



SUCCESS STORY

Families United for Better Communities

USAID's SolucionES Project promotes effective parenting roles as a basic tool for violence prevention.



Photo: Lucia Bonilla, FEPADE, 2014

“Thanks to SolucionES we are now a stronger family.”

—Baltimore Ortiz, parent and community leader trained under SolucionES

Crime and violence are two of the main reasons El Salvador's economic development is at peril. To address this problem, USAID has partnered with five private sector foundations to create SolucionES, a crime and violence prevention project which will work with five municipal governments to build stronger communities. As part of its activities, SolucionES engages with parents to show them the importance of unity and family integration, and how to reduce violence and strengthen positive behaviors at home.

The Ortiz family in San Martin is one of the families strengthened under SolucionES. The father, Baltimore, serves on the board of directors of the community soccer league, a SolucionES initiative; and the mother, Leticia, sells food during the Saturday soccer matches. Their children, Fanny, 14, Ovidio, 8, and Baltimore Jr., 6, all play on the SolucionES' soccer teams. “The most enthusiastic of all is Fanny. She even received an award for best player in her category in 2014,” Baltimore says.

“I started coming to the soccer league to accompany my daughter. Little by little I started to get more involved, until they included me on the board of directors of the league as discipline coordinator. At first, children were a little scared of me, but I gained their trust, and we all formed a very supportive group of some 200 children,” Baltimore says, adding that he has created stronger bonds with his own kids as a result of the league. “We spend more time together and have fun doing activities that make our community better,” he explains.

Fanny, the eldest, says that she loves participating in the soccer league because it is a healthy way to have fun in a safe space along with her family and her neighbors. “It is very important to have the support of my family. It makes me really happy to see them cheering for me and getting involved in the things I do. Not all parents come see their kids. So, I'm very lucky,” she adds.

Baltimore affirms SolucionES has made a big impact in their lives: “It has been a great experience for all of us to join activities like this. It has made us a stronger family. But most important is that now our children see and feel our support, and we can keep cheering for them to accomplish whatever goal they set in their lives.”