

Peru's Most Violent Prisoners Crowdfund a Campaign to Help Kids With Cancer

Inmates at the notorious Castro Castro prison became unlikely heroes for a charity struggling to help sick children.

September 1, 2013 | [Andri Antoniadis](#)

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Programs aimed at giving prisoners a sense of purpose have proven to be life-altering for them. Some, like the [Sustainable Prisons Project](#) in Washington state, teach inmates about ecology, preparing them for

green-collar jobs, while others, like [Paws in Prison](#) in Arkansas, give them a sense of purpose by training rescue dogs.

But for the inmates of Peru's most dangerous prison, known as Castro Castro, their ability to positively impact the world around them seemed negligible. Castro's population is made up of the country's most violent offenders, men who are serving time for offenses like murder and terrorism.

Nonetheless, when these inmates were approached about helping a struggling charity raise money for kids with cancer, they showed up—with an outpouring of money, handwritten letters of support and homemade gifts.

As one prisoner said in the [video](#), "What started helping the kids, ended up helping all of us because we realized we are humans."

The [Peruvian Cancer Foundation](#) offers treatment for cancer-stricken children whose families otherwise couldn't afford it. But street canvassing in recent years had left it crucially short of the funds it needed to operate.

Not only did the prisoners offer a significant amount of support, but when news hit outside prison walls that the inmates were demonstrating such a level of generosity, it ignited the rest of the country to do the same. As a result, the foundation's "Ponle Corazon" campaign this July reportedly raised more money than it ever had before.

From <http://www.takepart.com/article/2013/09/01/peru-castr-castro-prison-kids-with-cancer>