



A Breeze Of Hope



Our History

As survivors of childhood sexual violence, Brisa De Angulo and Parker Palmer—Co-Presidents of A Breeze of Hope—have yearned for dramatic cultural change and envisioned a world where all children grow up in safe, loving environments without the threat of sexual violence, neglect, or maltreatment.

To make this dream a reality throughout the Americas and the rest of the world, Brisa and Parker founded *A Breeze of Hope Foundation*.

Who We Are

A Breeze of Hope is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides free legal, social, and psychological services to child victims of sexual violence and that strives to eradicate sexual violence through a variety of prevention strategies, including the creation of contexts in which children can experience healthy early childhood development.

Our Programs

A Breeze of Hope operates two programs in Cochabamba, Bolivia, *Centro Una Brisa de Esperanza* (CUBE) and *Comunidad Educativa para la Vida* (CEV).

CUBE is Bolivia's first and only center dedicated solely to the prevention of sexual violence and the provision of free legal, social, and psychological services to child and adolescent victims.

CEV provides holistic education to young children from Chilimarca, Bolivia, an impoverished semi-urban community. At CEV, children develop emotional resiliency and the skills they need to transform their communities with love and respect for human rights.



DANIELA'S STORY

TEN YEARS ago a precious child walked through CUBE's doors. She appeared to be only eight or nine years old. She was silent, and her gaze never left the floor. I (Brisa) welcomed her to CUBE, and after countless attempts to speak with her, she gently whispered in my ear, "I'm Daniela, please help me."

Daniela was contemplating suicide. Her uncle had been raping her as far back as she could remember and she had never told anyone. But now, Daniela—just 11 years old—had no option but to break the silence. Her family had just discovered that she was four months pregnant. And after suffering several horrifying beatings at the hands of family members for being a "whore," her parents kicked her out.

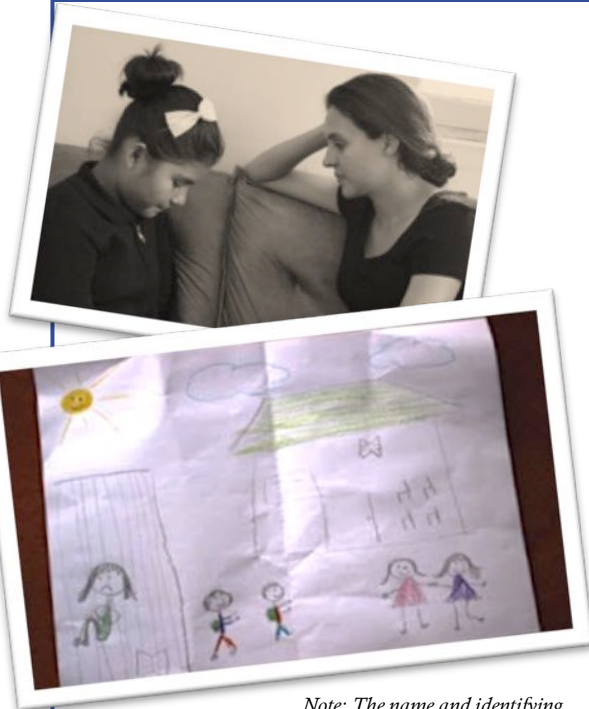
When Daniela arrived to CUBE, it had been open for just a few months. CUBE was still young, but it had already become the safe place that I never found after breaking the silence of my own rape. And it was there in CUBE that I gently held Daniela's hand and told her, "I believe you. You're not alone. We're in this together."

As Daniela lifted her little face to look at me, I could see the anguish in her innocent eyes as tears rolled down her cheeks. She painfully sighed, and then cried out, "I'm pregnant ...I'm pregnant ...I'm pregnant."

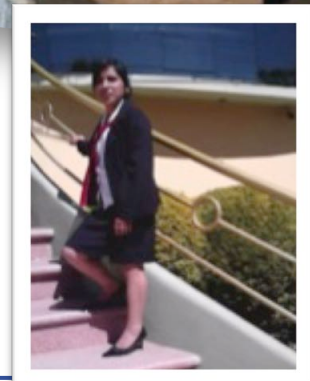
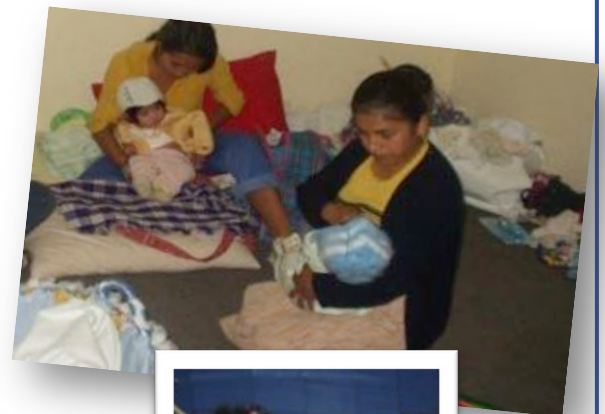
Daniela was one of the first girls to receive free legal, social, and psychological services at CUBE. We soon found a supportive member of Daniela's extended family to lovingly take her in. Daniela began participating in more and more group therapies and showing greater willingness to live. I remember working with her in art and music therapy like it was yesterday. All of her drawings and narratives had one common theme. They reflected her only desire, her only dream: to return to school. At just 11 years old—and 8 months pregnant—Daniela was expelled from school because her pregnancy was deemed a distraction to other students.

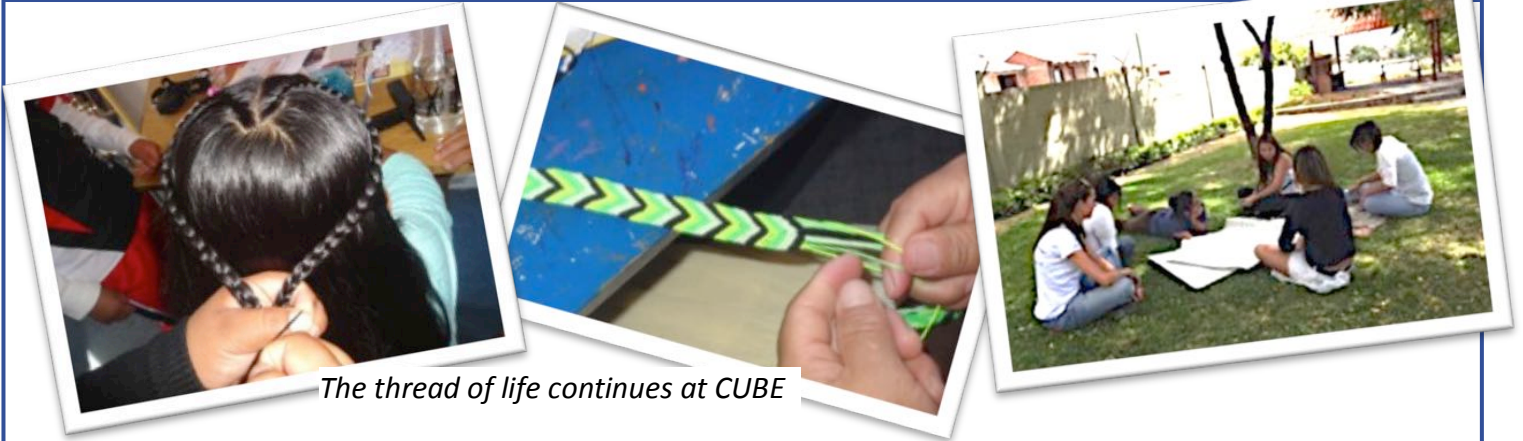
Soon after, Daniela gave birth to a beautiful premature baby boy. She was immediately ostracized in the media and in the streets as "the whore who got what she deserved." But CUBE surrounded Daniela with love and support. Each of CUBE's professionals paid out of pocket to ensure that Daniela and her beautiful baby had everything they needed. Nonetheless, the only thing she wanted was missing. She wanted to study.

One afternoon in CUBE last December, I received a little white envelope. It was perfectly flat, so much so that it looked like it had been ironed. I got chills all over my body. Was this a suicide note? On the front it said, "For Brisa: Because you believed in me and never left my side. Thanks for what you have done in my life." I was scared to read it, but as I carefully peeled it open I saw a beautiful graduation invitation. I began to cry. It was from Daniela. But it wasn't a high school graduation invitation. It was a college graduation invitation! Daniela had become a teacher. She now dreams to teach girls who, like her, have struggled to obtain an education because of difficult life circumstances.



Note: The name and identifying information of the child were changed to ensure anonymity.





The thread of life continues at CUBE

Program Centro Una Brisa de Esperanza (CUBE)

CUBE is the first and only center in Bolivia dedicated solely to the prevention of sexual violence and the provision of free transdisciplinary services to child and adolescent victims of sexual violence.

At CUBE children have access to compassionate attorneys, psychologists, and social workers that work together with the children to design integrated treatment plans and legal strategies that focus on the child's healing process.

This year at CUBE, children received a broad spectrum of therapeutic services that provided them the opportunity to heal, laugh, play, and be children again. These services include:

1. **Individual and group therapy:** Dance therapy, music therapy, trauma focused cognitive behavioral therapy; trauma focused play therapy; fit-ball therapy; yoga therapy; music therapy; art/ceramics therapy; and occupational therapy
2. **Life-project income generating classes:** Hair styling and braiding classes; baking and culinary classes; stitching, knitting, and artisan craft classes
3. **Social activities** - Going to the movies; visiting parks; going out for ice cream; English classes; and music classes
4. **Free Medical Services**
5. **Free Legal Services**
6. **Free Social Work Services**
7. **Free Nutritious Lunches and Snacks**

These activities helped the children to recover their dreams for the future and progress in their healing journeys.

Also, CUBE facilitated self-help groups for non-offending family members in which they learned skills for healthy communication, respecting rights and responsibilities within the home, managing vicarious trauma, healthy expressions of love, and more. Non-offending family members also received therapy and participated in workshops that emphasized the importance of creating supportive, non-revictimizing environments for their children.





In 2014, CUBE provided free legal, social, psychological, and medical services to **404 children**. The legal team established a **95% conviction rate!**

Since its opening in 2004, CUBE has:

1. Provided free psychological, social, legal, and medical services to over 1,300 child victims of sexual violence and their families.

We have helped these precious children to regain control over their bodies and the will to live. 95% are attending school or college and are pursuing their dreams. Many of them have become advocates for social change.

2. Educated and trained over 70,000 people, including psychologists, attorneys, social

workers, forensic physicians, educators, prosecutors, police officers, and judges. Through these workshops, CUBE challenges discriminatory laws, policies, and cultural norms. These workshops help to create a friendlier courtroom environment for children who break the silence. They also help to establish protective policies and broad systemic change in Bolivia.

3. Maintained a 95% conviction rate in criminal trials. In comparison to the Bolivian Government's 2% conviction rate in sexual assault trials, CUBE has established a 95% conviction rate. This conviction rate results from CUBE's sustained efforts to provide the highest quality legal representation and to educate judges and prosecutors.



AUGUST 9th!

Each year on August 9th, CUBE organizes the National March Against Sexual Violence and In Solidarity with Child Victims. This year over **10,000** participants showed up! The children were thrilled to see so many people proudly proclaiming, "You're not alone!" Also, the children presented a petition to the President of the Court requesting that all cases involving child victims of sexual violence be given special priority. The President of the Court signed the petition, and just days later circulated a memo to all judges under her authority stating that—as a matter of international human rights—judges are to give priority and preeminence to all cases involving child victims of sexual violence!



Our Approach to Prevention

Sexual violence against children is a global pandemic and is the product of complex relations among social, communal, relational, and individual factors. Thus, we take a three-tiered approach to prevention that aims to shift socio-cultural patterns, functions, and beliefs.

Primary Prevention strategies aim to remove the causes of sexual violence at a structural level and to construct safe and healthy environments in which children can experience comprehensive development and protection from all forms of violence. These strategies aim to reduce factors that contribute to the formation of sexual offenders and to stop sexual violence before it happens.

Secondary prevention strategies aim to reduce the prevalence of sexual violence by providing immediate transdisciplinary responses aimed at halting or slowing the progress of the short-term (and by implication the long-term) physical, mental, emotional, and social consequences of sexual violence. Secondary prevention requires highly specialized programs and institutions that can provide easily accessible comprehensive support to those who have the courage to break the silence, begin the healing journey, and initiate the judicial process.

Tertiary prevention strategies aim to reduce the impact of long-term consequences of sexual violence and to restore survivors' rights and sense of wholeness. This requires long-term support and rehabilitation programs for survivors, as well as long-term interventions in social, educational, and familial environments where sexual violence has occurred.



Sexual Violence Prevention

This year **13,639** people participated in trainings, workshops, and conferences on sexual violence prevention, the importance of disclosing sexual violence, and effective application of laws protecting child victims. Participants included:

Bolivia-Cochabamba:

- 6,990 Students
- 437 Teachers
- 312 Judges, Prosecutors, and Police
- 437 Postgraduate Students
- 1,359 Parents
- 961 Professionals
- 2,715 General Public
- 43 Volunteers

Bolivia-Tarija

- 60 Professionals
- 25 Judges and Prosecutors

Canada

- 300 Professionals

CUBE's professionals also trained 267 student advocates in managing the disclosure of sexual violence as part of CUBE's school based sexual violence prevention program

called Youth to Youth (*Joven a Joven*). Once trained, these students provided workshops to 1,955 students.

CUBE also held 15 public fairs on sexual violence against children, the importance of breaking the silence, and the help available to those who break the silence. Approximately **52,570** people were reached directly with this crucial and often life changing information.

CUBE's attorneys organized 20 institutions and 150 government officials to discuss Law No. 348 (Law Against Violence Against Women), which increases legal protections for child victims of sexual violence. The meeting identified flaws in Law No. 348's statutory structure and developed strategies to better apply and enforce the law. The meeting proved a wonderful contribution to the law's uniform application.



Program Comunidad Educativa Para La Vida (CEV)

As part of our primary prevention strategy, we operate CEV, an early childhood development program in Chilimarca, Bolivia that works with parents since the moment pregnancy is detected and with infants and children up to 7 years of age. At CEV, children experience safe, nurturing environments where they develop emotional resiliency and learn the skills they need to transform their families and communities with love, peace, and respect for human rights.

CEV's educational approach is based on five key health determinants: 1) physical nutrition; 2) cognitive nutrition;

3) emotional nutrition; 4) self-agency; and 5) safe and enriching environments. All curricular activities must enhance these health determinants.

In addition to this high quality education, the children at CEV receive nutritious meals, as well as free psychological, medical, and dental services.

During 2014, 173 children received high quality education at CEV based on values of gender equality and respect for human rights. 80 parents received training in early childhood development, prevention of violence, healthy conflict resolution, gender equality, neurological development in children, and more. Twenty members of the Bolivian Parliament received workshops on early childhood development as a form of primary sexual violence prevention and explored the



possibility of implementing this form of prevention in Bolivia's schools. Also 4,880 teachers, legislators, ministers of education, and other government officials received training in early childhood development. Participants came from various countries: El Salvador – 300; Monte Rey, Mexico – 3,000; Puebla, Mexico – 1,500; Peru – 80.



Volunteers

Rutgers Nursing Students

Seventeen students conducted well-child check-ups for 400 children to detect physical/sexual abuse, malnourishment, dental problems, and common illnesses. The nurses also vaccinated stray dogs against rabies to make Chilimarca safer for children who walk to school on a daily basis. Their participation in Chilimarca’s annual canine vaccination campaign significantly expanded its coverage and dramatically reduced levels of rabies in the community.

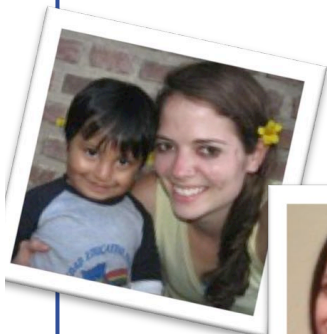


Eastern University Students

Fifteen students helped to organize the Annual March Against Sexual Violence on August 9th. The students prepared activities for the children at CUBE and distributed information about sexual violence and the help available to victims. On the day of the march, the students formed a protective border around the children from CUBE as they marched through the streets demanding justice and judicial reform.

Tara and Gillian

Tara and Gillian—both certified yoga instructors—provided yoga therapy and training to professionals and children from CUBE and CEV, to pregnant women from the community of Chilimarca, and to the general public. Tara and Gillian produced a yoga manual in Spanish and started what has become a celebrated therapy program in CUBE. Twice a week, the children of CUBE engage in trauma focused yoga therapy.



Lisa, Christine, and Valerie

Lisa and Christine volunteered their time at CEV. They assisted CEV’s educators and richly contributed to the early childhood development program. They also organized wonderful activities to engage parents in the education activities.

Valerie volunteered her time at CUBE and CEV. For one year, she provided invaluable assistance to CUBE and CEV and her love for the children has been nothing less than inspirational!