Dear Friend,

When I think about the impact of Child Aid’s program on children’s lives, I keep coming back to the image of fertile soil. Every seed has the potential to grow healthy and strong but it must be in the right environment to thrive. Without nutrients, water and light, even the strongest plant will wither.

The first years of a child’s education are so important to their early development and their ability to imagine and realize a brighter future for themselves. It is the time when they develop the fundamental reading and literacy skills that will carry them through their lives. And it is when their desire to learn must be nourished and encouraged.

However, too many children in Guatemala today are growing up in rocky soil, denied even the basic elements of a quality education. They attend schools that are trapped in a repeating cycle of poor quality instruction, insufficient resources and low expectations.

At Child Aid, our vision is to build a community of readers in every classroom. Because when children become participants in a community that values, models and nurtures literacy, they have the environment they need to become confident and independent learners. Every day, we work to empower educators to create a more fertile learning environment for their students by providing high-quality teacher training, books and resources for classrooms, and support for school literacy programs that give kids more opportunities to explore the world of books and become enthusiastic readers.

As the 2016 school year in Guatemala wraps up, I wanted to share some of our successes and accomplishments of the past year. They are the direct result of your confidence in Child Aid and your investment in improving the quality of education for the students and teachers of Guatemala.

Nothing can transform a life like education. Thank you for helping to nurture the potential of so many children through your financial gifts.

Best Wishes,

Nancy Press
Chief Executive Officer

“Before I didn’t like reading or doing my homework. But when Child Aid brought the new books to my school, I found many that I liked and I began going to the library to borrow them.”

Melisa, 6th Grade Student
San Gabriel School

Your contributions ensure that children have the books they need to become independent and enthusiastic readers.

Access to quality education means girls like this one have a greater opportunity for success in school and beyond.
New Trainers, New Schools and New Opportunities for Growth

Child Aid hired four new literacy trainers for 2016, allowing us to add 33 new schools and over 170 teachers who will impact an additional 4,000 students each year. This is our largest single-year expansion to date but we are working toward building our capacity to bring on new trainers every other year to meet the growing demand for our program.

District Supervisors and school officials in Guatemala face a mandate to improve teacher quality and student outcomes but without the resources or on-the-ground experience necessary to meet these expectations.

Child Aid’s emphasis on practical classroom techniques and support of teachers through one-on-one coaching has received an enthusiastic response from both teachers and principals. As awareness of our teacher training program has grown, school officials are increasingly looking to Child Aid as a reliable and effective partner for improving teacher performance.

Earlier this year, Child Aid signed an official agreement with the head of the Department of Sololá, which provides an explicit invitation to bring our program to all 500 primary schools in the Department. This is an unprecedented vote of confidence in the quality of our program and will open many new opportunities for growth in the years to come.

With the implementation of Child Aid’s program in our school, teachers have shown an increased interest in promoting and practicing reading.

Now we can prepare our students to become learners and thinkers, so their voices can be heard in the not too distant future.

Edgar Sánchez, Principal
Miguel García Granados School

Since 2010, more than 100 schools have participated in Child Aid’s teacher training and literacy programs. But the need for better training and resources in Guatemalan schools is great. There are over 800 primary schools in the departments of Sololá and Chimaltenango alone.
“The model classes that trainers give us help us feel so motivated and enthusiastic. You tell us what, you show us how, you give us materials and a chance to practice. After that, I felt in the clouds, like how cool! Like I wanted to try it.”

Marta, 2nd Grade Teacher
Miguel Garcia Granados School

Teachers who join our program often say they’ve felt isolated and unsupported in their jobs, making it nearly impossible for them to improve. Individualized coaching helps teachers build their confidence and develop new skills.

Increasing our Commitment to Coaching

For teachers who are learning and applying new skills in the classroom, spending quality time with a good coach can make all the difference. Coaches provide support that is personalized to teachers’ needs and interests, helping them integrate new techniques into their classroom more quickly and effectively.

A recent USAID report confirmed the benefits of this approach, concluding that providing consistent, sustained coaching to teachers in both formal and informal settings is one of the most effective tools for improving teachers’ knowledge and skills, leading to measurably higher student achievement.

That is why, in 2016, Child Aid increased the amount of time our literacy trainers spend in schools, scheduling extra time each week for informal coaching and support. In addition to workshops and one-on-one classroom follow-up sessions, trainers are available to answer teacher questions, help establish book lending programs, demonstrate how to set up book displays or model lessons for teachers who need extra help.

Thanks to our investment in coaching, teachers are developing stronger and more trusting relationships with trainers and are showing more confidence in integrating new activities and techniques into their lessons.

2016 PROGRAM RESULTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>66</th>
<th>53,000</th>
<th>2,100</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Schools</td>
<td>Books Delivered</td>
<td>Number of one-on-one follow-up coaching sessions conducted by Child Aid trainers in 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>625</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Trained</td>
<td>Children Benefited</td>
<td>Average number of hours Child Aid trainers spent in each program school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>of Child Aid schools have begun school literacy programs to increase student reading time.</td>
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New Evaluation Program Launches with Student Testing

This year, Child Aid began an ambitious new effort to measure the impact of our program on improving teacher effectiveness and students’ literacy skills.

Using a test developed by USAID and the Ministry of Education in Guatemala, we tested 3,200 2nd and 3rd grade students in reading comprehension and fluency at the beginning and end of the school year. Half the students were in first year Child Aid schools and half in non-Child Aid schools. The testing at the schools will be repeated each year of the four-year program.

In 2017, we will be implementing standardized teacher evaluation, measuring changes in teacher performance and their development of classroom instruction skills.

This type of in-depth evaluation is unique for organizations our size and will give Child Aid valuable information about the effectiveness of our program, allowing us to continue to make adjustments and improvements as the program grows.

Now I am reading a story to my students every day because that is what motivates them to continue learning.

Thanks to reading, the students who did not like school are now learning to read and write.

Juan Carlos, Preschool Teacher
Pachichaj School

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Our work is not possible without your generous support. Renew your commitment to literacy and education by making a contribution today. Your donation will help train a teacher, put a book in a child’s hands and give parents hope that their children will have a brighter future.

Yes! I want to make a difference in the life of a child.

☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ $2,500 ☐ $5,000 ☐ Other $ ______

☐ Check – Make check payable to Child Aid
☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Discover ☐ Am. Exp.

Card # ____________________________

Exp. Date: ____________ Security Code # ______

Signature: ____________________________

Email Address: ________________________