

CONTACT:

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Karin Pouw

(323) 960-3500

MediaRelations@ChurchofScientology.net

The Way to Happiness—Targeting Violence in Juarez

*Juarez, Mexico, was known as the murder capital of the world. But the homicide rate has [declined by 45 percent](#) since the broad distribution of *The Way to Happiness*, a booklet featured in a new brochure published by the Church of Scientology.*

Twenty-year-old Juan Carlos Martinez looked out across the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez and wondered what had happened to the place where he was raised.

He and his family, Scientologists since 1998, returned home to Juarez in April 2008 from San Jose, California, just as the trouble was beginning—trouble Martinez faced head-on with the help of *The Way to Happiness*, a nonreligious moral code based entirely on common sense, written by author, humanitarian and Scientology Founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Turf battles between warring drug cartels and their street gangs spilled onto the streets of Juarez in 2008 and the homicide rate exploded. Killings

increased five-fold that year and mounted again to 2,643 homicides in 2009. Ciudad Juarez became known as the murder capital of the world.

“It was shocking at first when dozens of heavily armed Humvees and soldiers began patrolling the streets,” says Martinez. “It looked like we were under martial law.”

Determined to take action to reduce the ever-increasing violence, Martinez began distributing copies of *The Way to Happiness* in his neighborhood and conducting lectures to students and parents at local high schools. He joined forces with The Way to Happiness Foundation, a Glendale, California-based nonprofit public benefit corporation, and took on the challenge of making a major impact in the city. Scientologists from around the world helped fund the distribution of a half-million copies of *The Way to Happiness* in Juarez.

As people read the booklet, it made so much sense they began to adopt the campaign as their own.

- The Juarez Water Company delivered copies of *The Way to Happiness* door-to-door on their rounds through the city.
- A local newspaper, *El Diario*, included 50,000 copies of *The Way to Happiness* in a Sunday edition of the paper.

- Channel 44, the most popular television channel in the city, began promoting the campaign, with TV presenters reading precepts from *The Way to Happiness* and airing its public service announcements.
- Schools and businesses began adopting the program, distributing customized copies of the booklet to their students and clientele.
- The post office came on board, with postal workers hand-delivering copies of *The Way to Happiness* to every household in the city.
- A government agency responsible for character education in the schools provided more than 800 hours of seminars on *The Way to Happiness* reaching 12,000 students.

As *The Way to Happiness* became known and used, the violence began to subside: by the end of 2011 Juarez achieved a [45 percent drop](#) in homicides over the previous year.

The Church of Scientology and its members are proud to share the tools for happier living contained in *The Way to Happiness* with all who work to build a better world. For more information, visit www.Scientology.org/thewaytohappiness



An employee of the Juarez Water Company delivered copies of *The Way to Happiness* door-to-door on his rounds through the city



Volunteers pasted address labels on copies of *The Way to Happiness* to be distributed to households throughout Juarez.



Youth in a Juarez school bus showing their copies of *The Way to Happiness*