

ICDP ACTIVITIES IN COLOMBIA IN 2025

During the year, in the municipality of Envigado, Antioquia, two ICDP trainers, Carolina Montoya Montoya and Lucy Osorio Mejía, from the ICDP Colombia team, developed a pilot project which was both a training and a research project for *caregivers of older people*.





The project strengthened the caring skills of caregivers, professionals, family members, and others who support this population. Caregivers of older adults are facing increasingly greater challenges in their daily work in both family and institutional settings. The purpose was to foster positive, humane and transformative interactions between carers and older people.

The team coordinated the ICDP work with the Social Welfare Secretariat of the Mayor's Office of Envigado.

In total, 130 caregivers of older people were trained in the principles of ICDP.

The ICDP adapted materials were tested in this pilot project, leading to the validation,

enrichment and adjustment of the booklet called: "Guide for a good interaction that dignifies the Older Person".

This new booklet contributes to the care of vulnerable older adults who need loving adults to teach them essential skill. It is now in its final stages of publication for later distribution and sharing with other regions and countries interested in implementing similar initiatives. It is an opportunity to promote collaboration with ICDP teams in different countries around the world that share the same goal: recognizing the value of aging with dignity, respect, and tenderness. Comments by the participants:

I think these are fundamental issues to address today; there are so many older people.

I really value personal growth I experienced here. We reflect and become aware of our role as caregivers.

The knowledge acquired allows me to communicate better with the older people I work with.

I learned to empathise with older people.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SOGAMOSO:

For the past twenty years, the ICDP approach has been actively sustained and promoted in the Municipality of Sogamoso, Department of Boyacá. It has played an important role in advancing mental health, child protection, and the holistic development of children and adolescents. ICDP was originally introduced as part of efforts to prevent violence against children, and over the years a wide range of coordinated initiatives have been implemented across planning, implementation, and evaluation processes to strengthen child protection and well-being. These initiatives have been integrated into local public policies and incorporated into both the Municipal Development Plan and the Territorial Health Plan, ensuring their long-term sustainability and impact.

The ICDP programme, locally known as *"I Am a Person,"* has become a cornerstone of mental health promotion within families and school communities. Today, the programme continues to be delivered by dedicated facilitators who use ICDP materials, financed partly through their own resources and partly through the support of the ICDP Colombia Foundation.

Mayor Mauricio Barón Granados and Municipal Health Secretary Lucy Esperanza Rodríguez Pérez have been strong advocates of ICDP and its work with children and adolescents. Their commitment is grounded in the understanding that the most effective way to support children is to equip parents and caregivers with practical tools for positive parenting. Central to this approach are effective communication, empathy, and the healthy expression of feelings and emotions within safe and nurturing environments.



DEVELOPMENTS IN CORRALES:



During 2025, the municipality of Corrales became a model municipality for its commitment to protecting children and adolescents. Despite limited resources, the municipality successfully strengthened the protection of children's rights and promoted positive caregiving practices through the implementation of the ICDP programme "*I Am a Person*." The ICDP programme has been integrated into key municipal policies and planning instruments, including the Municipal Development Plan, the Municipal Public Policy for Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence, the Territorial Health Plan (Mental Health Dimension), and the Good Treatment Programme. The initiative is implemented through a broad interinstitutional partnership involving the Municipal Administration, the Municipal Council of Social Policy, the Secretariat of Public Works, Development and Planning, the General and Legal Secretariat, the Secretariat of Culture, the Family Commissioner's Office, the Local Health Directorate, the State Social Enterprise Corrales Health Post, the Juan José Samaniego Educational Institution, and the Children's Homes of the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare.

The programme delivers training to families and community groups, engaging children, adolescents, caregivers, and families in various areas of daily life. Through group sessions, participants learn and apply the fundamental principles of ICDP to promote positive treatment, harmonious coexistence, and constructive dialogue. These activities help prevent neglect and all forms of violence and abuse against children.

The primary objective is to raise awareness among parents, caregivers, and others responsible for children under the age of eight, while strengthening their caregiving skills. The programme enriches relationships through empathy, emotionally responsive communication, and greater respect for each child's individuality. It promotes positive, caring, and supportive interactions based on meaningful communication, mutual understanding, and emotional connection. By improving family relationships and strengthening emotional bonds, the programme also contributes to reducing levels of domestic and community violence. Participants are encouraged to become multipliers of the methodology, sharing their knowledge and experiences within their families and communities and thereby extending the reach and impact of the ICDP programme.

VÉLEZ



Vélez, in the Department of Santander has been using ICDP in their projects for early childhood, childhood and adolescence and their families. Their focus is on the prevention of psychosocial risk and the promotion of mental health. The link to different recorded video testimonies in Spanish:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1I5IRCntlWn7d4vj37l3DaORkPrk1Bkwe?usp=drive_link

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ICDP IN BOYACÁ

Letter to ICDP from a trainer

Dear ICDP,

I would like to share with you several important developments that have been taking place in our department regarding the programme.

Within the Boyacá Health Secretariat, there has been a shift in the implementation of mental health programmes and strategies. These changes also affect the ICDP programme, "*I Am a Person Too.*" Going forward, the Secretariat will implement the ICDP programme through teams of psychologists who have already been trained in the methodology. This approach will help ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme throughout our department.

At the same time, we remain committed to celebrating the 20th anniversary of ICDP in Boyacá. As part of this milestone, I have been highlighting our community and health education strategy, which is based on good treatment, emotional connection, empathy, strengthening family environments, and supporting public policies for early childhood and adolescence.

ICDP continues to thrive here twenty years after Nicoletta Armstrong first introduced us to the programme. Nicoletta, thank you for your support and trust throughout these two decades of growth—not only for our department, but also for me personally. My understanding of parenting and its profound importance in people's lives has changed dramatically as a result of this journey. I hope to continue counting on your support in my new responsibilities and initiatives, which will undoubtedly remain closely connected to ICDP.

I am also pleased about the work carried out during recent months in 2025 in Paipa, Pisba, Floresta, and Corrales. This has been a multi-level effort involving decision-makers, formal and informal community leaders, families, and adolescents.

Finally, I will be writing to the Governor of Boyacá to express my gratitude for his support of ICDP and its development over the past twenty years.

Thank you again,

Luis Fernando Lopez
ICDP trainer and coordinator of ICDP in Boyacá