders of Just Food, a holistic ministry addressing the spiritual, psychological, and physical needs of people at risk of or rescued from trafficking and prostitution. See: www.justfoodinc.org.

Trafficking victims come from vulnerable populations such as refugees and internally displaced people, aliens without citizenship and language, and members of lower class, caste, or economic levels. Individual vulnerabilities include past sexual or other abuse, lack of education (both formal and in terms of awareness of trafficking dangers), lack of marketable skills or viable job options, pressure to earn income to support families, consumerism, and desire for material gain.

Why Does the Child Sex Trade Exist?

Trafficking of children would not exist without demand. Often, demand for child prostitution is local, supported (if only implicitly) by social attitudes and cultural practices. But sex tourism also feeds the demand for CSEC. Three million children in Africa, Asia, Central Europe, and Latin America are victims of tourists who travel internationally, regionally, or domestically to sexually exploit children.[3]

America is a "major source" of sex tourists.[4] Some are pedophiles with a preference for children, others are "situational offenders" who would not engage in CSEC at home but rationalize that "it is different over there." Internet pornography and chat rooms have increased the number of offenders.[5] Tolerance, corruption, and the lack of laws, effective law enforcement, and meaningful punishments (including extraterritorial jurisdiction which holds offenders accountable for overseas illegal acts) fuel local and foreign demand.

On the supply side, factors increasing vulnerability to trafficking include societal change, restrictive migration policy, criminalization of victims, gender discrimination, the low status of women and girls, family breakdown, war and conflict, political instability, and natural disaster—such as the recent Asian tsunami.

Extent of Trafficking and the Child Sex Trade

Trafficking in persons is a billion-dollar-a-year business.[6] According to the United Nations, human trafficking is "the fastest-growing business of organized crime" and more profitable and less risky than drug trafficking.[7] The U.S. State Department estimates that, globally, 800,000 people each year are trafficked internationally and millions more are trafficked domestically.[8] Other estimates put the number of children trafficked worldwide at 1.2 million per year.[9] Trafficking in the U.S. is a "significant problem,"[10] with an estimated 45,000 to 50,000 women and children trafficked to the U.S. annually;[11] however, most child trafficking in the U.S. is entirely domestic.[12]

The sex trade is also a multibillion-dollar industry.[13]

UNICEF estimates that globally "approximately 1 million children enter the sex trade every year."[14] In America, an estimated 320,000 children are exploited in the sex industry annually.[15] Other sources estimate that there may be as many as half a million children who are victims of CSEC in the United States.[16]

Impact of CSEC on Children

Sexual exploitation of children violates their basic human rights, dignity, and the image of God in every person. CSEC involves physical abuse, assault, deprivation, and rape, which cause serious physical damage including sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, forced abortions, and other injuries, including death. CSEC also causes devastating emotional damage ranging from trauma, depression, shame, and post-traumatic stress to severe psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, suicide, and sexual abuse by the child herself.

Biblical Accounts of Trafficking

While the terminology is new, human trafficking is not. We find examples throughout the Bible: Joseph's brothers trafficking him transnationally to the Ishmaelites (Gen 37); the Canaanite army trafficking girls for rape and sexual slavery (Judg 5:30); and creditors threatening to traffic a poor widow's children into debt bondage and slavery (2 Kgs 4:1).

In each of these cases God provided rescue, and even blessed the victims of the trafficking experience. Ultimately, God promises an end to trafficking. When Babylon falls, merchants will no longer find markets for the "bodies and souls of men,"[17] nor for the women and girls who are often most vulnerable to trafficking (Rev 18:11–13).

How Christians Can Respond to the Child Sex Trade

Only the future kingdom of God will bring an ultimate end to the child sex trade. But in the present kingdom, Christian individuals, organizations, and churches are not only called but are also specially equipped to address the needs of children across the trafficking spectrum.[18]

> Churches are the single largest untapped resource in the fight against child sexual exploitation. They are present in every country of the world and have a mandate to protect and advocate for the abused. Even governmental and secular agencies are crying out for the Church to help.[19]

Churches can mobilize against CSEC by raising awareness, prayer, protecting and healing from sexual abuse within local churches, assisting local efforts against child sexual abuse, learning good practices for starting a work,[20] and mentoring other local and international churches.[21] Combating CSEC provides tremendous opportunity for mis-

sion, especially in unreached and inaccessible areas of the world. As missionaries, tentmakers, nongovernmental organization workers, and members of governments and intergovernmental organizations (such as the United Nations and UNICEF), countless members of Christ's Body are *hands and feet* ministering to children at the grassroots level, *voices* advocating for those whose cries are stifled in brothels, and *minds* developing, influencing, and implementing effective policy to change the lives of children like Malee.

Conclusion

Salvation for sexually exploited children is a long-term process involving release from physical captivity, healing of emotional damage, provision of material needs (including education and vocational training) and transformation of the spirit through a relationship with Christ and growth in discipleship. All are essential to true salvation from CSEC, but only Christians can offer this ultimate hope.

As a result of her rescue, Malee now attends church, is learning to pray and trust God, and has her own Bible. We helped her start a small business and she receives counsel and love in Jesus' name. Malee is an inspiration to all who know her. But since we first met her, another 2,999,999 children have been forced into the sex trade. What would Jesus do? What will you do? The problem is complex and the solutions are not simple, but do something we must, otherwise there will be children to pay. ∎

ENDNOTES

1. Article 3(a) of the United Nations Trafficking Protocol (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime). This is the first internationally recognized definition of trafficking in persons.
2. ECPAT International, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children" http://www.ecpat.net/eng/CSEC/definitions/csec.htm (accessed August 22, 2005).
3. Cory Croymans-Plaghki, "Street children are not for sale," *Chiang Mai Mail*, June 11, 2005, citing UNICEF 2004.
4. The Protection Project, "United States Country Report" (The Protection Project, 2002) http://www.protectionproject.org/main1.htm (accessed August 22, 2005).
5. ECPAT International, *Child Pornography: A contribution of ECPAT International to the 2nd World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Yokohama, Japan, 17-20 December 2001*, (ECPAT, 2001) 9.
6. M2PressWire, "UN Secretary-General Calls Human Trafficking 'One of the Greatest Human Rights Violations' of Today", August 2, 2002, http://www.humantrafficking.com/humantrafficking/client/view.aspx?ResourceID=199 (accessed August 22, 2005).
7. Ibid.
8. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, "On the Release of the Fifth Annual Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report" June 3, 2005, Washington, D.C., http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2005/Jun/03-82857.html (accessed August 22, 2005).
9. UNICEF, "Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation" accessed at http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_exploitation.html (accessed August 22, 2005).
10. Protection Project, "United States Country Report."
11. UNICEF, *Profiting from Abuse: An Investigation into the Sexual Exploitation of Our Children*, (New York: UNICEF, 2001) 13.
12. Protection Project, "United States Country Report."
13. UNICEF, *Profiting from Abuse*, 1.
14. UNICEF, *Profiting from Abuse*, 20.
15. The Asha Forum, Video "Asha Short DVD" (Viva Network, 2005).
16. Nicole Ives, *Background Paper for the North American Regional Consultation on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children* (University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work: PA, 2001).
17. The "trafficking spectrum" includes prevention, protection, recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration, return, repatriation, and prosecution of traffickers. United Nations, *Combating Human Trafficking in Asia: A Resource Guide to International and Regional Legal Instruments, Political Commitments and Recommended Practices* (United Nations, 2003). See http://www.unescap.org/esid/GAD/Publication/index.asp
18. Only after such preparation and study of the child exploitation situation in another country, including a comprehensive needs analysis in consultation with missionaries and ministries on the ground who have experience with the situation and context, should individuals, organizations, or churches seek to begin a work in a foreign country.
19. The Asha Forum, "Asha Forum Resource CD" (The Asha Forum, 2003). The Asha Forum is the Sexual Abuse Forum of Viva Network. Viva Network is an invaluable resource that "creates and sustains networks amongst people already helping 'children at risk' so that more children get better help." Viva encompasses a wide variety of issues for children at risk including other issues addressed in this issue of *Theology News & Notes*. Contact Viva Network at www.viva.org.
20. The Asha Forum, "Asha Team Model," http://www.ashaforum.org/involve_churches.htm (accessed August 22, 2005).

War and Violence: Child Soldiers

THE CHILDREN living in the Hannah B. Williams orphanage in Monrovia, Liberia, were always tentative when I arrived. Ranging in age from infants to older adolescents, they spent their time in groups playing ball, braiding each other's hair, or taking care of younger children. They had been separated from their parents during the civil war in Liberia, and many had seen them killed (some in atrocious ways), while others had lost contact only to learn later of their murders. Still others had lost family members due to disease rampant during the conflict. These children were living in the ultimate effects of war: they had lost family, community, school, and any idea of what life is supposed to be. I was at the orphanage with a team from a Swiss non-governmental organization. We were providing training and support to the orphanage staff, and hearing the children's stories of loss and pain. A few of the boys who were living at the orphanage acknowledged privately that they had been combatants during the civil conflict. It was a risk for them to disclose that they had been soldiers, as it put them at risk of retaliation. The needs of child soldiers do not overshadow the needs of any child in war, but they present a complex set of physical, emotional, social, and moral challenges.

SYNOPSIS

Child soldiers report extraordinarily high rates of post-traumatic stress symptoms, but the emotional sequellae of combat is only a small part of the challenge for recovery. Ex-combatants need to find a new place in society and a new sense of purpose.

The Human Rights Watch World Report 2004 indicates that there are approximately 300,000 child soldiers worldwide. Unfortunately, this number has remained fairly consistent over the last several years.[1] The problem seems to be most critical in Africa, where it is estimated that 100,000 children were participating in combat in 2004;[2] however, children are being abducted and recruited into military service in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East as well. In fact, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Cynthia B. Eriksson (PhD) is an assistant professor of psychology, participating in the Headington Program in International Trauma at Fuller. She received her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Fuller's Graduate School of Psychology in 1997. She has done trauma training, research, and consultation in Liberia, West Africa; Kobe, Japan; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Barcelona, Spain; and Los Angeles, California.

issued a public statement in June 2005, asking Tamil rebel groups to stop recruiting children at Hindu Temple festivals in Sri Lanka.[3] So, it is happening at this very moment. In a summary of international recruitment of children under the age of 18, 58 countries worldwide were identified as having either verified or possible use of child soldiers.[4]

There is a complex set of reasons why children might join the fighting. First, children may simply be brutally abducted and forced into military service. In a study of former child soldiers in Uganda, all 301 had been abducted, and many at a very young age (an average age of 12.9 years). The children had also been kept in captive service for an average of more than 2 years.[5] The environmental context may also create a set of circumstances that "force" a child into combat. Children who have limited resources or live in poor and disadvantaged areas are sometimes targeted for recruitment by governments. These children may be seen as "easier" to engage, and the government seeks to intimidate the members of these communities so that they do not join resistance groups. Children may also become the focus of recruitment efforts when they live inside the conflict zone or if they are unaccompanied. Joining the military or a rebel faction may appear to provide protection to the child. Or a child may see joining the combat as a way to find revenge for the deaths of family and friends.[6] Whatever the method of joining in combat, a child faces severe consequences to the trauma and disruption in life that ensues.

Children in war face the obvious challenge of journeying through the traumas and losses that they experience. Violence, survival, deprivation, and disease are daily events. When considering risk factors that limit a child's development, one is hard pressed to find risks that are not present for a child soldier. Physically, they are under threat and living in diseased, unhygienic areas. Emotionally, they are caught in a terrifying mix of horror, fear of death, guilt, and power. Socially, they are taken from their homes, families, and communities. They are trained into a social group that may be abusive and demeaning. They may even be forced to perform violence against loved ones or comrades. Spiritually, they are exposed to evil and abuse that can strip away a sense of moral responsibility. In Liberia, it was common for leaders of rebel forces to use rituals of witchcraft to indoctrinate the children. They were told that drinking the blood of an enemy would keep them safe against the enemy's bullets.

It is impossible to overestimate the physical and emotional consequences of combat for a child. Over half of the former child soldiers in Uganda reported that they were seriously beaten, forced to carry heavy loads, forced to loot and burn homes of civilians, trained in combat, forced to fight, and had witnessed the death of another person. Almost 40% had killed another person. Over a third of the girl soldiers disclosed that they had been sexually abused, and 18% had given birth to at least one child while in captivity.[7] In fact, a random selection of the Ugandan child soldiers were interviewed for emotional reactions, and 97% reported clinically significant symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including nightmares, intrusive images, withdrawal, numbed feelings, hyperarousal, and difficulty concentrating.

One cannot ignore the exposure to traumatic events and losses that the children experience; however, the consequences for these children move quickly beyond combat trauma. Susan McKay and Michael Wessells have worked with child soldiers in Uganda, and they point out that "trauma is a small part of a much larger set of psychosocial, economic, ethnic, and political stresses which are continuous and challenge the rubric of 'posttraumatic'."[9] Children want to go to school. They want be have a place to live and food to eat. They want to have a way to move forward in their lives. These multilevel consequences remain in the forefront of the child's experience even when the "war is over."

The issues of healing and reintegration for child soldiers (and all children of war) pose a complex set of challenges for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in postconflict zones. First of all, the child needs to be seen for who she/he is as a whole. That means identifying that the child's life includes the time prior to and after his experience as a combatant. In that way, the trauma involved in his life as a soldier is only a part of what needs to be addressed.[10] McKay and Wessells indicate that for many children their most pressing concern is fear of retaliation if they go home.[11] Child soldiers in Liberia often relocated to special facilities, as they feared attacks by community members if they returned to their homes. The stigmatization, fear, and deprivation that these children experience is weighty. Girls who were sexually abused or who have children due to this abuse find particular difficulty reintegrating into society. They may be ostracized due to the cultural norms of sexuality. Or they may simply not disclose their painful experiences.[12]

The issue of stigmatization can be a tremendous obstacle to recovery, as the programs that have the highest probability of success for reintegration of child soldiers are those which involve local resources—the families and communities that are also healing.[13] Communities need to understand the reasons why children participate in the fighting. They need to be the ones who identify what the children need (not just the outside "experts"), and the communities and families must be the place for ongoing commitment to the care and recovery of these children.[14] It is within the community that these child soldiers will relearn the norms and limits of society, and what life can be without violence. This social reintegration will require transformation in the community, as it allows for transformation within the children.

I clearly remember my struggle as I returned to the U.S. after my brief summer stay in Liberia. The children of Liberia taught me grace in the midst of tremendous pain. I realized, however, that my preparation for that trip was limited. I had spent hours researching trauma and post-traumatic reactions, and this information was helpful to the orphanage staff to identify behaviors that were trauma-related, and not simply misbehavior. However, I was not prepared for the depth of the spiritual struggles that are part of a community at war. How do we understand forgiveness? How do we help a community that is torn by images of atrocity to embrace the very soldiers who committed those acts? These are challenges that sit squarely on the shoulders of our sisters and brothers in the local church, and these questions take a central place in the question of mission. The body of believers carries a unique perspective on grace that is undeserved, and the Church has an opportunity to reach out in reconciliation that defies "human justice." We have evidence of many of the social, emotional, and physical consequences of the experience of child soldiers; however, we need to add the transforming power of grace as we humbly approach the communities who hold the keys to reintegration. ■

ENDNOTES

1. Jo Becker. (2004). "Children as Weapons of War." *Human Rights Watch World Report 2004*, http://hrw.org/wr2k4/11.htm (accessed June 29, 2005).
2. "Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: Some Facts," http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers/some-facts (accessed June 29, 2005).
3. "Sri Lanka: Coalition of Rights Groups Urges Tamil Tigers to Stop Recruiting Children at Hindu Temple Festivals," http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers (accessed June 29, 2005).
4. "Child Soldiers 2004: Data summary," *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers (accessed

Street Children

WHAT IF, at the age of 10, you are told by your single mother it is time to find a place to live on your own because there isn't enough food for the whole family? Or what if, by 13, you realize your stepfather is not going to stop abusing you, and your mother is not sober enough to notice? What if AIDS has ravaged all of the adults in your life, leaving you responsible for two younger siblings? What if your family needs your income selling gum to survive? What if you discover that sleeping with friends on the streets is more lucrative and fun than living in a one-room shack with the rest of your family?

These situations and more describe the circumstances that send kids to the streets. Some describe cultural norms, others family or individual choices. Yet, seen from an outside perspective, street children are often a nuisance, cluttering city centers with their unsupervised presence—a problem needing to be solved—rather than young people who have persevered despite extremely adverse circumstances in their lives. Worse, in many cultures, street children are perceived as glue-sniffing thieves and beggars, a reputation not entirely unearned.

Overlooking the complex reasons why children work or live on the streets can prompt solutions that are long-term failures. Local governments are often accused of rounding up street youths to imprison or jettison them into surrounding countrysides before large-scale tourist events in city centers.[1] Though difficult to prove, the accusation is common enough to warrant concern.

Street children can be found in almost all of the major cities of the world. Reliable global estimates are hard to come by, but in some nations the number of children on the streets is staggering. In Brazil, a conservative estimate suggests that at least 39,000 children sleep on the streets[2]—a number that does not touch total of children who spend most or all of their days there.

It is clear that life on the streets is very difficult for children, and young people are more likely to survive in a group where they find protection and camaraderie. Substance abuse is rampant, especially cheap and accessible inhalants such as glue or paint thinner. Early and/or abusive sexualization is the norm as children—especially girls—find that the easiest way to survive is to trade sex with adults or other street kids for food or protection. Younger children are vulnerable to rape, even by older kids in their own gang. Violence is common, not only at the hands of adults and police officers, but also within groups or between competing gangs.

Christian Responses

As a Christian, it is hard not to be overwhelmed. The pattern of procreation that God designed makes it clear that his ideal was for each child to develop in the context of a family. Surely the substitution of a gang of other disenfranchised children and youth is a deformation. It does not befit the God-given dignity of a human being to sleep in a heap of children in public bus shelters and back alleys. Furthermore, the moral questions that street children are faced with on a daily basis are more than any child should be forced to bear on his or her own. On multiple levels, it is impossible to deny that which is horribly wrong in these young lives.

It is on this basis that many Christians have responded. The pattern for most is to befriend street children in hopes of convincing them to choose a safer life for themselves. Over time, they either decide to return to their families or live indoors—often in an institutionalized environment or a series of staged living environments—until they have been adopted by a family, returned to their own families, or been taught the vocational skills to survive on their own.[3]

The theological basis for this approach is elegantly simple. Life on the street turns children toward sinful lifestyles; therefore, children are offered the gift of a transformed life at the same time they receive new life in Jesus Christ. In essence, spiritual and physical salvation come together in hopes that transformation on many levels might occur.

For example, Tobias Hecht's account of street children in northeast Brazil describes the soteriological framework from which Christian and secular ministries to street children function. In every case, the task is to "save" children from the streets. The Pentecostal group Desafio Jovem, "speaks of offering a new life through Jesus"[4] and stresses the need for spiritual and moral rebirth through a combination of "Bible study, prayer, and the acceptance of discipline, but also the exchange of the *vida errada*, or iniquitous life, for the *vida boa*, the righteous life."[5] Similarly, Catholic priest Padre Romero runs a work farm designed to "effect a transformation through work," seeking conversion from street vices by teaching children how to do work deemed appropriate for them in Brazilian society.[6] Hecht also claims that these appeals to a soteriological framework for ministry are made even more obvious in secular work with street children, especially in their fundraising.[7]

Challenges to the Work

Challenges to these approaches are many. First, although these efforts are relatively effective for young children and youths that have only recently been forced onto the streets, experience and reason agree that they are seldom as useful when working with older children. Streetwise teens often realize life on the streets is richer than anything they could hope for within an institution, no matter how carefully such institutions are designed.[8] In such situations, little less than an act of God can convince young people to leave the freedom of life on the streets.

In addition, these efforts are costly. The resources necessary to feed, clothe, house, educate, and counsel children—even for a short period of time—are formidable. If a child is unable to return home or move quickly to vocational training because of age, these costs can continue for years.[9] This prompts some secular scholars to promote noninstitutional models to street children, placing less emphasis on "cleaning up" the streets and more on helping children survive more safely and equitably while there.[10]

This points to another issue—the need for ministries to address not just the choices and behaviors of children, but the social structures and patterns that disenfranchise children and make homelessness so dangerous. If children are less and less likely to leave the streets, and institutionalization is expensive, perhaps widespread advocacy campaigns to change perceptions of street children is a significant strategy for helping them. Certainly the Church, who carries and proclaims the gospel of the kingdom, ought to be able to serve this prophetic role on behalf of children, much as Jesus did.

Conclusion

Despite these challenges, many Christians continue to persevere, especially as AIDS continues to take a toll on communities across the globe and the prevalence of orphaned street children increases. Some ministries report remarkable results, however, such as Child Restoration Outreach, a group with multiple sites in Uganda, who rescued 1800 street children during their first 12 years.[11] In addition, other projects are exploring innovative new approaches that engage with churches to find families willing to adopt street children, at least on a temporary basis.[12] So the story for street children is far from over, but in the meantime, millions, if not tens of millions of children remain on the streets—working, begging, and sleeping there. These kids don't need handouts—they need relationships with people who are willing to get to know them and help them make some of the toughest decisions of their lives. The question is: will we, as the Church, be the ones to give them that help? ∎

Dave Scott is a PhD student in the School of Intercultural Studies and has been working with Viva Network for the past 8 years. Since Fall of 2004 he has also been a research fellow with Fuller's Center for Youth and Family Ministry, and is currently an adjunct instructor in the School of Intercultural Studies' Children at Risk concentration. He looks forward to the opportunity to return to South Africa, where he first worked with children as a volunteer with Cape Town City Mission.

ENDNOTES

1. For two recent examples, cf. Kuben Chetty, "Outcry as Durban Street Kids Are 'Removed'," Capetown, South Africa, *Daily News*, June 29, 2005, p. 5; and Iran Focus, "Record Number of Street Children in Iran Capital," www.iranfocus.com (accessed June 28, 2005).
2. Tobias Hecht, *At Home in the Street: Street Children of Northeast Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 101.
3. Cf. Marion Derbyshire and Les Derbyshire, *A Voice in the Streets* (Oxford: Viva Network, n.d.); and Jeff Anderson, Restoring Children of the Streets (Mountlake Terrace, WA: Action International, 2001).
4. Hecht, *At Home in the Street*, 163.
5. Ibid., 164.
6. Ibid., 158–59.
7. Ibid., 165.
8. Hecht, *At Home in the Street*, 206.
9. Judith Ennew, *Street and Working Children: A Guide to Planning* (London: Save the Children, 2000), 144, 106–7.
10. See: www.streetkids.org.
11. UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), "Uganda, A New Hope for Orphans," in *AIDS Education Global Information System,* August 16, 2004. www.aegis.com/news/irin/2004/IR040848.html (accessed July 26, 2005).
12. Derbyshire and Derbyshire, *A Voice in the Streets*, 48.

We Have Forgotten that We Belong to Each Other

I NEVER PLANNED to live in a Los Angeles barrio for over 15 years, sharing my life with at-risk youth and their families. Los Angeles was the "never" of my life—anywhere but L.A. I had my heart set on going to one of the world's great cities—Bangkok, Manila, Mexico City—where compelling stories of need ooze out of statistics: children forced into the streets because of poverty; children and their families living in garbage dumps; children rearing themselves when both parents have died of AIDS; child soldiers conscripted to carry guns and fight for another's cause; village girls desperate to save their families from starvation, whose urban restaurant jobs turn out to be brothel enslavement.

Instead I live in Los Angeles, where children go to school in a district with a high school drop out rate of 50% (70%

SYNOPSIS

While highlighting the difficult situations of children at risk around the world, we must remember children at risk in our own country. Tiersma Watson addresses the individualism that has often been the way of ministry in our cities, and calls us to remember that we belong to each other.

in our local high school); where families of six live in one-room apartments with no place to play; where the threat of violence hangs like a heavy shadow in some neighborhoods; where being a young Latino or Black youth carries the liability of being mistaken for a gang member either by a gang or by the police; and where some of the most at-risk kids are homeboys covered in gang tattoos, packing guns, and recruiting younger kids into gangs.

Over the years I have come to understand the words of Mother Teresa, serving the poorest of the poor in Calcutta and in other cities around the world, who often remarked that she found the poverty of the west to be deeper than the poverty of India.

In reality, whether we are dealing with children at risk globally or in our own cities, the situations are very complex. While we wish for simple causes and solutions, the reality is more like stacking blocks in Hasbro's game of

"Jenga." Initially the tower of blocks is quite sturdy. As the players take a block from the bottom and put in on the top, the tower rises, becoming less stable. Finally, the tower is too precarious and the whole stack tumbles. Who or what caused that tower to tumble? While the last block may appear to be the cause, in fact, all the blocks contributed to both the building and subsequent downfall.

To understand youth at risk in our cities, we need to see how the parts of the Jenga tower are interrelated. The Jenga tower illustrates our interdependence on one another. Although we may live in one neighborhood, even gated communities, in reality, our lives are connected.

We Belong to Each Other

> "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." Mother Teresa[1]

When the horror of the teen killings in Columbine reached beyond that Colorado community, there was grief and sadness and confusion in the entire country. Suddenly, many students, parents, and communities had their sense of security deeply shaken. What went wrong? There was a sense that these were our kids, and they were killing and being killed right in their high school.

For those who have grown up in or relocated into poor urban neighborhoods, the grief, confusion, and outrage over this tragedy was warranted. Certainly this was tragic beyond comprehension. But why did this particular tragedy so completely capture the public's attention? Kids have been killing kids for years in some urban neighborhoods, and our society has paid little attention.

Although it was perhaps not intended this way, many urban youth felt that within our society, a young life in Columbine, Colorado, was worth more than a young life in Compton, California. Many children and their families have never had the luxury of feeling safe and secure. A few months after the unrest in 1992 spurred by the now-famous Rodney King verdicts, our team surveyed our local neighbor-

hood. When asked if the disturbances had changed how they felt about living in the city, not one person said that it had changed how they felt about living in Los Angeles. What bothered them were the everyday street violence and the fear they felt for their children. Poor parents also desire safety and security for their children, but that is a goal that is unattainable for many of them.

Perhaps, as Mother Teresa believed, we have forgotten that we belong to each other. Yes, the high school students at Columbine were our kids, but so are the kids living in our inner cities, attending our over-crowded schools, being killed and killing each other—even the angry, despair-filled, tattoo-covered ones packing guns.

> "We must remember to save some of our grief for the one who died when he pulled the trigger." Father Greg Boyle[2]

Compassion comes easily when we think of innocent young children on their own in a cold, harsh world, victims of poverty and war, or victims of the bad choices of their families, or victims of bad choices by society. But what if that at-risk youth is "Diablo," the homeboy wearing $100 Nike tennis shoes, covered in tattoos, packing a gun, recruiting younger kids into the gang? What do we do with Diablo?

This is not a new question. In the 19th century, the debate centered around the worthy and unworthy poor. Everyone wanted to help the "worthy" poor, the "worthy" child-at-risk, the hardworking and chaste widow. Still today we all prefer to work with those who are at risk due to no fault of their own, who will show their gratitude and respond to the work of God in their lives. But who of us is truly worthy? Since when has the gospel been for the worthy?

Father Greg Boyle has worked with gang members in East Los Angeles, pouring his life out for youth many do not consider worthy of saving, much less giving one's life for. Over the years he has officiated over the burials of more than 100 young people. Father Greg reminds us that we have to "save some of our grief for the one who died when he pulled the trigger." Losing a child to violence is a great tragedy. But what a tragedy also is that youth who initiated the violence, who cares so little for life that he can take the life of another!

Frederick Buechner describes it this way: "Compassion is sometimes the fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else's skin. It is the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you, too."[3]

Beyond the Single Child-at-risk to Children in their Context

Children at risk exist not as individuals in a vacuum, but

within a particular context. They are part of families, schools, communities, cities, and nations. Urie Bronfenbrenner pioneered the concept of understanding a child not only as an individual but also within his or her ecological context. He likened it to a set of Russian *matrushka* dolls, "Like a set of nested structures, each inside the next."[4] Using Brofenbrenner's interlocking systems approach, we begin to see how complex and interdependent one life is. We need to look within each system, as well as looking beyond to the next system. Bronfenbrenner and his student, James Garbarino,[5] look at these interdependent systems, calling them *microsystems*, *mesosystems*, *exosystems*, and *macrosystems*. To understand these, let us look at the life of one child: Joey.

Joey lives with his mom and siblings in a one-bedroom apartment. Joey's *microsystems* are his family, school, peers, and neighborhood. After three recent deaths in her family, the mom is mentally unstable. The extended family and the father live in another state, and Joey sees them rarely. Joey's school ranks at the bottom of performing schools in the state. His home is one block from the "hood" of the local gang, and they actively work on recruiting him. Looking only at the *microsystems* in Joey's life might lead us to conclude that Joey is seriously at risk of entering the local gang.

Now let us look at the *mesosystems* in Joey's life. These are the connections between the *microsystems*. The more positive connections there are between the *microsystems*, the healthier the child's development. There are not many connections between Joey's family and his school, but Joey's neighborhood is a cohesive one, and his peer group is primarily based in the neighborhood. Although families are poor and most people are renters, many in the neighborhood have lived there for over a decade, sometimes two. This is a neighborhood where neighbors look out for each other. When Joey's family forgot his birthday, neighbors gathered and made a cake for him. Every day after school, he goes home with his friend and neighbor Jesse, and this has become a second home to him.

When Joey's mom is hospitalized, the neighbors rally to provide meals and childcare so that the family can stay together until she returns. In Joey's life we see how a community can ameliorate some of the other risk factors in his life. Without the strength of the surrounding neighborhood, and the many connections between Joey, his family, and the neighbors, the family might not have survived intact during this crisis.

The next layer of systems in Joey's life is the *exosystem*. The *exosystem* greatly impacts a child, but the impact is indirect. An example of an *exosystem* is a job that does not pro- ▶▶

duce adequate income for the family, or a school board that makes budget cuts and eliminates an after-school program. This greatly impacts the quality of life and potential development of the child, but is beyond his realm of influence.

In Joey's neighborhood, across the street from a row of buildings where whole families live in studio apartments, there is a small plot of grass. The neighbors call it "the park," although it is smaller than many suburban yards. This is where birthdays are celebrated, kids clubs are held, and families can escape the heat and crowded conditions of their studio apartments.

For hundreds of people, it is the saving grace of even that small plot of extra space that creates community, and gives youth a place to play. This green space makes a great contribution to the cohesion of the neighborhood. Last year, the city decided to move a police station to this location—the green space was to become the site of a four-story, walled parking structure.

Initially the residents accepted this as the way things are: officials come in and make decisions that affect the lives of residents. But discussions among neighbors led to discussions with the city councilman, who agreed that the park should be preserved for the residents. The residents have been assured that the park will remain in the neighborhood, and the parking structure moved elsewhere on the property. Had the park been eliminated in this park-scarce environment, this change in the exosystem would have had a great impact not only on Joey but the entire neighborhood.

At this *exosystem* level, community organizations can have a great impact, coming together to organize for neighborhood improvements—churches, neighbors, and schools come together to bring changes that cannot happen through individuals or individual ministries.

The next level, the *macrosystem*, occurs at the societal level. Racism is one example of a macrosystem. Influence of the globalizing media is another example. At-risk youth in Los Angeles may live in our poorer neighborhoods where no one dares to go, but Hollywood is here regularly filming on our "edgy" urban streets. (The highlight for one of Joey's best friends was the day he came face-to-face with basketball star Kobe Bryant being filmed in a commercial.) Youth are subject daily to images of what they cannot have, yet the media sends messages of what they must wear and drive in order to be valued in this society. All children and youth in all neighborhoods are inundated by these messages. The youth who will be most impacted, however, are those who are not hearing other messages about who they truly are. Thus Joey feels he needs to wear certain brands to form an identity and be valued as a part of society.

To be involved with Joey as an at-risk child, we need to see that Joey lives embedded in these systems that impact his life in both positive and negative ways.

This ecological approach is a serious critique of some traditional evangelical approaches to ministry. Historically, approaches have focused more on saving individuals and redeeming souls. In his history of *The American City and the Evangelical Church*, Harvie Conn notes that even when the evangelical church *did* respond to the needs of the poor, it was generally done in an individualistic manner. We have been better at saving souls than redeeming communities.

Even in the 21st century, one of our very few successful models has been to rescue children out of their toxic environments. We love the stories of the young woman who beats the despair of the ghetto and goes on to study at Yale, or the son of an immigrant single mother who goes on to become the mayor of Los Angeles. These are wonderful stories, but better yet would be to see entire communities transformed into livable neighborhoods with adequate schools and other supports.

Together, We Belong to God

A friend of mine went with her daughter on a visit to a ministry working with at-risk children. After returning home, the daughter seemed despondent. When asked why, she replied, "Those kids have something that I don't have." Despite her affluence and the relative poverty of the children, she saw something in their lives that was missing in hers.

Likewise, every year several students from our local high school are given scholarships to attend an elite summer school for the arts. At first they have fears about going to be with "rich white kids." By the time the summer is over, they return with a new perspective. The art students spend their summer learning art and sharing about their lives with one another. The kids from the barrio come to realize that there is a richness to their lives and in their neighborhood relationships that the suburban youth envy. One said, "You have a neighborhood and community, we only have a mall." The neighborhood youth return with a new sense of pride in their communities.

When I first moved into my neighborhood, I came with the idea of serving children at risk and their families. Far more compelling to me now is knowing we belong to each other, and that together we belong to God. For in serving and ministering to people, we can still keep a distance between them and us. When we belong to each other, a prophetic community is formed that begins to erase the lines between them and us, and we understand that there is no platform at the cross of Jesus that elevates me above

Diablo. We stand together in our need for God's grace to redeem and transform us. ■

ENDNOTES
1 http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/motherteresa (accessed July 15, 2005).
2 Fuller Seminary class "Urban Youth Workers." (Spring 2002, Los Angeles, CA).
3 http://www.brainyquotes.com/quotes/authors/frederickbuechner

---

12 Miles and Wright, *Celebrating Children*, 85.
13 Save the Children, "Three Models of Child Participation in Community Based OVC Care," *The Chris-Caba Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 13–15.
14 "Guidelines for Children's Participation in HIV/AIDS Programs," *The Chris-Caba Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 25.
15 Nathan Frambach, "Seen and Heard: A Theology of Childhood,"

(2004). By Isabel Carter. Tearfund UK. Available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.
Poor Relations? PRSPs and the Response to HIV/AIDS and Children. Tearfund HIV/AIDS Briefing Paper 2.
Stepping Stones. (1995). By Alice Welbourn, ActionAid. See: www.talcuk.org.
Still No Excuses: Orphans, Vulnerable Children and HIV/AIDS. (2004). Christian Aid.
Strategies for Hope series. ActionAid. See: www.stratshope.org.
Young People We Care! A Book of Ideas for Young People Supporting Each Other in Their Communities. (2003). John Snow International. See: www.jsiuk.com.

ENDNOTES
1 "Fighting HIV/AIDS: Strategies for Success 2002–2005" (UNICEF, June 2004).
2 M. J. Kelly, "Planning for Education in the Context of HIV/AIDS" (UNESCO, 2000).
3 HelpAge International, "The Cost of Love: Older People in the Fight against AIDS in Tanzania" (2004), http://www.helpage.org/publica-

---

June 29, 2005).
5 Ilse Derluyn, Eric Broekaert, Gilberte Schuyten, and Els De Temmerman. "Posttraumatic Stress in Former Ugandan Child Soldiers," *The Lancet* 363 (2004): 861–863.
6 Margaret McCallin, "Community Involvement in the Social Reintegration of Child Soldiers," in *Rethinking the Trauma of War,* ed. Patrick J. Bracken and Celia Petty (London: Free Association Books, 1998) 60–75.

(accessed July 21, 2005).
4 Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).
5 In an article this length, it is not possible to do justice to these concepts. For a more in-depth explanation, see J. Garbarino et al., *Children and Families in the Social Environment*, 2d ed. (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992).
6 Harvie Conn, *The American City and the Evangelical Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994).

Journal of Youth and Theology 4, no. 1 (April 2005): 35.
16 UNICEF, 2003, p. vii, as quoted in "An Introduction to this Child Participation Issue," *The Chris-Caba Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 4.
17 Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Sammtliche Werke* (Verklin: Georg Reimer, 1834–1864), II/6:71–72.
18 Mary Ann Hinsdale, "'Infinite Openness to the Infinite': Karl Rahner's Contributions to Modern Catholic Thought on the Child," in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 428.

tions/PapersEtc/PapersEtc.html.
4 "Learning How to Survive: How Education for All Would Save Millions of Young People from HIV/AIDS" (Oxfam, 2004). See: http://campaignforeducation.org/resources/resources_listall.php.
5 Ibid.
6 "World Vision Hope Alert" newsletter (April 2005), http:www.worldvision.org/help/aids-lib.nsf/setLibMain!OpenFrameSet.
7 Carol Coombe, "Mitigating the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education Supply, Demand and Quality," in *AIDS, Public Policy, and Child Well-Being*, ed. Giovanni Andrea Cornea, (UNICEF, 2003). http://www.unicef-icdc.org/research/ESP/aids/aids_index.html.
8 "A Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS" (UNICEF, 2004), http://www.unicef.org/aids/files/Framework_English.pdf.
9 G. Foster, Study of the Response of Faith-Based Organizations to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (New York: World Council for Religions and Peace/UNICEF, 2004).
10 "Future Imperfect: Protecting Children on the Brink," a discussion paper prepared by Mbulawa Mugabe, Mark Sterling, and Alan Whiteside for the "Africa Leadership Consultation: Acting for Children on the Brink." Johannesburg, South Africa, September 10th, 2002.

7 Derluyn et al., "Posttraumatic Stress," 863.
8 Ibid., 862.
9 Susan McKay and Michael Wessells, "Correspondence: Posttraumatic Stress in Former Ugandan Child Soldiers," *The Lancet* 363 (2004): 1646.
10 McCallin, "Community Involvement."
11 McKay and Wessells, "Correspondence: Posttraumatic Stress."
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 McCallin, "Community Involvement."

"A rapidly changing world demands a strategic missiological response. The fastest growing community in our global population is 'Children at Risk,' children made vulnerable through the ravages of war, HIV/AIDS, famine, violence, exploitation, and poverty. This is just one of the vital areas of mission training being addressed in the School of Intercultural Studies."

Douglas McConnell
Dean, Fuller School of Intercultural Studies

CELEBRATING
40
FORTY YEARS

engaging leaders to help {children at risk}

Fuller offers opportunities to learn to work with the most vulnerable and yet most missiologically strategic populations in the world:

- Understand and apply principles of good practice for work with children.
- Connect the links between work with children, their families, and local faith communities.
- Recognize signs of trauma in children and understand how to address them.
- Develop skills in social advocacy on behalf of others and in forming relationships with children during their times of critical need.

Fuller is also dedicated to serving the needs of at-risk youth in programs integrated between its Schools of Theology, Psychology, and Intercultural Studies. For more information please visit *www.fuller.edu*.

The School of Intercultural Studies offers PhD and Doctor of Missiology programs, as well as the Master of Theology, Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies, Master of Arts in Crosscultural Studies, and a Certificate in Christian Studies. For further information on these and other areas of specialization such as the Emerging Church, Global Christian Worship, and Healthcare in Missions please visit www.fuller.edu/swm.

Fuller Theological Seminary's
School of Intercultural Studies
(formerly the School of World Mission)
will celebrate its
**40th Anniversary
November 7–10, 2005.**

Please make plans
to join us for
a week of celebration,
discovery, and dialogue
as we gather from
all around the globe—
missiologists, alumni/ae,
students, faculty,
trustees, partners,
and friends.

Please check for details at
www.fuller.edu/swm/40th

www.fuller.edu/swm

FULLER
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY