

DESERT BLOOMS

January 2012

We were all delighted to be together again after our break for the Christmas holidays. Alex was grinning from ear-to-ear, showing off his newly capped teeth. There are only two pediatric dentists practicing in Juarez currently, and we were fortunate to be able to access their services for Alex whose teeth and gums had been very painful. He had extensive dental work under general anesthesia thanks to some special Christmas donations, and it has made a great difference in his life.

Martin is not a child you can cuddle. He has cerebral palsy and severe spasms make him a challenge to hold. It is difficult to keep him in a sitting position so most of the time he lays on the floor mats and catches glimpses of the activities that pass him by. But he really enjoys the full-length mirrors we installed by the parallel bars. We found a way to keep him upright so that we could watch ourselves in the mirrors while the other children exercised at the bars.

Despite the uncontrollable squirming, Martin was quite entertained by his own reflection and



the coming and going of the walkers. And each one who passed was greeted with his beautiful smile!

“Mainstreaming” is a familiar concept in the field of special education. At Santo Niño we

have our own version of this technique thanks to the siblings of our children with special needs. Working on a wooden puzzle with 3 year old Reyna, Oscar’s big sister Millie (also 3) was quick to join us at the table. Watching her learning process gave us ideas that helped Reyna grasp the concepts of shapes, contours, and animals. It also helped us with benchmarks for Reyna’s achievements. The two little girls kept each other entertained for quite awhile, working the puzzle, dumping the pieces and starting over (and over) again.

Speaking of benchmarks, Cristina put a poster on the wall in the kitchen. The message is a prayer which she says she recites at least once every day: *“Lord, forgive my lack of love and my rough manner towards my neighbor. Forgive my lack of charity and patience and my lack of affection and courtesy. Forgive me for the sweet word that I didn’t say and the recognition of other persons that I didn’t give. Forgive me, Lord, for the hardness of my frozen heart.”* Cristina has set the bar high for all of us.



If you haven’t already visited our website please take a look! www.proyectosantonino.org It is new and improved with all the previous Desert Blooms as well as photos and a video! Also, if you are receiving this monthly newsletter in the mail but could receive it via email, please contact us at:

proyectosantonino@gmail.com. Thank you for your prayers and support of this ministry! God bless you!

Photos

▪ Left: Martin with his mom Celia and his sisters, Janet and Patti

Above: Cristina, front left, with some of our clinic team: Kika, Lupe, Luci and Griselda