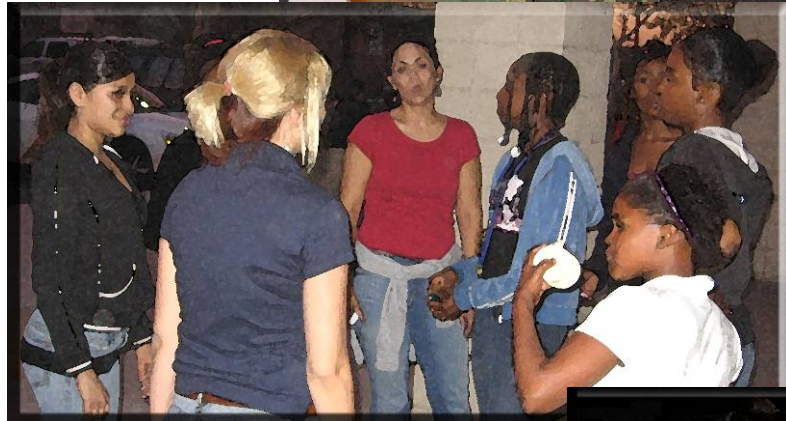
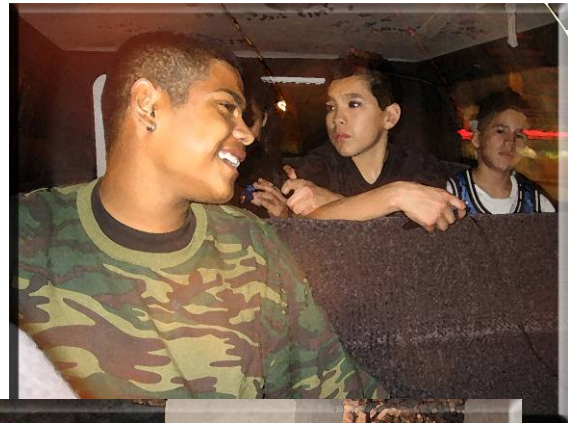


July 2006

Junior Highers: Leading Now!

Every Tuesday night during the school year, Kristen Martin, NM's Junior High Director, leads 100-125 junior high students at Jr High Kids Club. The Neighborhood Ministries Jr. High group may be a little different than the junior high groups in your area:

- ◆ Tisha (names changed) has 10 brothers and sisters from 2 different families. Her father was removed from the home by CPS a month ago when Tisha's younger sister showed up at school with bruises. They are now back with their mom although they haven't lived with her for years. The family is reluctant to talk about the situation, but Tisha has decided to be a leader instead of sitting back. She has a fun-loving spirit that is evident to anyone around her. A few months ago, some of her friends were trying to fight some other girls. Tisha began quoting Bible verses to them about how gossip makes fights worse and that they needed to back down and stop gossiping about it. In the middle of her peer-pressured world and difficult family situation, she chose to make a powerful stand for Jesus.
- ◆ Julio's older brother was shot and murdered 2 years ago. He lives in a very small apartment with his sisters and mother. His dad is out of the picture and his mom is frequently gone as well. Despite these challenges, Julio gets himself to school everyday and recently started attending church every Sunday on his own, frequently calling Kristen for a ride. He continues to do well in school and recently started reading his Bible and praying on his own because he wants to get closer to God.



Leadership Development: These 2 students are also a part of “Discipleship”, a special part of Junior High Kids Club. An hour before the regular meeting, about 25 junior high students meet with Kristen and a few adult sponsors to continue to learn about following Jesus as a servant leader. They come early, provide peer leadership during the regular meeting, and stick around afterwards to clean up – providing amazing role models for their own friends (and the rest of us, too)!

Junior high-age kids are at a unique turning point and Kristen has three distinct goals for the students under her care:

1. **Junior High students need to understand that they are part of the larger church community.** Recently, 30 to 40 junior highers attended The Neighborhood Church worship on “Junior High Sunday.” Several have been coming regularly now, and Junior High Sponsors (adult volunteers) are regularly inviting the kids in their group to attend with them.
2. **Junior High students need to grow in their faith and apply scriptural principles to their daily lives.** The Discipleship Program is helping kids to trust God with their lives. They’ve been memorizing Scripture and asking really great questions about who God is and what it means to live for Him.
3. **Junior High students need to reach out into the world around them –** to understand that life isn’t just about them. Service projects help to expand their worldview, and are an important part of their activities.

One of the highlights of the year is the summer Junior High Kids Camp. Just completed (June 12-16), the theme was “God is Real”. Dedicated leaders (including high school leaders as well as these junior high “Discipleship” students, provided a fantastic week for 150.

Thanks for continuing to pray with us as we provide a camping experience for over 800 children, junior high students, and high schoolers this summer – Jesus will surely show up!

Warmly,


Kit Danley
President

Upcoming Activities:

- ◆ Summer Camps – now through mid-August
- ◆ Shoe Day – August 12
- ◆ Fall Volunteer Training – Sept. 16
- ◆ Fall K-12 Programs Begin – week of Sept 18

For more information, see www.nmaz.net or call 602-252-5225