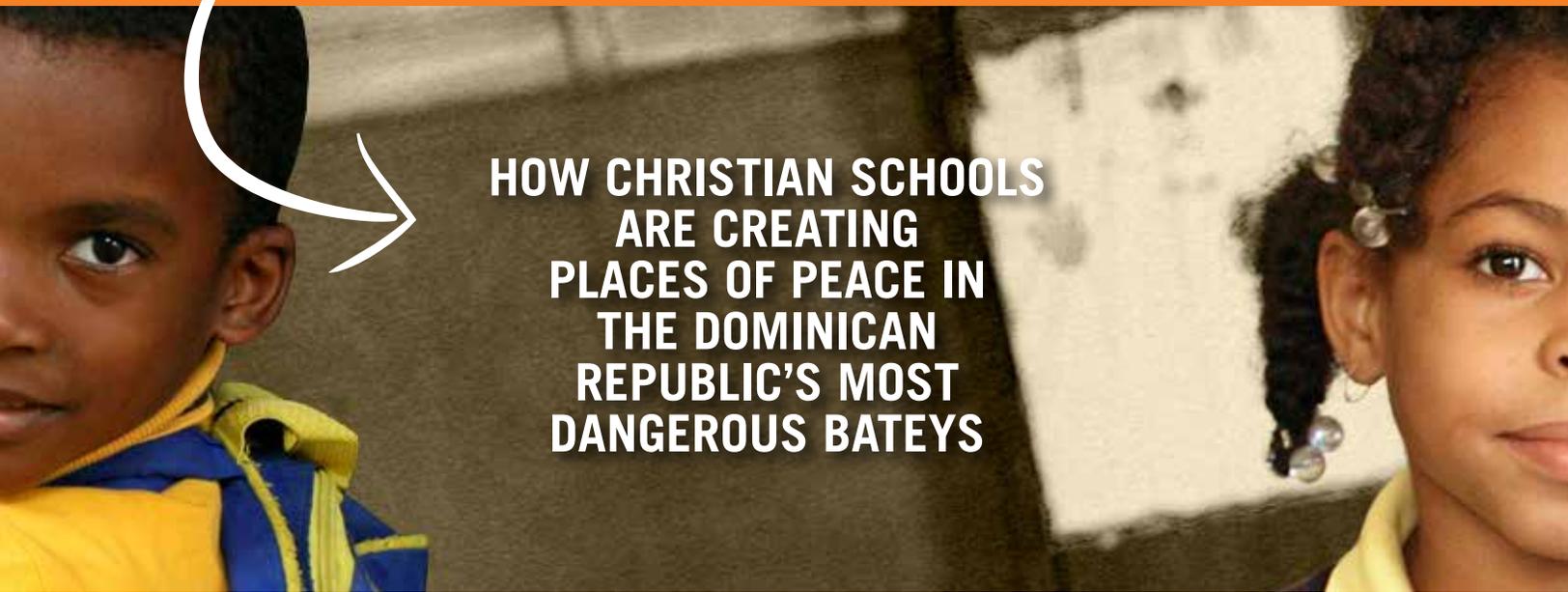


GET INSPIRED

TEACHING PEACE



HOW CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS ARE CREATING PLACES OF PEACE IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S MOST DANGEROUS BATEYS

The walls are a bright, canary yellow. The floors, clean grey concrete. On the wall hangs a colourful paper cut-out of a tree – with leaves containing the Spanish words for “faithfulness”, “gratitude”, and “punctuality”.

This is Nuevo Creacion de Fe (New Creation of Faith). It was built with the help of EduDeo HANDS teams and funded by your generous support. This school has become a place of refuge in one of the Dominican Republic's most violent bateys – for the country's most vulnerable kids.

Its mission? To transform children's lives with education and teach them the peace of Christ.

VIOLENCE AND DIVISION

“The contexts in which we work are affected not just by poverty – but also by violence,” says Mario Matos, director of Colegios Cristianos Reformados (COCREF), EduDeo's partner.

Students come to school having experienced violence. They come believing that people from Haiti are ‘less deserving’ than native Dominicans. These ideas and experiences turn into schoolyard fights. They become children bullied because they're of Haitian descent.

“My oldest daughter – I remember the first time she came home crying because she was called ‘Damned Haitian’.”

Mario has experienced this first hand.

“I suffered some bullying. And I know a lot of kids of Haitian origin suffer bullying just because of their skin colour. Their accent.” Mario says. “My oldest daughter – I remember the first time she came home crying because... she was called ‘Damned Haitian’. I had to sit with her and explain why some people think like that about Haitians.”

A HISTORY OF CONFLICT

The story of discrimination between the people of Haiti and the Dominican Republic is a long and bloody one. For a time, the Dominican Republic and Haiti were one country. There was a war. On February 27, 1944, the Dominican Republic became independent –

CONTINUED »

A CLASS DIVIDED

▶▶ CONTINUED FROM COVER



forging the Dominican identity as being ‘non-Haitian’. Since then, anti-Haitianism has haunted the Dominican Republic.

LEARN MORE:

To learn more about promoting healthy conflict in the classroom, watch the video online:

edudeo.com/learn

TEACHING PEACE

How does COCREF respond to violence and discrimination? Education.

“Our classrooms are places to practice reconciliation. We are very intentional about it,” Mario says. “I believe even the way we teach Dominican History

is different to the way it is taught in public schools, where kids come out of the class hating Haitians and Spanish [people]. Our kids are taught to love their neighbours and that there is no difference between Haitians and Dominicans.”

GOING FURTHER

“Turning classrooms into places of reconciliation begins with the teachers,” says Mario. “The teachers need to understand the roots of violence. And how to respond to [them] and how to equip the kids and their families to respond to that reality.”

That’s why EduDeo is sending learning leaders Diane Stronks (of Edifide) and Ann Martin (of Shalem Mental Health Network) to train teachers on ‘restorative practices’.

“Restorative practices are more than just a toolkit for managing conflict in the classroom,” says Diane. “They create understanding. They build trust. And that improves what is at the heart of an excellent education: a teacher’s relationship with his or her students.”

BEYOND BAD BEHAVIOUR: Hope for the Child No School Wanted

They are the children no school wants. The kids who act out – insult authority – abuse their classmates – and, in the worst cases, bring weapons to school. Ambiorix was one of these children. He was in grade twelve – he’d been tossed out of several schools – and he was running out of options. Desperate, his parents went to one of EduDeo’s partnering schools, Renacer.

Renacer’s principal, Lisbet, choose to believe in him. Ambiorix’s first three days were hard.

“I believe in you... I know that you can succeed.”

Day 1 – Ambiorix insulted his fellow students. Day 2 was worse. Day 3, Lisbet went to speak to Ambiorix in one of his classes. She moved his backpack so she could sit beside him. Ambiorix froze. Lisbet looked inside the backpack and found a knife.

She took the teenager to her office. Ambiorix was sure he was going to be expelled again. The conversation that followed surprised him.

“I believe in you,” Lisbet told him. “I know that you can succeed.”

Lisbet kept the knife – and allowed Ambiorix to stay in the school.

She also spoke to other students, explaining that Ambiorix had some issues he was dealing with – and that he was learning how to behave at Renacer. The students befriended Ambiorix, despite his initial abuse.

From that day on, Ambiorix’s behaviour changed. He no longer insulted teachers. He laughed with the students he had hurt. Through the work of the Holy Spirit – and the healthy relationships built between teachers & classmates – Ambiorix’s life was transformed.



Lisbet, principal of Renacer

EDUCATION IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF MY STUDENTS

Story by Mayelin Rosario

When I started to work at Nueva Creacion de Fe school, I met a child called Derbelis. She had the particularity to come late to class, often with a dirty uniform and sometimes with her hair uncombed. When she came to the classroom she would just remain in her desk and did not participate in class or do her assignments. She was disinterested in everything.

Derbelis was not interested in any of the subjects. I did not take into consideration any problems she might be going through. I made the decision to put her on the list of students that would possibly fail the grade.

It wasn't until I received the Biblical worldview training that I came to understand that education is an opportunity to change the lives of my students. Then one day I just came to Derbelis and started to highlight her good qualities. I told her that she is the beloved daughter of God and that she could be different. She could wash her uniform, comb her hair, and other beautiful things.

The child started to cry and I hugged her until she calmed down. She told me that she did not live with her mom but with her aunt and her dad.

After our conversation, I saw many changes in Derbelis' behavior. Her uniform was always clean, she was well combed and the most important thing is that she is now one of the best students in the classroom and is very responsible with her assignments.

Mayelin Rosario is a literature teacher at Neuva Creacion de Fe in the Dominican Republic. The training you gave Mayelin through EduDeo changed the way she taught her students, having a life-changing impact on Derbelis and students like her.



“I told her that she is the beloved daughter of God”

It wasn't until I received the Biblical worldview training that I came to understand that education is an opportunity to change the lives of my students



WHAT'S NEW @EDUDEO?

RUN/WALK THE ROAD2HOPE

Road2Hope is bigger than a race. EduDeo seeks to transform lives by teaching others about God... That's why I sign up for this event: to be part of something transformational!

-BRIGETTE



Brigette has been participating in the Road2Hope since 2008. 3 years ago – after trouble with her knee – doctors told she should never run again. That injury didn't stop her from participating in the Race. Brigette, her husband Paul, and 4 kids do the 5K walk as a family!

Join Brigette on the Road2Hope:
edudeo.com/r2h

Or start your own fundraising walk/run!
edudeo.com/campaigns

HANDS UP!



I continue to see the value of investing in Christian education - allowing change to occur from the ground up, one child at a time.

-GEANNETTE

Early this year, Geannette led a HANDS team of students from Gateway Christian School in Alberta to Nicaragua. EduDeo is looking for more HANDS teams to travel to Nicaragua – Belize – Zambia and the Dominican Republic.

Start a HANDS team with your church, school, family or friends:
visit edudeo.com/hands
or call Karla-Maria:
905-387-9927 ext. 226

CREATING A CARING CULTURE

Schools need to establish a healthy culture in order to get the best out of their students. Restorative practices teach students how to become people who care about other people.

-DIANE STRONKS



As part of EduDeo's Walking Together program, Diane Stronks and Anne Martin will be providing training in restorative practice (helping resolve conflict) for teachers in the Dominican Republic.

Learn about Restorative Practices from Anne & Diane:
edudeo.com/learn



OUR VISION EVERY COMMUNITY TRANSFORMED BY THE GOSPEL.

OUR MISSION TO ADVANCE CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WORLDWIDE.