

Sophie Kleinhandler
Cuba Reflection
February 2015

The Purim carnival we held for the children of the Religious School at the Patronato was an amazing experience. It was so meaningful because, even though it was not a typical carnival with rides and elaborate games, the children enjoyed it all the same. I will never forget the look of excitement and amazement on the faces of the children when they entered the room and saw all that we had set up for them. At my make-up booth, we did glamorous make-overs along with tattoos and hair braiding. I remember for one adorable little boy we had to try ten different tattoos because they just weren't working. He was so patient and beyond happy when the spiderman tattoo finally worked. Styling the older girl's hair was also a lot of fun, especially because they were not familiar with the different types of braids that we were doing and they were so excited to see the finished results in the mirrors we brought. It was a little nerve-wracking for me to do the make-up for the littlest girls because they wanted to touch everything and it was not so easy to communicate with them but they were all so sweet and just wanted to look like princesses. Seeing their smiling faces for the photos they posed for made it all worth it.

On the morning following the Purim carnival, we spent time visiting the members of the Adath Synagogue. My mom and I spoke to a man who told us that his grandchildren attended our carnival and had so much fun and loved all of the prizes they won. Seeing the happiness on this man's face in describing the joy of his grandchildren really brightened up my day. The prizes that we gave out were not all typical carnival prizes. We tried to give out hats, shirts and cute socks along with some small toys and other little things that the kids most likely could not afford or have access to in Cuba. Seeing how incredibly appreciative and happy these children of all