

**Doors of Hope**  
**Pentecostal Church of Chile Trauma Healing and Resilience Development**  
**Six Months after the Earthquake in Chile**

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD, “plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” Jeremiah 29:11*

The Pentecostal Church of Chile responded within days of the February 27th earthquake and tsunami, first with emergency food, water, health care, and clothing. Then the church began to build Blessing Cabins, a project that continues as more homes must be torn down due to safety concerns. The church, through its Shalom Center, also responded to the emotional trauma suffered by many people in the wake of the catastrophe by designing a project called “Doors of Hope” to bring healing to and develop resilience in individuals and communities affected by the catastrophe.



**STAR TRAINING:** In January 2010, the Shalom Center hosted its first STAR training (Seminars in Trauma Awareness and Resilience) with the help of the Brookfield Institute in Massachusetts. In the first week after the earthquake, the people who had been certified in STAR 1 prepared a handout with instructions about how to offer emotional first aid to adults as well as children. This handout was widely shared throughout the Pentecostal Church of Chile as well as others in the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Regions of Chile.

**DOORS OF HOPE WORKSHOP:** Later in March, the same people who had been certified in STAR 1 designed a workshop to be held in local churches and communities throughout the identified “shake area” which included the Metropolitan Region (Santiago, the capital city), and the same regions mentioned above. This two hour workshop is an introduction to trauma and resilience and includes special topics and activities for adults, youth, and children. With the help of the Superintendent Pastors of the Pentecostal Church of Chile, eight trainings were held from May to August 2010 to teach local church and community leaders how to use the workshop materials and the basic theories and practices of trauma healing and resilience. The people trained to lead a Doors of Hope workshop received all of the necessary materials to carry out the program (background information, craft materials, music, and activities). Each person also committed to implementing the workshop with adults, youth, and children in their local churches or communities. The women of Tomé and Dichato, two coastal towns severely damaged by the tsunami, made “Esperanza” or “Hope” dolls to be included with the workshop materials. The people trained to lead the workshops learned to use Esperanza dolls to offer hugs and comfort and initiate conversations especially with children.



**Summary of churches and people trained to lead the Doors of Hope workshop**

**Number of people trained so far: 155**

Sixth Region: 26 people

Seventh Region: 57 people

Eighth Region: 26 people

Shalom Center staff: 28 people

Metropolitan Region: 18 people

Number of local institutions represented in trainings: 4

Total number of local churches represented in trainings: 69

**HEALING RETREAT FOR WOMEN:** On April 24 and 25, 2010, the Shalom Center held a Prayer Shawl retreat for women. The women who participated in this retreat learned about how the healing process can be strengthened as they knit, pray, and create with their hands. They also learned that blessing others, even in those moments when one has one's own needs, can also be a healing practice.



**TRAUMA HEALING AND MASSAGE:** Given the long-standing relationship with the Shalom Center and experience in the field of trauma healing, the Brookfield Institute offered to train someone from the Shalom Center staff in massage for trauma healing, Healing Touch, and various forms of Thought Field Therapy. In July 2010, Alejandra Benitez, who is on the Shalom Center facilitation staff (overseeing health and safety issues) and is also a nurse, traveled to Massachusetts for a two-week intensive training in these areas. Alejandra is from one of the areas worst hit by the tsunami and is already applying what she learned at her work in the municipal government clinic. She will also integrate her new skills into the trauma healing program of the Shalom Center.

**MEDIATION:** As a preventive response to the possibility of adolescents “acting inward” with violence toward themselves or “acting out” with violence towards others after the collective trauma suffered on February 27<sup>th</sup>, the Shalom Center has contacted two church youth groups, one in Constitución where the tsunami hit, and another in Sagrada Familia, where many people lost their adobe homes in the earthquake, to begin the Medacción (conflict transformation, mediation, peace building, and trauma healing) program. These groups will begin weekly meetings at the end of September under the guidance of Shalom Center volunteer staff. This program will end with two summer camps in January 2011.



**STAR 1 TRAINING AND ROOTS IN THE RUINS TRAINING:**

During two weekends in September, fourteen people will be trained by the Brookfield Institute in the basic introduction to trauma healing and resilience STAR course. In addition, eight of the people originally trained in January of this year will receive further instruction in the Brookfield Institute's Roots in the Ruins program. These newly trained people will have the opportunity to share their skills at the Women's National Congress of the Pentecostal Church of Chile, at three regional retreats for Pastors and their spouses, at two Compassion Fatigue gatherings, and at various workshops and camps between September 2010 and February 2011.

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