



## Our Mission

*We believe all children deserve access to a quality education and that curious kids can change the world.*

Our work aims to have a measurable impact on primary school education in Guatemala, strengthening communities, the nation and providing a model for similar work elsewhere.

We **emphasize literacy** because education is the most effective long-term solution for alleviating extreme poverty.

We **focus on rural villages** where illiteracy disproportionately affects indigenous people, and in the early grades where education can make the biggest impact on literacy and overall life chances.



## The Problem We Address

Guatemala is on the front lines of the global learning crisis. The nation has one of the highest rates of illiteracy and one of the most profound income gaps in the Western hemisphere. Although the Guatemalan government builds primary schools and employs teachers, very little actual learning occurs in these schools.

**Primary school teachers generally have only a high school education**, and they are all products of the same broken educational system in which they now work. Schools lack resources, which reinforces the use of teaching methods based on rote memorization and copying from the blackboard.

In fact, Guatemalans over the age of 15 have only 5.6 years of schooling and that figure drops precipitously – to 3.4 years – for indigenous women. Only 30 percent of children who stay in school until sixth grade can pass a grade appropriate reading comprehension test, according to the Guatemalan government.

70% OF KIDS IN GUATEMALA ARE  
**IN SCHOOL &  
NOT LEARNING**  
BASIC READING AND WRITING SKILLS

# CHILD AID'S PROVEN SOLUTION

Child Aid addresses these problems by providing an integrated, multi-year program of teacher training and school resource provision that is aligned with the Guatemalan National Curriculum and certified by the Ministry of Education. The award-winning Child Aid program, field-tested and well-proven since 2010, contains these components:

## School-wide Workshops

Eight day-long workshops help teachers build a new paradigm of interactive instruction and equip students with foundational comprehension and critical thinking skills.

## Coaching

Twenty-four in-class, follow-up coaching sessions help teachers integrate Child Aid techniques into their daily practice.

## Time Spent with Teachers

With eight workshops and 24 coaching sessions, we spend at least 75 hours with each teacher over the course of our program. Our programs have a built-in "multiplier effect" since each teacher successfully trained by us will teach approximately 24 students each year for, perhaps, an additional 20-25 years.

## School Break Book Clubs

Adventures in Reading, held on school campuses daily for six-weeks, helps offset loss of learning gains during the long school holiday.

## Book Provision

Annual provision of high-quality, grade-appropriate, fiction and non-fiction books provides the resources needed to apply what was learned in workshops and coaching. We also work to help establish school libraries, lending programs, and the development of a culture of reading in the school

## Bilingual Learning

"Bridging techniques" address a serious problem for the many students who come to first grade speaking a Mayan language and little Spanish. Bridging techniques slowly add Spanish-language content as grade levels progress. We can do this because our staff is fully bilingual in Spanish and the language of the communities where they are assigned schools (at this point, K'iche', Kaqchikel and Tz'utujil).



## LITERACY AWARD WINNER

In 2020, the Library of Congress recognized Child Aid for our teacher-training and book delivery program and work advancing literacy.

# OUR IMPACT

Since 2010, Child Aid has helped tens of thousands of children learn to read, giving them the core literacy skills and habits of reading so critical to lifetime learning.

 **81k**  
CHILDREN BENEFITTED

 **1,990**  
TEACHERS TRAINED

 **211**  
PARTNER SCHOOLS

 **665k**  
BOOKS DISTRIBUTED

CHILD AID  
**STUDENTS IMPROVED 65%**  
MORE THAN THEIR PEERS IN  
READING COMPREHENSION

# HOW IS CHILD AID RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

In the middle of March 2020, the government of Guatemala shut down all K-12 schools, and we were immediately faced with direct challenges to our core mission. How do we continue our literacy work with teachers and students? And how can we help the communities we serve, all the while navigating the harsh realities of the pandemic? Here's what we're doing:



## Addressing an Immediate Food Crisis

An already precarious and chronic food shortage was made worse by the economic shutdowns necessary during the pandemic. Beginning in June 2020, Child Aid began delivering shelf-stable food boxes to the communities where we work. **To date, Child Aid has made four large food deliveries, providing food relief to more than 12,000 people.**



## Leading the Charge for a Safe Return to School

A threat that hits directly at the heart of Child Aid's work is the real possibility that children may not return to school after the pandemic subsides. It's a global issue threatening to erase decades of very significant primary school enrollment progress. In Guatemala, the setback is heartbreakingly personal. Parents tell us they will not be able to feed their families and will need their school-age children to work and help with child care. Addressing food uncertainty could allow parents to do what they most want: send their children back to school. We plan to continue our emergency food relief efforts as long as the pandemic continues to cause catastrophic hunger, and we intend to target our food provision in a way that encourages students to return to school.

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# HOW IS CHILD AID RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS?



## Continuing Child Aid's Literacy Efforts Using Technology Solutions

Teacher training is at the heart of Child Aid's strategy, and we moved quickly to turn our in-person workshops into virtual ones. We're thrilled that teacher participation rates exceed 90 percent. Videos modeling Child Aid teaching techniques are widely shared via WhatsApp and Zoom. We're also helping teachers adapt the text-heavy and inaccessible learning materials dispatched from the Guatemalan government, transforming them into student-friendly and visually oriented materials.



## Reaching Students Directly

Child Aid doesn't ordinarily reach students directly with our literacy program, but the pandemic crisis and our successful use of technology emboldened us to try something new. We used local television and radio programming to reach out to students in their homes with specially curated broadcasts featuring Child Aid Read Alouds and question/answer segments broadcast in the local indigenous languages. The positive response from children and parents is more proof that our use of technology in creative, new ways really works.

## BE PART OF THE CHILD AID STORY

Follow us on social media where you'll find vibrant and interesting content about literacy and Guatemala and concrete steps you can take to help Child Aid reach more children with a good education.



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