tF The Forum tF

The Student Newspaper of Lincoln-Sudbury

April 24, 2020 · Volume XXVII · Number 5 · An Open Forum for Discussion

A Look L-S' Buildings and Grounds Staff

By Justin Lewitus
Editor-in-Chief

Clocks that don't tick. Flickering lights. Boxes of food piled up outside the doors. The PA system sounding at seemingly random intervals. What happened to L-S? Was there a zombie apocalypse? Nope. This nightmarish scenario describes what L-S would look like after only a few days without its Buildings and Grounds (B&G) crew.

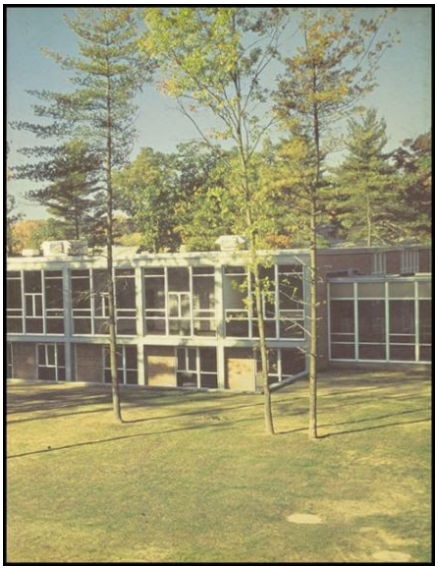
"Everyone in the department works together"

The larger Buildings and Grounds Department is divided into three sub-departments: custodial, grounds, and maintenance. However, these departments are intricately connected. Any issues that B&G can fix are reported by faculty members through a work order system within the L-S G Suite. Since multiple B&G employees have access to these requests, communication happens frequently and effectively. Everyone in the department works together to keep 385,000 square feet of building space, 93 acres of property, a wastewater treatment plant, and the 420 Lincoln Road building running smoothly.

The school has 3.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) daytime custodial staff members. One is a designated daytime custodian, while two work to oversee a contracted cleaning company that comes in from 2:30-11:00. During this second shift, classrooms and common areas are wiped down and tidied up. The last 0.4 FTE employee works on weekends to prepare for events and does a limited amount of security.

B&G WORKS HARD to keep L-S beautiful. *Photo courtesy of DesignShare.*

The grounds department is responsible for general property cleaning, parking lots, drainage, and athletic fields. Additionally, snow removal is often the biggest challenge for its 2.6 FTEs. During a snowstorm, the employee who splits time in the custodial department as well as Director of Buildings and Grounds Kevin Rossley join the two full-time grounds workers to clear snow and communicate with administration about the quality of the parking lot and sidewalks. Often, communication with Superintendent/Principal Bella Wong begins as early as 4 a.m. However, Rossley explained in an interview, this winter has been "fantastic."



MANY MEMBERS OF B&G STAFF remember working on the old building. *Photo courtesy of Classmates.*

"We've been able to work on our deferred maintenance/repair list," Rossley said, as the grounds department has "been getting a head start outside" on projects such as the athletic fields.

"'We've been able to work on our deferred maintenance/repair list'"

Lastly, the maintenance department has 2.5 FTEs. Its

responsibilities include general and preventative maintenance as well as repairs. The other 0.5 FTE staff member is responsible for the operation of L-S' on-site wastewater treatment plant.

However, over the summer, all nine of B&G's employees unite to work on larger projects such as repairing the HVAC system, electrical and plumbing work, major preventative repairs, and testing safety systems to meet compliance requirements. As such, all B&G employees work 12 months a year, often for over 40 hours a week. In recent years, the Buildings and Grounds Department has lost FTEs from its high of 11 in 2011. However, as the number of employees has shrunk, the needs of the building have actually increased.

"'The whole crew feels like they're part of something that's much larger'"

"Everyone refers to it as the new building," Rossley described, "but it's not as new as everyone thinks." As such, Rossley plans to push for more employees.

"My long-term goal is to actually add staffing back," he acknowledged.

Despite this minor shortcoming, Rossley and his staff are incredibly appreciative of the role they play at LSRHS itself and in the larger L-S community.

"We are depended on, and we appreciate that," he explained. "The whole crew feels like they're part of something that's much larger than the Building and Grounds Department." This strong sense of community exists not just within B&G, but also between its staff and L-S students and faculty. Connecting with students doing community service over the summer helps strengthen these relationships in addition to daily interactions during the school year.

"'That speaks volumes as far as what kind of culture is here'"

The one thing Rossley wants students to know about the B&G crew, he said, is "just how much pride they take in their work." When L-S switched the company it contracted to do after-school cleaning, many employees went as far as joining the new company in order to stay at L-S. That anecdote, Rossley claims, exemplifies what he loves about B&G.

"That speaks volumes as far as what kind of culture is here, what kind of friendships they've built over the years."

L-S SITS ON 93 ACRES OF PROPERTY that B&G is responsible for maintaining. *Photo courtesy of ForeFront Power.*

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The Forum, established in 1994, is the student newspaper of Lincoln-Sudbury. *The Forum* strives to cover all aspects of school and community life and current events. *The Forum* is an open forum newspaper and accepts articles from all members of the community.

The opinions expressed by writers are their own. The viewpoints expressed by the lead editorial reflect the opinions of the editorial board, which is comprised of the editors-in-chief and managing editors.

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Features

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Task Force Assesses Racial Climate at L-S

By Josie Halporn
Managing Editor

On the night of February 13, every seat in the Lincoln-Sudbury chorus room was taken. Teachers, administrators, and students returned to the building long after the school day had ended. Family members traveled to L-S from Sudbury, Lincoln, and Boston. They gathered together in an open forum to discuss the school's racial climate. The air in A211 quickly filled with personal stories and raw emotion.

A week earlier, a forum with the same agenda was held at the Melnea Cass Recreation Center in Roxbury. The Racial Climate Task Force (RCTF), the host of these community events, made it a priority to schedule the forums in the two home bases for L-S families: Sudbury and Boston. Like the gathering at L-S, the Boston event was attended by a wealth of parents, teachers, administrators, and students. The Recreation Center also quickly filled with stories, questions, and a hope for progress.

Established in 2017 as an immediate response to a charged racial incident at L-S, RCTF is a group of L-S teachers, administrators, parents, and students actively working to create a more safe and respectful environment in the school.

Soon after its formation, the Task Force commissioned an assessment of the current racial climate at L-S. Civil Rights Attorney Richard Cole and his associate Steven Flythe conducted student and faculty focus groups. Through random sampling, the consultants gathered confidential feedback from students and faculty members across grades, ethnicities, races, and genders. Cole and Flythe condensed their findings into two summary reports, one focusing on student perspective and one on staff. The reports highlight key strengths and challenges in the school's climate, and also offer recommendations for improvement.

Cole Civil Rights and Safe Schools Consulting

The community forums focused mainly on the challenges detailed in the reports. While most students stated that they do not experience open hostility at L-S, many reported that others make derogatory "jokes" based on stereotypes. A significant number of students of color-said they do not feel connected to the school. The reports documented the overrepresentation of students of color in lower level classes or being steered to those classes. A number of students stated that there is no real student voice at L-S, and also commented that administrators are "distant."

"It's upsetting to read those things and yet it's not surprising. Because it's been my experience as a mom of a transracial family," said Judy Merra, an L-S parent and RCTF member, about the challenges named in the reports.

> "It's upsetting to read those things and yet it's not surprising"

"The school district put a lot of money into those reports. The reports had a lot of information, which a lot of people already knew. The reports kind of proved it, solidified it, and brought up some new points," explained Matt Baird, a student leader on the Task Force. Baird said that he was disturbed by all of the material in the reports except for the sections that named strengths in the L-S community.

The climate reports were distributed to every attendee at the Sudbury and Boston events, and were shared prior to the forums with L-S families via Email. At the evening gatherings, Cole and Flythe led discussion about the challenges, and answered questions about recommendations for action. In many cases, forum attendees echoed the report findings through personal stories.

"It was an opportunity for everyone to have a voice and to hear what everyone had to say and work

together to address some concerns," described Shelly Hinds, L-S METCO Director and Task Force member. At the events, Richard Cole applauded L-S for making the reports available to the public. He noted that the Lincoln-Sudbury community forums were unique; he had never worked with a school that had opened its report to public discussion.

"The reports were confidential. Publicizing them to begin with was a big step for the school district, because the reports certainly aren't portraying the school in a great light," agreed Baird. He was encouraged that the school district devoted a significant portion of its discretionary funding to this important issue.

"Publicizing them to begin with was a big step for the school district"

Moving forward, RCTF plans to continue to work towards recommendations laid out in the reports, including four key priorities: redesigning the 9th grade diversity workshop, implementing new professional development, building a framework for hiring and retaining diverse staff, and creating a new system for incident reporting.

Foci for RCTF

2020 Training. *Photo courtesy of Lori Hodin.*

9th Grade Diversity Workshop

Each spring, Lincoln-Sudbury freshmen participate in a workshop focused on the school's core value of respecting human differences. In the past, these small-group discussions about diversity and microaggressions have been led by faculty and trained upperclassmen. However, the school climate reports revealed the need for a redesign. In student focus group talks about the school's diversity program, "a number of students said, across racial lines, that a lot of white students do not want to participate, that a lot of students 'just don't care,' that they 'don't take it seriously at all,' that they 'do not care about what's being discussed,' or that it's viewed as an opportunity to miss class."

Even trained students are not experienced enough in these issues to respond to some of the tough conversations that can arise. The redesigned workshop scheduled to launch this spring will be led by contracted professionals, creating a safer space to discuss difficult topics.

"How it's going to work is now there's going to be 20 professionals from the City School, an organization that does work of this nature every day - adults who will be leading the group," explained Baird. "And two students and a teacher will be acting as classroom assistants to this trained person during the workshop." Many of the workshop themes will remain the same as before, but discussions will be facilitated by more experienced, skillful leaders.

Training for student workshop leaders took place on Thursday, March 5. Shelly Hinds said that many students in the METCO program were in attendance and left the training feeling excited. "I think in a school that's had some difficult times and some frustrations on the part of students, the way that they left that training yesterday was encouraging," she added.

Staff Professional Development

The climate reports found that "while all faculty and student services staff express a commitment in helping all students succeed, some appear to hold stereotypes and lower academic expectations for METCO and African-American Students." In response to these findings, the RCTF has partnered with Tufts psychology professors and social scientists Keith Maddox and Sam Sommers to explore implicit bias with L-S staff.

A professional development focused on the *Science of Stereotyping* was scheduled to take place on March 18th. It will have to be rescheduled due to COVID-19. In this PD, faculty will learn about the science of implicit bias. They will discuss the challenges it presents for teaching and learning in diverse settings. Faculty will also consider strategies to mitigate its impact.

The RCTF has set goals to determine short and long-term plans for continued professional development on race related topics.

Staff Diversity

The Task Force is committed to bringing more educators of color into the school.

"You want to be consistent. You want to be thoughtful," said Hinds, "And it's not just about hiring, it's retaining staff of color. You want them to stay, because students need consistency. So you want them to see someone this year and see them three years from now." Hinds emphasized the need for an approach that hiring committees can continuously tap into.

"You want them to stay, because students need consistency"

The Task Force has already started to forge partnerships with local colleges. "Thanks to Ms. Benhaim, we now have a spreadsheet with contact info for all of the colleges/universities in the area with education majors/degrees. This spreadsheet also includes the percentage of students of color enrolled," said Associate Principal Leslie Patterson, who serves as a Co-Chair on the Racial Climate Task Force. The next step is to start creating connections with these selected schools with the hope of creating a pipeline for candidates of color into L-S.

Baird stressed the importance of hiring support staff who can eventually move into faculty roles. "Take more hiring risks when hiring teaching assistants because then their performance can be evaluated and they can possibly apply for teaching positions," he urged. If the candidate is already part of the L-S community, the school may be able to retain educators of color more effectively.

RCTF also recently engaged the Academic Council in a conversation about hiring diverse staff. According to Patterson, they talked about "how our biases have the potential to impact hiring decisions, and the benefits of having racially diverse hiring committees." Patterson said that the timing of this conversation was important given that hiring season is already underway.

Discipline

At both community forums, attendees questioned Lincoln-Sudbury's disciplinary code for racial incidents. In the RCTF reports, "a number of students say that they are not aware that any consequence ever occurs for inappropriate or discriminatory behavior." Community members at the forums and students in focus groups expressed frustration about inconsistent enforcement and unclear policies.

"There's no real precedent set for important punishable acts in the school," said Baird. "Suppose that somebody said the 'n' word out loud in the connector in between classes in a hateful way. It is not clear what will happen to the perpetrator as a result of their behavior."

Baird highlighted detailed codes that exist in other areas. For example, plagiarism rules specifically describe first, second, and third offense punishments, along with special circumstances. There are specific codes of conduct for weapons on campus.

Baird said that many other schools have successfully created and implemented a discipline system for racial incidents. While he acknowledged that developing a detailed code would be a huge effort, he also believes it to be imperative for the health of the school.

Merra agreed that the code of conduct for racial incidents must be clear. "I feel like it's my job as an adult to say no. And I feel like the adults, because there's fuzziness for the adults in the building, they don't know what to do when kids say it," she said, with regards to hateful speech.

Hinds explained that "there needs to be a streamlined process of how these [incidents] are documented, how they're addressed, how they're reported, and then the next steps. And that way we have a paper trail of what has happened."

According to Ms. Patterson, the school is in the process of finalizing new incident reporting and tracking forms.

Getting Involved

The Racial Climate Task Force welcomes anyone from the community who wants to get involved. Baird encourages everyone to start by reading the reports. There are lots of different levels of involvement, even if you aren't able to attend the RCTF's monthly community meetings. The easiest way to join is to contact Matt Baird at bairdm21@lsrhs.net.

Features

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Editor's Note: These articles were originally written in Spanish. English translations have been provided.

El Efecto de Trabajo Infantil

The Effects of Child Labor

By Diya Mehta and Caitlin Myron
Contributing Writers

ESPAÑOL:

Muchos niños en el mundo, más de 150 millones, son víctimas del trabajo infantil. De ellos, 70 millones sufren de un trabajo muy peligroso. Uno de cinco niños en África tiene que trabajar cuando están joven y cada semana niños entre cinco y diecisiete años trabajan 52.1 horas.

El trabajo infantil es el trabajo de niños menos de dieciocho años. Según la UN, el trabajo puede ser bueno si los niños tengan entre trece y quince años y el trabajo sea seguro. Muchas veces, el trabajo infantil "incluye el trabajo o las actividades económicas que pueden dañar la salud, la seguridad, o la moralidad de los niños (a menudo conocidas como trabajo peligroso)" especialmente en condiciones peligrosas que interfiere con la educación de los niños (Trabajo Infantil y Educación Para Todos, 9).

En *La Carta de Zara*, por ejemplo, una niña pequeña llamada Zara no podía ir a escuela cuando su familia estaba trabajando en la tierra. Esto es porque su familia carece el dinero. Las causas del trabajo infantil son meramente la pobreza. Adicionalmente, en comunidades con mucho trabaja infantil los padres no valoran educación mucho y ellos piensan que es mejor si los niños trabajan para la familia y que ganan dinero es más importante que la escuela.

Un ejemplo fuerte de una situación de trabajo infantil que afecta una familia entera es la cuenta de Basilio Vargas del documental *La Mina del Diablo*. El documental graba Basilio y su hermano Bernardo trabajando en minas peligrosas ubicadas en Bolivia. Basilio, aunque tiene solo 14 años, tiene que ser la primer apoyado económica de su familia y cuida por sus hermanos. En la mina en que él trabaja, según los lugareños, más de ocho millones personas han muerto, y por eso, ella se llama "La montaña que come hombres". Los niños también respiran gases tóxicos, y pueden sufrir de una condición grave, "Silicosis". Las condiciones son tan peligrosas que los trabajadores hagan sacrificios a un dios llamado "Tío". La película muestra una costumbre: los trabajadores dando la sangre a la mina "para que toma el Tio, no para que toma nuestro sangre", Basilio dijó (La Mina del Diablo). Esto describe uno de las situaciones de un niño que tiene que sufrir trabajar en condiciones peligrosas para apoyar su familia; Basilio es uno de 800 niños trabajando en las minas de la montaña, y muchos tienen que trabajar allí por su vida entera. La tristeza es evidente en sus ojos cuando Basilio habla sobre la mina y la educación.

Tenemos que entender que muchos grupos no piensan que el trabajo infantil sea justo y están reforzando la necesidad de un cambio. Por ejemplo, el sacerdote de Potosí, Bolivia, dijo que "es una tristeza bastante fuerte" mirando a los niños. Él dijo que ellos viven "sin esperanza" y que "nadie podido llenarse de lo que ellos han vivido" (La Mina del Diablo).

> "Crear las regulaciones para salvar los derechos humanos de los niños"

También, en *La carta de Zara*, el padre de Zara y muchos padres de trabajadores infantiles dijeron que quieren que sus niños vayan a la escuela para ganar trabajos mejores. Porque muchas personas del mundo compran los productos hechos por usar el trabajo infantil, gobiernos y compañías tienen que crear las regulaciones para salvar los derechos humanos de los niños. Afortunadamente, más de 78 países han decidido a hacer un compromiso internacional de reglas sobre trabajadores infantiles en 2017. El compromiso incluye las reglas del salario mínimo de los niños y las reglas

para el seguro y salud de los trabajadores.

También la UN ha presentado soluciones del trabajo infantil con un énfasis en educación con los niños y con los padres. Ellos quieren que la escuela tenga más importancia de los padres y que los niños puedan atender escuela con más frecuencia. Con escuelas gratuitas y la matrícula obligatoria, más niños tendrán que ir a la escuela y no trabajarán. Gobiernos necesitan enseñar a los padres que la educación es muy importante para sus niños. Finalmente, la solución de la problema entera es avecinarse de pobreza. Si las familias no son pobres — tienen comida adecuada, calefacción, y otras necesidades básicas — los niños no tienen que trabajar y sufrir de condiciones peligrosas.

ENGLISH:

Many children in the world, more than 150 million, are the victims of child labor. Of these, 70 million endure very dangerous work. One in five children in Africa has to work when they are young and each week children between the ages of 5 and 16 work 52.1 hours.

Child labor is the work performed by children younger than 18 years old. According to the UN, work can be good for the children if they are between 13 and 15 years old and the work is safe. Often, child labor "includes the work or economic activities that can be hazardous to the health, the security, or the morality of the children (often known as dangerous/hazardous work)" especially in dangerous conditions that interfere with the education of the children (Trabajo Infantil y Educación para Todos, p.9).

In *Carta de Zara* for example, a young girl named Zara could not attend school when her family was working in the fields. This is because her family lacks money. The causes of child labor are merely poverty. Additionally, in a community with much child labor, the parents do not value education much and they think that it is better if the children work for the family. They also think earning money is more important than school.

A strong example of a situation with child labor that affects an entire family is the story of Basilio Vargas in the documentary, *Devil's Miners*. The documentary documents Basilio and his brother Bernardo working in dangerous mines located in Bolivia. Even though Basilio is only 14 years old, he has to be the principal economic support for his family and he takes care of his brothers. In the mine where he works, according to locals, more than 8 million people have died, and for this reason, it's called, "The mountain that eats men." The children also breathe toxic gases and are subjected to a dangerous condition, "silicosis."

"The sadness is evident in his eyes when Basilio speaks about the mine"

The conditions are so dangerous that the workers make sacrifices to a god called, "Tío" (Uncle). The movie shows the workers' practice of giving blood to the mine, "it is for the Tío, so he won't take ours" said Basilio. This describes one of the situations a child has to endure when working in hazardous conditions to support his family; Basilio is one of the 800 children working in the mines in the mountain, and many have to work there for the rest of their lives. The sadness is evident in his eyes when Basilio speaks about the mine and education.

We need to understand that many groups don't think that child labor is fair and they are reinforcing the need for change. For example, the priest in Potosí, Bolivia said that "it's a tremendous sadness" to look at the children. He said that they live "without hope" and that "no one can imagine what they have gone through." (La Mina del Diablo)

Also, in *La Carta de Zara*, Zara's father and many child laborers' fathers said that they want their children to go to school to find better jobs.

Since many people in the world buy products made by children's labor, governments and companies must create regulations to "rescue" the human rights of the children. Fortunately, more than 78 countries have decided to create international agreements to regulate child labor in 2017. The compromise includes minimum wage laws for the children and regulations for the safety and health of the workers.

Also, the UN has presented solutions for child labor emphasizing education with the children and the parents. They want the schools to have greater importance with the parents so that the children can attend school more frequently. With free tuition schools with mandatory registration, more children will have to go to school and will not work.

The governments must instruct the parents that education is very important for their children. Finally, the solution to the entire problem is if the families are not poor – they have enough food, heating and other basic necessities – the children do not and should not have to work and suffer dangerous conditions.

Features

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El Trabajo Infantil

Child Labor

By Eric Feng
Staff Writer

ESPAÑOL:

Según El Informe Global de OIT de 2010, 215 millones de niños en el mundo siguen atrapados en el trabajo infantil, y más que la mitad de estos niños trabajan en condiciones peligrosos? Los niños son el futuro de nuestro mundo, pero el trabajo infantil es una carga en nuestra sociedad que impide a los niños que realicen sus sueños y viven vidas felices y Saludables.

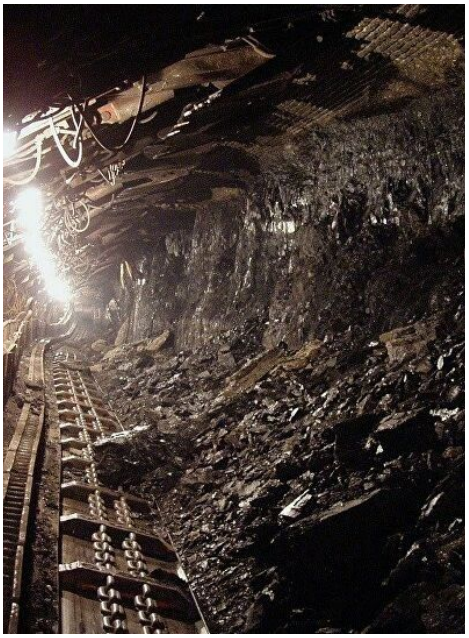
La consecuencia más importante de trabajo infantil es como se afecta la educación de los niños. Niños que trabajan en lugar de ir a escuela sufren mucho porque en muchas veces, no pueden completar y pasar sus clases. Según el vídeo, *Campaña por el Derecho a la Educación*, un organización que fomenta la importancia de educación, casi la mitad de la población joven en Latinoamérica no ha completado escuela secundaria en el año 2010. Es muy común que familiares de estos niños viven en pobreza extrema y necesitan el trabajo de sus niños para sobrevivir.

El video *La Carta de Zara* refuerza este punto. Zara es una hija joven que vive en pobreza. Aunque a ella le gustaría asistir a escuela, pero cada día, Zara tiene que dejar de escuela en medio del día escolar. Puedes ver la tristeza en los ojos de Zara: ella entiende que su solo oportunidad para dejar de su vida horrible es si ella convierte en maestra o doctor, pero no posee esta opción: necesita sacar las avellanas, sacar plantas ubicado en el campo, y ayudar a sus hermanos menores. Todos de estas trabajas son gratuitos, pero necesita apoyar a su familia completamente desempleada. Sin una educación suficiente, familias como esta seguirán sufriendo por generaciones y generaciones sin cambio.

Otra consecuencia de trabajo infantil es como se afecta la salud de los niños. Según el artículo, *Trabajo Infantil y Educación para Niños,* 115 millones de niños realizan trabajos peligrosos, definido como el trabajo o las actividades económicas que puedan dañar la salud, la seguridad, o la moralidad de los niños.

> "115 millones de niños realizan trabajos peligrosos"

Basilio Vargas, un niño que tiene catorce años, es un ejemplo de la explotación del bienestar de niños por el trabajo infantil. Usualmente, Brasilio trabaja en la mina por 14 horas cada día. Las horas de su trabaja son imprevisibles: a veces trabaja por turnos dobles. Esta mina es demasiado peligrosa y ha causado la muerte de ocho millones de personas porque puede pasar accidentes fatales en el trabajo. También, el aire en la mina está sucio y puede deteriorar su salud con tiempo.



UNA MINA. *Photo courtesy of Sputnik.*

Es evidente el nivel de estrés este trabajo ha pasado por los cuerpos, pero el estrés por la mente de niños como Brasilio es tan peligroso. Brasilio se ha dado cuenta que su solo oportunidad para alcanzar una vida adecuado es por la educación, pero no tiene esta oportunidad. Si niños pobres carecen o pierden la esperanza que puedas realizar sus sueños y contribuir a sociedad, el bienestar mental de la

población va a empeorar significativamente en el futuro.

Todos de estos problemas del trabajo infantil no pueden quedar desconocidos. Necesitamos traer atención a estos problemas y buscar soluciones si queremos salvar la sociedad.

ENGLISH:

According to the OIT Global Report of 2010, 215 million children in the world are still trapped in the child labor cycle and more than half of these children work in dangerous conditions. Children are the future of our world, but child labor is a burden in our society that prevent children to achieve their dreams and to live happy and healthy lives.

"215 million children in the world are still trapped in the child labor cycle"

The most significant consequence of child labor is how it affects children's education. Children who work instead of going to school often suffer because they cannot complete and finish their classes. According to the video, *Campaign for the Right to Education*, an organization that promotes the importance of education, almost half of the young population in Latin America had not completed their Secondary Education in the year 2010. Commonly, the families of these children live in extreme poverty and they need the work of their children to survive.

The video *La Carta de Zara* reinforces this point. Zara is a young daughter who lives in poverty. Although she would love to go to school, each day, Zara has to leave school in the middle of her school day. You can see the sadness in her eyes: she understands that her only opportunity to flee her horrible life is if she can become a teacher or a medical doctor, but she doesn't enjoy these options: she needs to pick hazelnuts, pull weeds located in the farms, and help her younger brothers. All of these jobs are unpaid, but she needs to support a completely unemployed family. Without proper education, families such as this one will continue to suffer for generations and generations without any change.

Another consequence of child labor is how it affects the health of the children. In the article *Child Labor and Education for Children*, 115 million children perform dangerous jobs, defined as jobs and economic activities that can endanger the health, security, and the mental state of the children.

Basilio Vargas, a 14-year-old child, is an example of welfare exploitation in child labor. Usually, Basilio works in the mine for 14 hours a day. His work hours are unpredictable: sometimes he works double shifts. This mine is very dangerous and has caused the death of 8 million people because fatal accidents can occur. Also, the air in the mine is dirty and will deteriorate one's health with time.

"The air in the mine is dirty and will deteriorate one's health with time"

It is evident that this work is stressful to the body but the mental stress in children like Basilio is very dangerous. Basilio realizes that his only opportunity to attain a better life is through education, but he does not have this opportunity. If poor children lack or lose the hope to fulfill their dreams and to contribute to society, the mental welfare of the population is going to significantly worsen in the future.

All of these child labor issues cannot remain unknown. We need to bring attention to these problems and to find solutions if we want to save society.

Features tF

La Verdad Sobre el Trabajo Infantil

The Truth About Child Labor

By Keith Hylton
and Alkinoos Armoundas
Contributing Writer, Sports Editor

RIGHTS of the child. *Photo courtesy of UNICEF.*

ESPAÑOL:

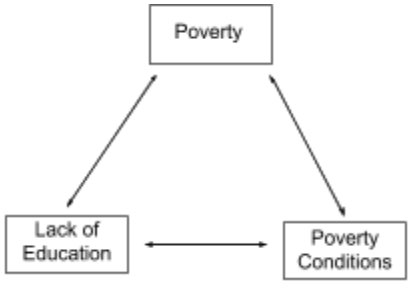
En el mundo hoy, el trabajo infantil es un problema grande de que muchos personas en los Estados Unidos no son conscientes. El trabajo infantil es un resultado de la pobreza; es causado por que los niños tienen que trabajar para apoyar a sus familias económicamente. Es un obstáculo grande contra la educación para los chicos en muchos países en desarrollo. Sin una educación adecuada, los chicos no pueden escapar el ciclo de pobreza, y por eso sus niños serán víctimas de la pobreza infantil por el resto de sus vidas. Muchos de los trabajos infantiles son peligrosos y pueden interrumpir el desarrollo de los trabajadores adolescentes, como trabajos en las minas y las fábricas, porque les expone a unas substancias y químicas peligrosas (mira la primera foto). En un informe publicado en octubre de 2013, la O*rganización Internacional del Trabajo* (OIT) dice que "215 millones de niños siguen atrapados en el trabajo infantil en el mundo y 115 millones de niños realizan trabajos peligrosos." Mucha gente estadounidense nunca considera la importancia de este problema porque no es muy frecuente en los Estados Unidos. El mismo informe dice: "el número de niños en situación de trabajo infantil se registra en la región de Asia y el Pacífico (113,6 millones), seguida por África Subsahariana (65,1 millones) y América Latina y el Caribe (14,1 millones)."

> "Mucha gente estadounidense nunca considera la importancia"

El trabajo infantil todavía existe hoy porque proteger los niños pobres es difícil por los gobiernos (especialmente los de los países con economías débiles) y la comunidad internacional. Hay tres leyes universales para combatir el trabajo infantil, pero en algunos partes del mundo el trabajo infantil todavía está aumentando. Por ejemplo, El Convenio de la OIT núm. 138 sobre la edad mínima de admisión al empleo (1973) establece que 15 años es la edad mínima de un trabajador, o 14 años en países en desarrollo. También, *La Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos del Niño* (1989) protege a los niños de la explotación económica. Además, El Convenio de la OIT núm. 182 sobre las peores formas de trabajo infantil (1999) dice que la edadmínima para trabajos peligrosos es 18 años. A pesar de que estas tres leyes han fomentado la terminación del trabajo infantil, es evidente que no son muy fuerte. La comunidad internacional carece el poder de cambiar la situación currente. Solo los gobiernos y los ciudadanos poseen el poder, porque pueden mejorar las economías de sus países y sus comunidades.

Hay muchas causas de la pobreza infantil que no pueden ser arreglados. En muchos países, los chicos tienen que trabajar, no porque quieren les gustaría, pero porque sus familias

necesitan más ayuda económica para sobrevivir. En otros casos, algunos padres no pueden pagar para que sus niños puedan asistir a la escuela porque algunos países no tienen el privilegio de educación gratuita, y así que los estudiantes tienen que ganar el dinero por sus mismos (mira la cuarta foto). También, el trabajo infantil "perpetúa el ciclo de pobreza de los hogares, en particular en las zonas rurales," y por eso, la falta de educación es una causa de la continuación del problema, porque la generación siguiente no tendrá dinero para la educación (OIT). Esencialmente, la educación es la mejor manera para escapar la pobreza, pero la pobreza evita el acceso de educación; las condiciones de pobreza refuerzan la pobreza más.



POVERTY and education. *Photo courtesy of* The Forum.

Las consecuencias del trabajo infantil pueden afectar a los niños por el resto de sus vidas. Por instancia, la OIT dice que "el trabajo infantil tiene consecuencias negativas para la salud física y mental del niño, y para su desarrollo individual ya que se padecen de un bajo nivel de competencias y reducidas oportunidades de empleo." En particular, las niñas son las víctimas más afectados, porque hay mucho trabajo doméstico y servil (mira la segunda foto) y explotación sexual. De acuerdo al *UNICEF*, "Las niñas son más vulnerables que los niños y representan 54% de la población no escolarizada." Adicionalmente, los trabajos peligrosos pueden lastimar a la salud de los niños; más de 8 millones personas han muerto en las minas de Bolivia, y muchos de ellos fueron niños (Película: *Las Minas del Diablo*).

"Más de 8 millones personas han muerto en las minas de Bolivia"

Por último, hay problemas complicadas en este mundo que persisten completamente desconocidos para personas estadounidenses porque son ubicados en el tercer mundo. Con el trabajo infantil, la gente tiene que darse cuenta de que solamente crear leyes no es suficiente para terminar la raíz del problema. Se necesita apoyar económicamente a las familias pobres para que sus niños no tienen que terminar la educación para ayudarles. No se puede hacer esto con leyes o convenios internacionales; sólo con compasión, pensamiento, caridad, y acción. Quizás, esta meta no es alcanzable, porque muchas veces las consecuencias de la legislación son imprevisibles. Sin embargo, incluso si no se puede terminar el trabajo infantil enteramente, por lo menos nosotros tenemos que mejorar la situación.

ENGLISH:

In the world today, child labor is a significant problem that many people in the United States are not conscious of. Child labor is a direct result of poverty; it is caused by the fact that children need to support their families economically. It is an important obstacle in the education of children in underdeveloped countries. Without a good education, the children cannot escape the poverty cycle, and consequently, the children will remain victims of the poverty cycle for the rest of their lives. Many of the jobs held by the children are dangerous and can interrupt the development of the working adolescent, like jobs in the mines and the factories, because it exposes them to certain substances and chemical products. In a report published in October 2013 by the OIT (*International Labor Organization*), "215 million children in the world continued to be trapped in child labor and 115 million children carry out dangerous work."

INTERNATIONAL Labor Organization. *Photo courtesy of ILO.*

Many people from the US never consider the significance of this problem because it's not common in the United States. The same report states: "the majority of the children in child labor conditions are registered in Asia and the Pacific (113.6 million), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (65.1 million) and Latin America and the Caribbean (14.1 million)."

"Many people from the US never consider the significance"

Child labor continues to exist today because it is difficult for the government and the international community to protect the children (especially for those countries with weak economies). There are three universal laws to combat child labor, but in many parts of the world child labor continues to grow. For example, *Agreement 138 of the OIT* (1973)

BOLIVIAN mine. *Photo Courtesy of FT.*

establishes the requirement that the minimum age for employment has to be 15 years old, or 14 years old in developing countries. Also, the *UN Convention On The Rights of the Child* (1989) protects children from economic exploitation. Additionally, *Agreement 182 of the OIT* (1999) about the worst child labor conditions states that the minimum age for dangerous work is 18 years old. Although these three laws have encouraged the ending of child labor, it is evident that they are not very strong. The international community lacks the power to change the current situation. Only the governments and the citizens possess the power because they can better the economy of their countries and their communities.

"Only the governments and citizens possess the power"

Many reasons cause child poverty that cannot be fixed. In many countries, the boys have to work; it is not because they like it, it is because their families need economic help to survive. In other situations, some parents cannot pay the fees for the children to attend school because in some countries they do not have the privilege of free education, therefore the students must earn their own money. Also, child labor "perpetuates the poverty cycle in the homes, particularly in rural areas," and therefore, the lack of education is one of the causes for the ongoing problem, because the next generation will not have money for their education (OIT). Essentially, education is the best way to escape poverty, but poverty prevents access to education and poverty conditions reinforce the state of poverty even more.

The impact of child labor can affect children for the rest of their lives. For example, the OIT states that "child labor has negative consequences for the physical and mental health of the child and in their individual development since they suffer a low level of competences and reduced employment opportunities." Particularly, girls are the most affected victims, because they experience subservient and domestic labor and sexual exploitation. According to *UNICEF*, "girls are more vulnerable than boys and represent 54% of the out-of-school population." Additionally, dangerous jobs can threaten human health; more than 8 million people have died in the mines of Bolivia and many of them were children (Film: *Devil's Mine*).

"The impact of child labor can affect children for the rest of their lives"

Finally, there are complicated problems in the world that remain completely unknown for the people in the United States because they are located in third world countries. With child labor, people must realize that creating laws alone is not enough to end the root of the problem. You need to support poor families economically so that their children do not have to stop any education that helps them. This cannot be done with laws and international agreements; only compassion, thoughtfulness, charity, and action. Perhaps, this goal cannot be reached because oftentimes the consequences of legislation are unforeseeable. However, child labor cannot be ended completely, but we can at least do something to better the situation.

GIRLS represent 54% of the out-of-school population. *Photo courtesy of UNICEF.*