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In January Father Chris Riley once again journeyed to East Timor to provide support to a Salesian orphanage in Baguia.

This year, Fr Riley was accompanied by 4 young people from Youth Off The Streets who took part in the trip within the Service Learning programme.

The group comprised three young women who have been chosen as Trainee Youth Workers for the Youth Off The Streets Macquarie Fields Outreach Programme and Shayne Walsh, a 2006 Youth Off The Streets Scholarship recipient. The young people had the opportunity to learn the importance and value of being generous to others by helping out at the orphanage and providing care for the children.

“The young people I am taking with me have been chosen because they have shown great leadership potential. By helping out at the orphanage, they will learn to understand the importance and value of being generous to others. In the past, Service Learning has helped young people develop greater self-esteem and positive values. As future role models in their communities, these are necessary qualities for these kids to build on,” said Father Chris Riley.

Miss World Australia, Sabrina Houssami and Miss World NSW, Caroline Pemberton, also accompanied the group to fulfil part of their Miss World Beauty With A Purpose obligations and to help raise awareness of the good work being performed in the region. A Skynews team filmed the visit and prepared a documentary, showcasing the involvement of those young people during the trip.

Father Chris Riley’s Overseas Relief Fund continues to support the Baguia orphanage by organising funding and donations of food, clothing, educational tools and sporting equipment.

Father Riley and the Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund are very grateful to The Honourable Tony Stewart MP for his support of this project and Bankstown District Sports Club for providing the funding for the 2007 Service Learning trip.

Sabrina Houssami has generously agreed to continue to work in support of the Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund by accepting a Youth Ambassador role.