



Capstone Ministries



Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

Capstone Ministries Program Description

In this Issue

Page 1: "Capstone at a Glance"
p. 2: "Capstone cont."
p. 3 "Travel schedule in Canada & USA"
p. Classic photos
p. 4 Various approaches and projects of CM



USA Address:

Capstone Ministries
P.O. Box 2080
Oakdale, CA 95361

Kenya Address:

Dan and Patty Schmelzer
P.O. Box 3962
Kisumu, Kenya 40100

Email: CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com

Website: WWW.CapstoneMinistries.org

The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by
Capstone
Ministries to date:

619

Reconciled since '05



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



"Capstone Ministries"

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Psalm 118:22, 23

Capstone Ministries was founded in 2005 by Dan and Patty Schmelzer after serving in institutional care for three years in Kisumu, Kenya. During those three years Dan and Patty learned that family and divine reconciliation of street boys is a better option than institutional care. Most families to whom street boys are reconciled, live in poverty. However, a poor family is still superior to any institution. Sixteen years of serving full time in Kenya, working with families in abject poverty has revealed one primary Biblical truth: Reconciliation flows from the cross of Jesus Christ. Too many times mission finds expression in the provision of that which is temporary. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is eternal and nothing can replace it. And in the context of family and its natural divine authority, reconciliation is extremely practical. It crucifies the predisposition of selfishness in the human heart and empowers God's people to live for one another. This environment encourages children to flourish, parents to be loving and responsible and communities to be supportive.

Reconciliation between people, however, is seldom an event. After reconciling 483 street boys in those 13 years, we have also learned that it takes time, repeated expressions of repentance and forgiveness, persistence and the spiritual gift of faith to bring a family to a point of being reconciled.

In this article I would like to give an overview of the process of reconciliation at Capstone Ministries. Keep in mind: Every situation is different. Some rescues go smoothly and efficiently. Others take much time and effort. Generally, the more serious the division from home, the longer it takes to bring reconciliation.



(Cont. p. 2 left column)

Over time we have refined our approach to children on the street. Initially we thought a transition center and counseling would be needed before a child could be taken home. We have found that not to be the case. In fact, it is often better to return a child to his home as soon as possible. This minimizes the western influence and dependency mindset from exposure to a “Center.” In addition counseling done in the environment of the home is always superior as the very individuals who need to reconcile are present.

Capstone staff minister directly to boys on the street almost every day, engaging them in conversation about their home and encouraging them to consider reconciliation. Often what a child fears is not poverty or disease. What drove him to the street was a breakdown in relationship caused by his or someone’s sinful and selfish behavior. What is often needed is encouragement to repent, willingness to change and Capstone staff expressing a willingness to stand alongside the child in this conversation of reconciliation.

In this initial crucial step, we have developed relationships with other institutions in Kisumu. The government run children’s detention center is one. Here 50-100 boys and girls are housed. Arrested for various crimes from petty theft to assault, these children await their day in children’s court before being taken back to their parents. Capstone has an excellent reputation with this “Remand Center” and has the confidence of the management. Capstone staff meet children at Remand every week, once to counsel one on one with children and once to present a Biblical lesson for the children and minister to their spiritual needs.



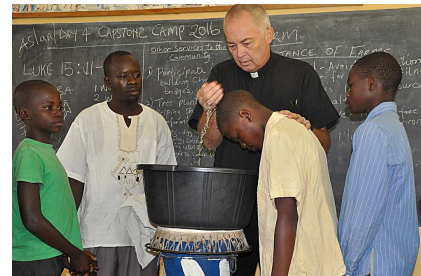
Capstone also works with a Catholic organization in Kisumu called Pandepieri or KUAP. If a Capstone staff rescues a boy late in the day, they will leave the boy overnight at this location and take the boy home the next day.

Recently Capstone staff developed a relationship with the local police and were called to counsel with a boy and take him home.

Follow-up visits with family is the strength of the Capstone program. Each child’s situation will be evaluated in the Friday staff meeting and a program of counseling will be recommended. This is where Capstone staff shine. Home visits can be tough, especially when a parent has been irresponsible. We are in process of developing a Toolkit of Bible Lessons which covers topics on repentance, grace, forgiveness and humility. All staff will be versed in the details of the lessons so that can be applied in a myriad of circumstances and needs.



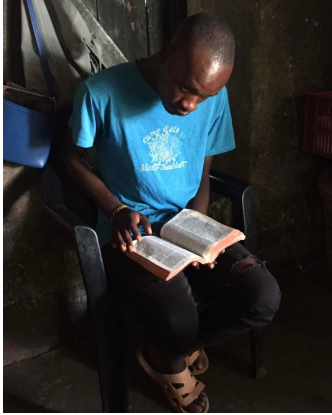
Several years ago, Capstone staff initiated home Bible study groups with parents of reconciled children. Currently we have 14 small groups. These are designed primarily to encourage spiritual growth and be a mutual encouragement to the parents. They meet at least once a month.



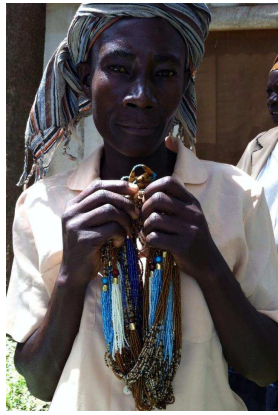
Capstone Camp is an intensive week of spiritual lessons on the six chief parts of Luther’s Catechism leading to Baptism on Friday. 20-30 boys who have been reconciled within the past year are invited to the one-week camp. The intention is to address those areas which need encouragement and development in the boys. Scouting, games competition as well as innovative, practical, and interactive learning exercises make this a fun filled week for the boys who go home with a new spirit and focus.

Classic Photos

Here are some photos from Kenya that show the unique nature of ministry in Kenya.



The Word



The Faces



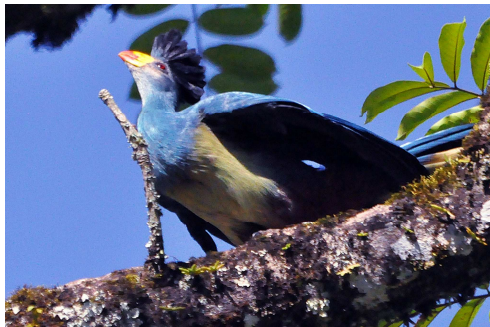
Baptism



Hornbills



Drawing of Abraham by Maxwell, a reconciled street-boy



Dan's Fall Travel Schedule

Below are the dates and locations where Dan will be visiting this spring.

May 1 Victory Lutheran Church, Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada

May 4 CALC Pastor's Retreat, Hastings Lake, Alberta, Canada - Speaker

May 6,7 CALC Convention, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada – Keynote speaker

May 15 Open

May 22 Messiah Lutheran Church, Mounds View, MN

May 29 - Open

June 5 Trinity Lutheran Church, Freistadt. WI

Rescue and Reconciliation

Here are the faces of some of the most recent rescues by Capstone Ministries. Reconciliation takes time, persistence, and prayer. Relationship building is done by Capstone staff almost every day with children caught in the quagmire of street-life.



The Face of Reconciliation

Reconciliation between us and God is an event. It took place once and for all time on Calvary. However, reconciliation between people is a process and takes patience, persistence and faith.

On this page you have outlined some of the elements that go into the complexity of reconciliation.

High Flyer Project

A child who is in school is automatically removed from temptations that can lure him into the street. Succeeding in school enhances self-esteem and brings hope for a brighter future. Once a child reaches Grade 7, Capstone provides a study aid called a “High Flyer.” It is a book that gives overview lessons on the subjects tested in school. Preparation for the KCPE exam in 8th grade is a long process and already in 7th grade, serious pupils are preparing for this 3 day exam. The High Flyer prepares pupils for this exam. Currently Capstone provides the “High Flyer” for eight 7th grade pupils and ten 8th grade pupils. We have seen a significant improvement in exam results since we have started this project.

Lunch Project

Food insecurity can be a push factor for some boys who come from poor rural homes. Tales of white people handing out food in Kisumu can fill a child’s mind with all sorts of ideas when his stomach is empty. It is a reality that in some rural families, daily bread is not always automatic. For this reason Capstone does assist in exceptional situations where self-reliance may take time to develop. Currently 10 families are helped by this project. Food is always given in kind directly to the school to remove any temptation by the family to spend the cash on something else. The idea is: if a child knows he will get food every day in school, he will be less tempted to run away from home for lack of food.

School Uniform Project

All Kenya schools require pupils to wear one school uniform at all times while on campus. This uniform costs at least 1000 KSh = \$10. And this does not include a shoes which can be another \$20. For some rural families this is a hardship that can take them some time to save. The sooner a child is enrolled in school, the more stable he becomes so in needy circumstances, Capstone will provide a school uniform for the child.

High School Sponsorship and Vocational Training

Education is highly valued in Kenya. It is the desire of most primary school pupils to go to a boarding high school. However, the cost is prohibitive for most rural poor families. Capstone has developed a sponsorship program for those pupils who score well on their KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) exams.

However, it is not in the interest of every child to go to a boarding high school. For some it is better to attend a local day school or pursue vocational training. Through a cost sharing program, Capstone offers to assist families who choose this option for their child. For many it is better to enter vocational training and receive a skill in carpentry, masonry, welding, or auto mechanics.

Capstone Camp

Each year 20-30 boys are invited to Capstone Camp. This Camp held in August strives to expose specially selected boys to intense individual and group counseling, spiritual development, academic tutoring and scouting. Held in August at Kima Intl. School of Theology, the camp results in spiritual and behavioral breakthroughs. It is the highlight of the year for Capstone staff as well. Group sessions include a specialized approach to problem solving and counseling called Children’s CHE.

Spiritual Tool Kit

Over the last two years Pastors Isaiah Apiyo and Dan Schmelzer have developed a Biblical toolkit for the staff to use on home visits. The toolkit is comprised of 12 Scriptural stories from the Old and New Testament that deal with the most common spiritual obstacles in rural Kenyan families. The toolkit is used during staff devotional time every Friday and all staff take notes as the Scriptures are studied. The focus is the practical application of the Scripture to the circumstances of families in need of reconciliation. As an example, one portion of Scripture chosen is Chapter 50 of Genesis. Upon the death of Jacob, his sons anticipate retaliation from Joseph for their long history of failure. Retaliation and revenge was a family weakness. Jacob’s brother Esau had done the same when Isaac died. In many rural homes generational dynamic weaknesses are common. The cycle is broken, however when Joseph renews his promise of forgiveness and chooses to love instead of hate.