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New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning Adult Learner Writing Contest

Category: Memoir
Title: Childhood Memories
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Childhood Memories

When I think about my early life in Danli, Honduras the word “free” comes to my mind. I remember flying kites, feeling the fresh air in my face, and running through the spacious fields. The sweet smelling wild flowers made me feel very close to nature. I loved the sound of the small ravine where I frequently swam. Sometimes I walked over the suspension bridge that swayed over the ravine. My mom was at home waiting for us to come for her dinner. We had delicious tortillas, with cheese, beans, rice and eggs. Our table was very crowded with five sisters and one brother and of course my dad who came home very tired from driving a tar truck to and from the city.

At the weekend our whole family took care of our small field where we planted corn, beans, yucca and plantain. We kept some food for ourselves and the rest my father and brother would sell to the Mercado in town.

We also helped our mother with some chores before going to school - like feeding the chickens and the pigs and gathering the eggs for breakfast. My brother helped to milk the three cows and to feed Lucero, our horse.

Climbing in the trees was my favorite thing to do. I would find mangos, guavas, oranges and I would eat them while sitting in the tree with my sister Ana.

We played rayuela (hopscotch) and hide and seek. It was difficult to find each other because there were many, many places to hide.

After we did all our morning chores we were ready to go to school. It was a very long walk on rough roads but we played and sang many songs. It was fun and we were joined by other neighbors.

Our teacher Matilde was a very nice and dynamic lady who taught grades 1-3. She recognized that I was a type of child who liked to ask questions and to get answers. We did not have a library so she brought many books for us to borrow. She advised us to study hard.

Looking back I realize how wonderful my childhood was and how it helped me to be a good person and a caring mother. I am sorry that my daughter who lives in the city cannot climb trees, care for farm animals and run near sweet smelling fields as I did.