

# Tiny Tim & Friends

WINTER 2010

WWW.TINYTIMANDFRIENDS.ORG

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## Notes from Dr. Tim Meade & Team

Since partnering with Grassroots Soccer (GRS) – a non-governmental organization that uses the “football pitch” to help engage children and teach them about health and HIV/AIDS – we have screened 4,000 children in the last four months and discovered 5% of the children and their caregivers to be HIV+.

While a few of these children were already enrolled in programs, most are now enrolled in the Tiny Tim and Friends (TTF) medical program. They will receive six months of intensive treatment and counseling as we prepare them to face the rigors of the public ARV system. Our model is working well and has gained the attention of the Ministry of Health and many other important partners who are helping us build a better and stronger organization.

Screening kids at the football pitches has brought some new and unique challenges. The outreaches are held within walking distance from the children’s homes, and we soon found that the only children

coming were those who were well enough to walk to the event. Thus, we were finding few children who were actually infected.

We realized that we needed to be more proactive about getting potentially infected kids out to participate. Sometimes the children’s sickly appearance (rashes, skin infections or being too thin) means their caregivers don’t want them seen in public because of the shame and stigma surrounding this infection.

In response to this issue, we enlisted the help of our Kachele Women’s Group, who in turn organized additional Women’s Groups in other neighborhoods (see photo above). We now have ten Women’s Groups (over 300 women!) who TTF/GRS has trained to help sensitize the community before our events. These women quite literally go door to door in the compounds for a few days prior to our screening, describing who we are and what we hope to do. There was an immediate and dramatic

increase in the number of HIV+ children identified at the events.

The Women’s Groups also play an important role in follow up, along with the GRS coaches, making sure the kids who need TTF care make it to their first appointment. Because these women are well-known members of the communities, people have been more comfortable accepting their help and advice.

On the last Saturday of each month, TTF Farm hosts a day of fun and activities. Over 100 HIV+ children come together to learn more about living positively, adherence, disclosure and just plain fun. These amazing days are both rewarding and exhausting. Various partners continuously help us learn more about the best ways to communicate these important messages to the kids. From the moment the two buses arrive (see photo above), there is a structured environment using innovative models developed by TTF and others to aid in teaching, communicating and encouraging participation.

## Kachele Education Center Has Water!

TTF partnered with H2O For Life, a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization run by teachers, parents and students raising funds to provide clean water and sanitation to schools in developing countries.

Together TTF and the Sunnyside Elementary School and Edgewood Middle School of Moundsview, MN raised \$7,000 to put water into the Kachele School. Not only does this provide clean water to the school, but also to the surrounding community! A huge thank you to the children and teachers at Sunnyside and Edgewood schools. They have truly made a difference in the lives of the children at Kachele School.

If you know of any school or group (Scouts, Book Clubs, Church Groups, Social Justice Groups) who would be interested in helping with future projects, please contact us at [tinytimandfriends@pclink.com](mailto:tinytimandfriends@pclink.com).

**We have many fundraising ideas and can always use your help!**

## More News From Dr. Tim...

Both local and international organizations have expressed interest in these events and helping us expand to serve even more children... maybe hosting two days a month versus one. So there is a good chance of this service growing in the upcoming year!

The TTF Farm also plays a vital role for children who have fallen between the cracks and are not eating enough, have no place to safely live, or – in spite of intensive counseling – are still unable to take their medications regularly. We've even had children come to stay at the farm who are dying and cannot get the curative or palliative (end of life) care from their caregivers at home.

Everyone who is employed at the farm (or their children) are also enrolled in the TTF program, so there is an empathy and understanding here which cannot be found other places. Local orphanages and transit homes are understandably reluctant to take on children with severe medical problems or complicated medication regimens. Thankfully we have found a few notable exceptions such as Every Orphans Home (Mary and Bob Segikowski) and the Kasisi Children's Home (Sr. Mariola and Team).

Over 100 HIV+ children come together to learn about living positively, adherence, disclosure and just plain fun.

So our work here, in your name, continues much the same as it has these past six years. And while we are bigger, better organized and now locally recognized, our mission remains the same—to identify and treat otherwise unrecognized HIV infections in children and pregnant women, whom we identify through an elaborate outreach system in the communities, involving partners who are also committed to this cause.

The dollars that you donate through our Web site and events in the U.S. continue to go directly to the children, without servicing overhead. Donors in Zambia and internationally (UK, Germany and Holland) serve to support our children as well as our staff and rent here in Zambia. Some of the medicine we give to the children now comes directly from the Ministry of Health in Zambia, and there is light at the end of the tunnel in terms of sustainability. Let's hope that gone are the days when large-scale ARV rollout programs will fail to include initiatives that target the AIDS orphans of Zambia, the voiceless and nameless thousands who would not otherwise be in care, if not for Tiny Tim and Friends. Thank you so much for your donations; they are making a real and tangible difference on the ground here in Zambia.



# Meet New Friends of TTF

## Dennis

Dennis is an 11-year-old boy who lives in John Lainge, one of the poorest compounds in Zambia. When his mother found out she was HIV+, she was too ashamed to show anyone her results. In 2004, Dennis' mother died of AIDS and TB. Because their father's location was unknown, Dennis and his two sisters were sent to live with their aunt. All three children have been tested HIV+.

Currently there are ten people living with their aunt, who is not working at the moment, and they survive on \$4 per day.

Since being introduced to TTF, Dennis has been enrolled in school and is in grade 2.



## Phoebe

Phoebe is 14 years old and in grade 9. When she was 3 years old, her mother died of AIDS. She doesn't remember a lot of things about her mother and has not seen her father since the day of the funeral. In grade 5, Phoebe's aunt explained why she had to take ARV medication—Phoebe was HIV+. She worried that she was going to die and felt unlucky and miserably sad.

Phoebe was transferred from a local clinic to TTF in September 2010, where she was tested and enrolled in the TTF program. Phoebe tells us she wants to be a doctor when she grows up.



## 2011 Newsletter Update

The 2011 Spring Newsletter will be sent by e-mail only. If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter, please send your e-mail address to [tinytimandfriends@pclink.com](mailto:tinytimandfriends@pclink.com).

Past issues of the TTF Newsletters are also archived on our Web site ([www.tinytimandfriends.org](http://www.tinytimandfriends.org)).

**Happy Holidays from all of us at  
Tiny Tim and Friends!**

