



# YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM (YTP) UPDATE

JUNE  
2016

## Transition Houses

It has been a slight period of change this year for YTP. With renovations taking place to our previous Youth Transition Houses, we needed to find new, suitable accommodation for the young people living in the transition houses, and thankfully we were able to find properties close to Misión Mexico. We also had a number of changes within the houses themselves, with 1 of our young men transitioning out of the Youth Transition Program into independence.

“Since leaving Misión Mexico I have moved to Puerto Escondido, which is a coastal town in a Oaxaca, a different state of Mexico. I first found a job working in a café, then I moved to a job in a hamburger restaurant and now I work as a chef in a kitchen. I live in a small apartment that I rent.

When I was in the YTP, I learnt about how to cook for myself and what is healthy and what isn't. I also learnt about saving money, how to find a job and other things about living independently.

I think the YTP is important because it starts the process of the kids moving out early, and slowly, so by the time kids leave Misión Mexico, they are confident and ready to live by themselves. When we are living in the YTP Transition House, we are able to have the freedom to do things for ourselves, like go shopping, which helps us to learn about living alone.” **Delmar**

One of our young women, Dulce, also plans to soon leave the Youth Transition Program, having graduated university this year. Dulce completed her Social Work degree and is looking forward to pursuing further study by completing her Master's Degree in Social Work in the near future. Dulce is our first ever Misión Mexico female to graduate university and we couldn't be prouder of her.

Finally, Griselda, one of our older females, exited the Youth Transition Program upon completing her Prepa qualifications, and is now living independently and working in Cancun.



# Youth Groups

The Boys Group and the Girls Group continue to meet weekly, and these structured group meetings continue to be a highlight for many of the young people involved. The groups provide a forum for the young people to learn and talk about important issues and concepts. Our young people have significant involvement in the running of these groups, and in collaboration with YTP staff, really drive and identify the topics that these groups cover. In recent months' topics covered have ranged from identifying strengths, to cyber safety to health education and many more. To encourage consistent and meaningful participation, all of the young people who take part in these groups are invited to participate in an off-site activity which has included things such as going to the cinema, going out for a Quesadilla dinner or going camping at our Misión Surf property.

## YTP Cooking Program

The YTP cooking program continues to take part each week on either a Friday or Saturday night. This is a practical life skills program which involves the young people planning and preparing a healthy nutritional meal and using appropriate budgeting skills to buy the ingredients needed. The kids love being able to decide what they are cooking, within the constraints of their budget and for them being able to visit the supermarket and be in charge of the process is a real highlight. By cooking in small groups, teamwork and leadership skills are developed, and it is wonderful to see our young people step up and really take the lead in the kitchen and in their groups.



# YTP team

This year we welcomed Luke Owen to the YTP team as our new youth worker. Luke is responsible for mentoring all our male YTP participants, running boys group, managing the male transition house and co-managing the YTP cooking program alongside our female YTP youth worker. Luke is also acting as photographer/videographer for the Misión and teaching our young adults how to edit their own videos.

“My work with the boys here is challenging but extremely rewarding. All of the older boys in the house meet with me on a Friday evening where we recap the week, talk about the successes they have had and any challenges they have faced. We then work through a personal development curriculum I have created.

A recent highlight for me has been our Boy’s Group camping trip out near the beach. The outing acted as both a reward for working through the life skills curriculum and as a forum for using some of the skills they are learning, but also just as a way of them to experience new things. They learnt to make a fire, roast marshmallows and go fishing. The boys were responsible for planning budgets and food menus for the entire trip, which allowed them to use some of the skills they have been learning from the cooking program.” **Luke**

As an experienced teacher and boarding house master, Luke has begun working with our Education Coordinator to produce individual study plans for all of our boys to help them improve their grades in subjects they are struggling with. Over the next six months Luke will be working closely with our five older boys to enable them to set goals, explore career paths and research higher education options.

**We could not have achieved any of these successes without our YTP Sponsors. We cannot thank you enough for your funding and continued support to our program and our young adults.**

