

PRESS RELEASE

ANNI Bolivia presents its 2005 – 2006 Comparative Report: Child and Adolescent Issues in the Bolivian Press and presents the first ever National Child-Friendly Reporting Prize

La Paz, Bolivia. 17 December 2007. During the presentation of its 2005 – 2006 Comparative Report: Child and Adolescent Issues in the Bolivian Press, the National News Agency for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (ANNI) awarded the first National Child-Friendly Reporting Prize, the award of its kind in the country for journalists who highlight child and adolescent-related news stories.

Three prizes are awarded: National Child-Friendly Journalist, Special Mention and Honourable Mention.

Distinctions went to Roxana Escobar and Beatriz Avalos of the newspaper *El Deber* and Katuska Vázquez of the *Los Tiempos* newspaper from Cochabamba.

Special mention was given to Esteban Astorga of *Extra*, the Bolivian News Agency (ABI), Fides News Agency (ANF) and international agencies DPA and EFE.

Special international mention went out to journalist Sibila Cams of Argentinean daily *El Clarín* for highlighting information on the trafficking of Bolivian children in Argentina. The honourable mentions were awarded to the society pages of newspapers *La Razón* and *La Prensa*.

The purpose of the prizes is to publicly recognise those journalists who raise the profile of child and adolescent rights in the press and promote commitment to Bolivian children.

2005-2006 Comparative Report

The *2005-2006 Comparative Report: Child and Adolescent Issues in the Bolivian Press* reveals the priorities of nine national newspapers regarding matters concerning children and adolescents, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of daily coverage of issues that affect this sector of the population.

The research presents both qualitative and quantitative results of daily monitoring that took place in 2005 and 2006. The newspapers that were monitored were the following: *La Prensa*, *Extra*, *Gente*, *La Razón* (La Paz), *Los Tiempos* (Cochabamba), *El Deber* (Santa Cruz), *El Potosí* (Potosí) and *El Alteño* (El Alto).

ANNI-Bolivia Coordinator Julia Velasco said that this, their second, study was supported by UNICEF, the Avina Foundation and EcoJóvenes Bolivia. Its purpose is to increase and improve the quality of journalistic coverage of child-related issues in this country.

PRESS RELEASE

These institutions are seeking to create journalism culture that promotes and defends the rights children and adolescents, as well as one that provides greater visibility in the mass media of the vulnerability and disadvantages that most children suffer from.

Issues covered and dealt with

Using strict, detailed and scientific monitoring methods, over 18,000 news stories were analysed to reveal the agendas and priorities of each monitored media source regarding child and adolescent issues. It also highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of daily coverage of related stories in each.

At the launching of the report, Velasco made mention of the most frequently covered types of stories in the papers, which for the third year running were education and violence, in that order. Nevertheless, the topic was dealt with contextually.

Stories on social conflicts such as national teacher strikes caught the attention of the press. Subjects like education policy, budget or infrastructure lagged behind despite their greater relative importance pointed out Velasco.

The second most written about issue in the media was violence. The analysis showed that violent acts involving children as the victims were more numerous than those in which they appeared as aggressors.

Over half of the articles published on violence are very descriptive, are not at all investigative, make no accusations and seek no solutions.

Velasco also pointed out that although derogatory language still tends to be used in these stories, stigmatising and discriminating against those involved, this decreased to 10% during 2005 and 2006 as compared to 2004, which was the first year that 20%.

Of the six areas covered in the report, violence stories contain the most derogatory language. Coverage of health stories dropped to fourth place in both years. In 2004 it ranked third place overall.

The media gave the issue light general treatment, concentrating mainly on urban stories, with rural health stories receiving minimal coverage.

Information sources were also analysed. Evidence indicated that journalists show a marked tendency to quote state or official sources, with source variety seriously lacking.

PRESS RELEASE

About UNICEF

UNICEF is on the ground in 150 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

For further information please contact

Clara Marcela Barona, Communications Officer, (591-2) 2770222, ext 184

cbarona@unicef.org

Delina Garsón, Communications Assistant, (591-2) 2770222, ext 149

dgarson@unicef.org