

Operation Uruguay: Protecting the Children

The Facts about Uruguay

- ⇒ Est. population of 3.3 million (2005)
- ⇒ Located in Southern S. America
- ⇒ Second smallest country in S. America
- ⇒ Nearly 5000 youth live on the streets (2007)
- ⇒ 44% of the population under age 18 live in extreme poverty



The Issue

Even though the population of **Uruguay** is small compared to other countries in the region, it has near **half a million children and adolescents living in poverty.**

The situation is **especially serious** in the case of adolescents living **outside the capital, Montevideo**, where the lack of opportunities and spaces for participation, learning and recreation, contribute to poverty, social exclusion, high rates of

school drop-out and failure and teen pregnancy.

The high drop-out rate is one of the most critical problems the country needs to face in order to ensure development. According to a study based on a group of students from public high schools, **only 40% of students enrolled in the first year finish the basic cycle on time, and only one in three graduates.**

The Project

Through the creation and management of **socio-educative and cultural centers**, funds raised by Key Clubbers will help reduce the social vulnerability factors for those adolescents under the most critical situations (living on the streets, lack of education, job opportunities, and social services).

Specifically funds will be used **to support the Mandalavos Center**, a pilot project started in 2008 that works on a local level to ensure the rights of youth to education, health and basic services and family support; **and to create new centers to** ensure the rights of all youth to education, health, protection, access to public services and family support.

All centers focus on specific strategies to help Uruguayan 'street children' reintegrate into the community: school support; intervention to reduce social vulnerability factors; empowerment of families; healthy skills attitudes and behavior; participation and communication skills and socio-cultural activities; and building a positive image.



KEY CLUB

Key Club has a set a goal to raise \$1.5 million through Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF for Operation Uruguay!

Trick-or-Treat
for **UNICEF**

Make Halloween count.™