

It takes a 28-day village to raise CISV's kids

Starting on June 27, the Atlanta chapter of **Children's International Summer Village** (CISV) will host a 28-day "village," with children present from 12 different countries, for the first time since the group founded a chapter here in 2004.

Founded out of the ashes of World War II as a way to bridge cultural and ethnic divides, CISV is a "non-political volunteer youth exchange organization that offers children and adults the opportunity to make new friendships worldwide and understand and appreciate different cultures," according to its Web site.



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John Manasso

Tait Anberg, who took part in the program himself as a child growing up in the San Francisco area and founded the local group, said Atlanta CISV's initial goal through a "60 for Peace" fundraising program was to locate 60 individuals or groups who would donate \$1,000 apiece.

He said the chapter needed to raise about \$33,000 for the village, which includes 48 students, 12 adult leaders and six junior counselors. (Of the 12 countries participating, each

sends four 11-year-olds, two boys and two girls.)

Anberg explained why 11-year-olds are chosen for the cultural exchange

that takes place in the summer villages, which are conducted in English.

"Much research showed that 11 years old was the perfect age for it," he said. "They're old enough to represent their culture ... They don't have a lot of stereotypes built up at that point. Communication tends to be easier when getting together."

During the village, the adults teach from a curriculum that has eight points. Those points include global awareness education, human relations education and human rights.

Anberg said the result is that when international disasters occur, such as in China with the recent earthquake, the children who have been in these villages are not learning about it through the news, but calling friends in those

countries to hear firsthand accounts.

Local chapters are eligible to host villages once they are four years old, which is why Atlanta is hosting its first one this year. However, children from its chapter have taken part in ones hosted in other countries, such as one in France in 2005. Older children are eligible to take part in other exchange programs through CISV. Annual dues are \$800 per child.