

### **The Sunshine Summer Camp – May 12-14 2014 – Cebu City, Philippines supported by IFL**

It was a huge success. We took 30 children aged 5-22yrs and literally gave them back their lives - we filled them full of joy, love, technical diabetic information and most importantly - insulin! Ultimately we gave them and their parents (the ones who could afford the journey) HOPE for their future! We tested their blood sugars in mg/dl's each day and it was so great to see the numbers decrease with training.

At the start of the camp most of the children's readings were like the boy's results in the image entitled "472 mg/dl." Look at his face - he knows that is a death sentence. But if he can get it under control it doesn't have to be. The normal blood sugar range is 102-110mg/dl for non-diabetics! Non diabetics never rise higher than 125 mg/dl! But by the end of the camp we were starting to get more normalised figures in the low 200's.

As ever we heard so many stories of hardships beyond belief – like young Geneth who looks like any normal 8 year old except she is actually 13 because her mother has had to drastically restrict her insulin dose; lack on money means she is unable to predict when she can make the expensive journey to the hospital in Cebu to receive fresh supplies of insulin for her daughter.

Hopefully less than 5% of the children we helped at the camp will die by this time next year and most will live until their fifties is they can continue their treatment - whereas untreated Type 1 Children die within a year of contracting the condition.

The organisation that IFL (Insulin For Life) works with in the Southern Philippines is Sweet Alert - a band of courageous mothers who are determined to do something about so many young children dying so needlessly. This was their first diabetic camp. Processing, diagnosing and helping these young people is tough, intensive work but IFL is working hard to help Sweet Alert grow and organise more camps. Interestingly we learned during the camp that a lot of successful young diabetics go on to become diabetic health workers themselves. And so the circle of life continues.

Thanks to The Sweet Alert Society spearheaded by Armi Lopez Garcia and Marian Denopol and JDF – Cebu Chapter and the Philippines Dept of Health – for making this camp possible. It was an amazing humbling experience for all of us as we watched children as young as 5 sit and concentrate all day in +40C heat as they knew their lives depended on it! We are already trying hard to repeat the experience in the battle to save young diabetic lives. Please help us by donating to IFL here: <http://www.insulinforlife.org/help>