

LITERACY, EDUCATION, OPPORTUNITY

# Education is essential to a child's ability to imagine, pursue and realize a better life.



Our innovative work in rural villages is creating a new generation of teachers and librarians who are transforming education in their communities.

Our program, called *Reading for Life*, is based on nearly two decades of literacy and education work in Guatemala. It is predicated on long term commitment and rooted in our belief that training and support for local people is the key to lasting change.

By investing in Child Aid, you bring children the transformational gift of literacy.

## Dear Friends,

Although we have been traveling to Guatemala to oversee our literacy program for more than 18 years, we are inspired anew with every visit. This is hardly surprising given the depth of the need in Guatemala and the hopefulness that children display everywhere, simply in being children. But each year, something stands out for us - the words of a young teacher, a story told by a librarian or the actions of an inspired school director.

On our most recent trip, that extra bit of inspiration came during a visit to one of our partner schools, a seven-room schoolhouse in the village of Godinez. We sat in on a reading hour, led by a Child Aid-trained librarian, in a second-grade classroom. During the session the children were amazingly enthusiastic. Hands were going up, kids anxiously wanted to write on the board, and everyone was engrossed in the storybooks. The level of participation we saw that morning was the antithesis of what you would see in most rural schools in Guatemala. Typically, it's rote copying, no interaction, no questions from the children, no engagement from the teachers. It became very clear to us that Child Aid is replacing the dreariness of the old methods, so typical of neglected rural schools in Guatemala, with a genuine excitement about learning - and not just among the children, but among teachers, too. We knew at that moment that even if Child Aid were to walk away from Godinez for good, the teaching skills, inspiration and know-how you've helped us bring

**Child Aid brings educational** opportunity to children in over 50 towns and villages in Guatemala.

to the community would remain. As you read through these pages, we hope you feel the same sense of excitement about our work that we feel. Thank you for helping us bring opportunity to so many children.

Our warmest regards,

Nancy Press, Ph.D. Cofounder & Board President





Richard T. Carroll, Ph.D. Cofounder, Secretary & Treasurer

## **Reading for Life**

**D** eading for Life is the name of our flagship literacy program in Guatemala. Through R this unique program, we help more than 8,500 children in over 50 villages improve their lives through education. Each year, we help hundreds of teachers in remote villages

A child who can read has far greater potential to create change.

more effectively teach children to read. We deliver tens of thousands of children's books to neglected schools and libraries. We create and improve community libraries and train librarians to be promoters of reading in their villages. We provide scholarships, fund schools for children living in poverty, and support educational programs for indigenous girls. We also provide

training, materials and support to local organizations that are working to improve educational opportunity for children.

> Reading for Life is effective because it is multifaceted. It is sustainable because we invest in local people. It is empowering because it gives children the greatest resource they can possess to lift themselves from poverty: literacy.

## Why Guatemala

W/e work in Guatemala because the need is great. Guatemala has the lowest literacy W rate in all of Latin America, and the majority of the country's indigenous children grow up in crippling poverty. On top of the constant threat of malnutrition, these children live in the aftermath of a brutally violent, 36-year civil war that left over 200,000 people dead or missing. Since the 1996 peace accords, the United Nations has documented over 600 massacres that were carried out by state forces or paramilitary groups during the war. Most of the victims were indigenous Guatemalans. In the communities where we work, children grow up living the history of this war. Families are broken, domestic and sexual violence are prevalent, alcoholism is common, and the grip of poverty seems inescapable. For these children, illiteracy poses a nearly impenetrable barrier to improving their lives.

Sadly, when it comes to learning to read, children in rural Guatemala face tremendous challenges. Because books are rare and illiteracy is common among adults, few



Most indigenous children in Guatemala grow up in poverty, and few make it past sixth grade.

applying cookie cutter solutions doesn't work. Rather, transforming education requires long term commitment, deep knowledge of local culture, intense, ongoing investigation and village-by-village flexibility. We've been tackling the problem of illiteracy in Guatemala for 18 years, and we know the intricacies of the problem well. The effectiveness of our program reflects this.

children are read to in the home. Most have never even put their hands on a book by the time they start school. Additionally, the majority of teachers in rural areas are undertrained and lack the necessary experience to effectively teach and promote reading. By training teachers and librarians and helping children learn to read, we provide children the skills they need to succeed in school and lift themselves from poverty.

We focus on Guatemala, because directing resources toward a single location allows us to have the greatest impact. Illiteracy is a different beast in every region of the developing world and

## **Transforming Rural Libraries**

In a town or village where books are rare, even the simplest library can have a transformative effect. For years, we have helped indigenous communities like Xojolá create and improve libraries for children. When we set out to improve a library, we provide hundreds of high-quality children's books, including storybooks, textbooks and reference books. When necessary, we hire local carpenters to build tables, chairs and bookshelves for children. On the rare occasion when a community lacks a usable building for a library, as in Xojolá, we help create a new one.

But our library work goes beyond buildings and books. In order to truly create communities of readers, we give local people the tools they need to improve education in their communities themselves. We train librarians and help them transform their

#### In 2011, Child Aid:

- Trained 42 librarians representing 31 rural libraries.
- Sponsored summer reading activities in 25 indigenous communities.
- Supplied 38 libraries with thousands of quality children's books.



Reading for Life engages thousands of children in library reading programs, including these girls in Santa Catarina Palopó

libraries into dynamic centers for reading promotion and literacy education. Through group and individualized sessions, we help them learn everything they need to know in order to run a small library, link it to nearby schools and foster community involvement. Once this is accomplished, we know we've created a highly functioning library, with partner librarians who are true catalysts for literacy in their communities.

## READING FOR LIFE: Library Profile

Xojolá

For the village of Xojolá, 2011 was a milestone year. Not only did the community successfully open its first library, it started its first reading programs, received hundreds of children's books, appointed a librarian and prepared the village's seven teachers for Child Aid's teacher training program, which began this year.

It all started two years ago when Xojolá's teachers and community leaders presented Child Aid a formal request for support. The document, which was hand written, signed with thumbprints and bound in an old manila folder, requested that we bring our *Reading for Life* program to Xojolá. We agreed, and our first step was to help the community create a library. Six months later, in mid-2011, a group of indigenous K'iché children walked through the metal door of the village's first library.

Today, the library has become so popular it can't hold all the kids who want to use it. So, given the tremendous local commitment to literacy, we recently partnered with another organization to help Xojolá build a bigger library, which will be completed this year. In addition to the books, reading programs and other resources it will offer, the library will function as a distribution point for Child Aid's *Books to Villages* program, which will loan books to schools in nearby villages. Children in four of the nearest communities will also have direct access to the library. In all, it will serve nearly 2,000 kids, not just by making books accessible, but by being a community rallying point for literacy in a region that has long deserved a resource such as this.



## **Training Rural Teachers**

C killed teachers are the cornerstone of effective education. In Guatemala, public Uschools are underfunded to the point of neglect, and teachers enter the profession with almost no specific training in how to teach children to read. These young educators begin their careers with minimal classroom management skills, little knowledge of lesson planning and almost no support. The results are poor student performance and high dropout rates, especially among girls and indigenous children. By training hundreds of teachers, we are improving education at its core.

#### In 2011, Child Aid:

- Partnered with 27 schools in rural indigenous communities.
- Trained 294 teachers to promote and teach reading more effectively.
- Engaged 6,434 children in school-based literacy activities.
- Conducted over 1,000 one-on-one classroom training sessions with teachers.



Teachers and Child Aid staff at a teacher training session, Boca Costa region

In both group and one-on-one settings, we provide dynamic, interactive training for over 350 teachers in 39 rural schools. Each teacher in our program receives six training sessions per year. We also provide ongoing training to more than 180 young indigenous men and women from remote villages. These students, who grew up in extreme poverty, are now studying to become teachers and will be more effective at promoting reading when they return to their communities. All of the teachers in our programs receive storybooks, textbooks, an extensive Child Aid teaching manual and instructional materials for use in the classroom. For the teachers involved, these are the first such resources they have had.

# **READING FOR LIFE: Teacher Profile**

Teacher Luis Miguel Can

with his sixth grade class

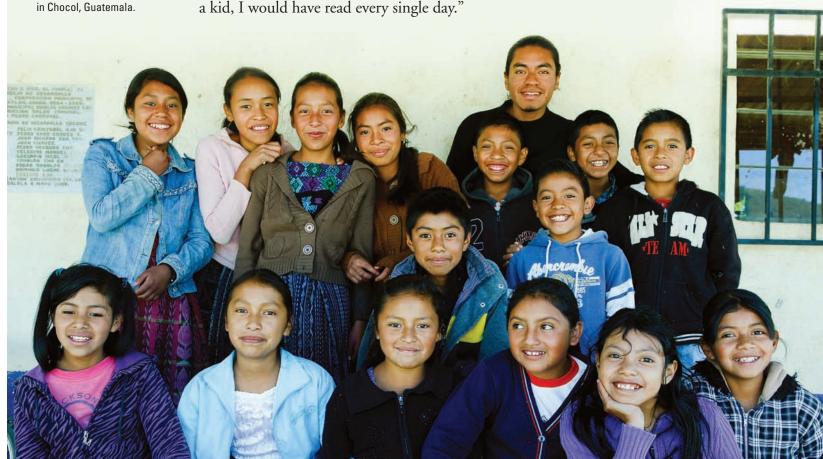
uis Miguel Can is a sixth-grade teacher in the remote village of Chocol, Guatemala. Left grew up in a similarly isolated village in the country's mountainous Central Highlands. Like the majority of indigenous children in Guatemala, he never had access to books. As a child, Mr. Can struggled his way through a neglected educational system and, working against the odds, made it all the way through high school. At 18, he became an elementary school teacher, but had no idea how to teach or promote reading. The idea of reading aloud to his students or engaging them in a book never even occurred to him. Of course, it hardly would have mattered anyway. He had no books.

books."

Mr. Can's challenges - both as a child who once grappled with reading, and now as a teacher who struggles to teach it - are commonplace in Guatemala. Most teachers simply never bother teaching anything beyond the most basic reading skills. And without books, resources, training or support, it's no wonder.

This year, Child Aid began its Reading for Life program in Chocol. We delivered dozens of storybooks to each of the school's six classrooms and began our intensive teacher training program for Chocol's teachers. The teachers, now a year into the program, already report progress in the classroom.

"I use Child Aid's techniques all the time," Mr. Can says. "It has been a wonderful experience, and the kids are really picking up reading. If I had this program when I was a kid, I would have read every single day."



# Luis Miguel Can

"Teachers face so many obstacles here," Mr. Can says. "The main one is lack of books and materials. The smidgen of money we get is for pens and maybe erasers. But never

## **Bringing Books to Children**

**D** ooks are the building blocks of literacy. They are fundamental to our program and Dcritical to helping Guatemala's poorest children reach their potential, in school and in life.

Each year, we ship tens of thousands of Spanish-language children's books to Guatemala and deliver them to remote schools and libraries. We work closely with U.S. publishers and nonprofit distributors to acquire supplies of high-quality books, and we carefully select only those titles that will be appropriate for children in the impoverished regions where we work. We turn rural libraries into book hubs, working closely with librarians to help them supply rotating boxes of books to remote classrooms in outlying villages. In this way, we ensure that even the most isolated schools have access to vital reading materials.

Most importantly, we back our distribution efforts with practical, ongoing literacy training for teachers and librarians in order to ensure that books are used regularly and in a way that improves children's reading abilities. When bringing books to village classrooms, we help teachers develop specific reading techniques that engage and inspire

#### In 2011, Child Aid:

- Brought 37,911 Spanish-language children's books to Guatemala.
- Made them accessible to over 10,000 impoverished children.
- Improved book collections in 93 schools and libraries.



Child Aid uses storybooks to engage children and inspire them to read.

their students to read. We help librarians create reading programs, book-lending programs and extracurricular literacy activities that guarantee the books get used. In places where most books are outdated, irrelevant, dilapidated or inappropriate for children, our books are exactly what's needed to inspire and engage new readers. In our 52 partner communities, books are used and enjoyed by children and teachers every day.

## **READING FOR LIFE:** Family Profile

The Yax Godoys live in the village of Tzantinamit, where they have a simple house and a small plot of corn. Their income is so low they're rarely able to put meat on the table, and they subsist almost entirely on rice, beans and the corn they grow. The idea of purchasing children's books for the girls is simply out of the question. And, until 2011, the Yax Godoys couldn't even rely on the village school for reading materials.

Lack of books is one of the primary barriers to improving literacy rates in rural

Things began to change for the Yax Godoys – and the community – last year.

Guatemala. Without them – particularly books that make children *want* to read – teachers have an extremely difficult time teaching reading. Plus, the absence of books in homes means children enter school without critical pre-literacy skills. For children like the Yax Godoy girls, it's a one-two punch that makes learning to read a nearly impossible task. Throughout 2011, Child Aid delivered rotating boxes of children's books to Tzantinamit's school and worked closely with teachers to help them use the books to promote reading. Now, nearly every child in the school reads on a regular basis. "You would never see this in other villages," said Carlos Pos Ben, a Child Aid Literacy

Trainer who works in Tzantinamit. "Since they've had access to good books and reading activities, the children have shed their fears of participating in class. And the teachers tell me the kids are doing better with their test scores."

Mr. Yax Godoy explained that kids in the village, including his girls, never used to read. "They hated it," he said, "But now that we have storybooks in the school, they love to read." For the Yax Godoys, this is a triumph. The girls, who are now in first and third grade, are becoming better readers – and they have the books they need to nourish their

newfound love.

## **The Yax Godoy Family**



## **New Initiatives**

#### **STUDENT TEACHER PROGRAM**

In 2011, we tripled the size of our student-teacher program by partnering with two more vocational boarding schools for young indigenous men and women: La Salle School for Indigenous Boys in Guatemala City and Nuestra Señora del Socorro, **Child Aid helps future** a school for indigenous girls in San Andres Semetabaj. The students who teachers learn how to attend these schools come from some of the country's remotest and poorest communities and are studying to become teachers. Through promote and teach reading. these partnerships, we now provide ongoing literacy and teacher training to over 180 high-school-age students so they can return to their villages as educators and better promote reading among children in their communities.

## **RURAL GIRLS CLUBS**

Indigenous Mayan girls are Guatemala's most disadvantaged group. For many, life is characterized by early pregnancy, lack of education, domestic violence and chronic poverty. In the communities where we work, illiteracy rates among adult women are as high as 75%. To bring girls to the forefront of our literacy program and help them reach their full potential, Child Aid partnered with the Population Council to provide reading workshops and activities for over 350 girls from 16 villages. Through this initiative, we hope to increase girls' reading skills and lay a foundation for improved academic performance. We believe the Girls Club setting offers a great opportunity for us to work with girls in a way that is both educationally effective and personally empowering.

### **BOOKS TO VILLAGES**

In rural Guatemala, the reach of a community library is only as great as the distance a child must walk to get to it. We created Books to Villages to expand that reach by turning libraries into hubs for book distribution. Through the program, librarians bring rotating boxes of books to outlying villages and schools so children have easy, everyday access to reading material. After piloting Books to Villages in 2010, we officially launched the program in 2011, bringing it to 25 rural classrooms. Over 850 children in seven remote villages gained access to books through this initiative. In 2012, that number has doubled.

Working in neglected village schools, Child Aid helps thousands of indigenous girls learn to read and succeed in school. Why? To empower Guatemala's most disadvantaged children to create change for themselves and their communities.

## **Child Aid 2011 Financial Statements**

## **Our Organizational Partners**

**FUNDIT** – El Tejar, Guatemala Since 1996, Child Aid has partnered with this locally run organization to operate a community library and the only Montessori-style preschool for poor children in Guatemala. Child Aid provides majority support for the school, helps sponsor a nutrition program for the children and funds ongoing scholarships for preschool, primary and junior high students in El Tejar.

#### **CORAL** – Oaxaca, Mexico

Founded by Child Aid in 1988, CORAL is a full-service hearing clinic and education center for impoverished children and their families, located in Oaxaca, Mexico. The only resource of its kind in all of southern Mexico, CORAL provides testing, therapy, clinical services, advocacy, family support and hearing aids to some of the poorest families in the country.

#### **INTERNATIONAL BOOK PROJECT** – USA

Partnering with IBP, we bring tens of thousands of books to Guatemala each year and distribute them to isolated schools and libraries. IBP promotes literacy, education and global friendships by sending books throughout the world.

#### **INTERNATIONAL BOOK BANK** – USA

Thanks to International Book Bank, we put books into the hands of thousands of children every year. IBB increases literacy and advances education by procuring and donating books and other educational materials to developing countries.

#### **POPULATION COUNCIL** – Guatemala

We work with the Population Council to help young Mayan women bring reading programs to indigenous girls in remote highland villages in Central Guatemala.

#### **PEG PARTNERS** – USA

We help PEG Partners further its mission to improve learning environments for Guatemalan children by providing training and resources to teachers and librarians in remote Mayan communities in the department of Sololá.

#### **MIRACLES IN ACTION** – USA

Together, Miracles in Action and Child Aid are bringing literacy programs to three neglected primary schools in the town of Patzún and creating a new library for the indigenous K'iché community of Xojolá.

#### **CENTRO CULTURAL AZOTEA** – Guatemala

Centro Cultural Azotea generously donates extensive warehouse space to Child Aid, which we use for housing and sorting our books and staging distributions in Guatemala.

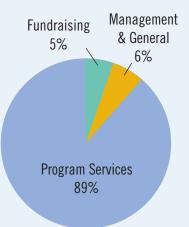
#### **CLUB ROTARIO DEL ESTE** – Guatemala

Rotary Club East manages the complex customs processing required for all of our major book shipments to Guatemala. The club's support allows us to bring books to children throughout the country.

hild Aid is an efficient, cost-effective nonprofit organization that prioritizes programs for children that make a real and lasting difference. In 2011, we again received the highest rating, four stars, from Charity Navigator, the nation's leading independent evaluator of nonprofit organizations. Charity Navigator determined that Child Aid is fiscally responsible and financially stable, exceeding industry standards and outperforming most other charities in our field.

Revenue	Unrestricted Cash & Security Contributions	\$381,648
	Restricted Contributions & Grants	\$402,078
	In-Kind Donations (non-cash)	\$571,822
	Investment Income	\$171,799
	Total Revenue	\$1,527,347
Expenses	Program Services	\$1,095,811
	Management & General	\$77,136
	Fundraising	\$64,492
	Total Expenses	\$1,237,439
Assets	Cash Restricted	\$21,948
	Cash Unrestricted	\$275,401
	Securities Restricted	\$993,756
	Securities Unrestricted	\$147,722
	Other Assets	\$972
	Total Assets	\$1,439,800
Liabilities	Accounts payable & current liabilities	\$20,687
Net Assets	Unrestricted	\$1,121,495
	Temporarily restricted	\$297,618
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	Total Net Assets:	\$1,419,113
	Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,439,800





## **Our Supporters**

On behalf of Child Aid's Board of Directors and staff. as well the children and communities we serve, Thank You! Your generosity makes our work possible, allowing us to bring educational opportunity to some of the poorest children in the world.

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Rebecca Garcia Marketing Consultant

Holly Jimison, Ph.D. Professor, Oregon Health & Science University

John Kin Senior Web Producer, Oregon Public Broadcasting

Misha Pavel, Ph.D. Program Director, National Science Foundation & Professor, Oregon Health & Science University

Dan Regan Executive Director, Kaiser Permanente

Donald Sodo Former CEO, Amercia's Charities

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