

Meet Karla... (Cont)

One afternoon when she was 10 years old, Karla was inside her home with her 7-year-old sister. A man unknown to her entered the house, grabbed her by the arm, and violently threw her to the ground; she was startled and very frightened.

The man threatened the young girl, saying that if she yelled or screamed, he would take her far away from her family. He tore her clothes and touched her in mean, ugly ways. He hurt her. The younger sister, witnessing all of this, cried very hard. The man ran out of the house, escaping through a neighbor's yard, and disappeared.

During the Tamar Encounter, Karla experienced trust and freedom. She was able to face this painful experience. She felt comfortable in the space shared by the Encounter, so she could express her opinions about sexuality. Though difficult, she could share the story of her pain.

The CEDEPCA facilitators were trained and sensitized to listen to and attend to the needs of the teen girls. Through the use of special activities, they facilitated healing spaces. The teens were able to “visibilize” sexual abuse (to make it visible), to name it, to learn the different types of violence, and to realize that this is not normal. They committed themselves to denounce sexual violence and to declare that they have the right to live a life free of violence.

We in CEDEPCA are committed to reducing the problem of violence. Latin America is the region of the world that has the second highest number of forced child pregnancies. Therefore, our commitment is to prevent and eradicate sexual violence.

We thank all of the persons who collaborate with CEDEPCA and who make it possible for us to share the good news of eradicating sexual violence against adolescent women and girls.