

## UPDATE ON ICDP IN PANAMA IN 2017

In March 2017, ICDP started a training programme in the El Chorrillo district in Panama City in cooperation with the local organisation "Movimiento Nueva Generacion".

The first workshop was attended by 18 participants, mostly staff members from centres and schools run by the organisation. The Movimiento Nueva Generacion school in El Chorrillo was the venue for the ICDP workshop.

The neighbourhood around is one of the poorest, high-risk areas of Panama, but the school is a very nice, modern, airy place for children to come to learn and to play. The founder of the MNG grew up in El Chorrillo and has worked hard, with great devotion to fulfil his dream of improving the lives of the poor children and young people.



The workshop was conducted by Nicoletta Armstrong, who says the participants were very active and showed interest during the workshop. She continued the training in May and also held a third workshop in November.

The trainees first used the guidelines in relation to their own children and then with children and young people they are working with. In the second half of the year they started to run ICDP courses for parents – in most cases two trainee facilitators worked together, but in some cases this was not possible so there was only one trainee facilitator in charge of a group.

The certification ceremony in November was attended by the director of MNG and also by UNICEF representatives who said that the results were very encouraging - they made plans with ICDP for follow up in 2018.

A father at the workshop in Panama shared about his experience of change. He had been a strict father and used corporal punishment; he seldom talked to his two girls before ICDP, but after participating in the course he found

himself talking and even praising his children - and gradually he stopped using corporal punishment.

Other participants talked about a misconception, common in their community, concerning the effects of empathy. They explained that it was commonly held that children need strict upbringing in order to cope with the harsh realities of life in these marginalized communities, plagued by crime, drugs and violence. However, they said they realized during the ICDP course that empathy was a better way of building strength and resilience in their children."