



# Never Forget to Play!

by Thea Ricchiuto

I made the mistake a few times, and I will never make it again. I forgot to play. When I became frustrated with the girls during *estudios*, my first thought was get to my computer and it will all be better. My computer is my link back to my life in California, but that currently isn't my home. My home is in Bolivia, and I can't run away from it by turning on a computer.

*Estudios* ends at 5:00pm and *Rosario* begins around 6:30 pm. This leaves the girls an hour and a half to gather their clothes from the line, eat a snack (*merienda*), and most importantly play. This is the best time to play because the girls are just released from sitting, and they are ready!

Once they have all had their snacks, the numbers start to gather and the screams are heard across town. The girls have a few different games they love to play, but

most importantly they just love to scream. I now remember why I love working with my all boys camp... no screaming. The big girls are very athletic so I stay out of all the games they play, to avoid a ball being pelted at my head. It's a special version of dodge ball that scares me!

I stick to the little ones during this time because they have an energy level that is astonishing. A few days ago I was lucky enough to enjoy the company of 5 little ones and a soccer ball. It began with us kicking the ball in a circle, which turned into 'monkey-in-the-middle', with all the girls trying to get the ball away from Becca (volunteer from WA) and me. In the end I was dribbling around and through the girls, as if they were cones that were trying to trip me. I was holding my own until the swarm around my feet grew so large that I could barely move without stepping on

