



Semillas de Amor

Instilling Values, Sharing Love, and Creating Bright Futures

Semillas de Amor Talking Points

What is Semillas de Amor?

Semillas de Amor, located in Parramos, Guatemala, is a children's village and home to 24 children who were relinquished by their birth mothers or brought to us by the Guatemalan government.

Semillas de Amor's mission is to raise and educate thoughtful, compassionate leaders with excellent critical thinking skills and a commitment to social justice and civic responsibility. We focus on character and academic excellence in a creative, safe and nurturing environment.

Before international adoptions stopped, Semillas de Amor supported the adoptions of over 500 children. Since international adoptions are longer possible we shifted into the children's village we are today.

When entering the children's village you will see our beautiful vegetable gardens, chickens and orchards that help to feed our children, solar panels that heat our water, a large colonial style building, and a large yard with a play ground and gazebo. The home includes four large bedrooms, a kitchen, dining area, and boys and girls bathrooms.

Semillas de Amor is not only home to these children but also a school that provides their education. We have 4 large classrooms where we teach our kids how to read, speak English and the local Maya language, mathematics, and values that will support their success in life.

How many kids live at Semillas do Amor?

24 children call Semillas de Amor home. These children were brought to Semillas de Amor by the Guatemalan children's court system or relinquished by their birth mothers. Our children are currently ages 5-13 years old, both boys and girls.

Why should you support the kids at Semillas?

By supporting the children at Semillas de Amor you have broken the cycle of poverty for them. Not only are you changing their lives but the lives of their future children. So many programs focus only on feeding children and, in a very short time, these same programs are feeding those children's children. We invest sufficient resources of time, money and talent into making sure that we provide our kids with everything they would receive in a loving family. We set high standards that provide a structure for our children to step into opportunities.

Where does the money go?

All the money that is donated to Semillas directly supports the children, their growth, and their future. This includes education, health services, operations of the home, operations of the school, staff, and teachers.



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Why do “you” support Semillas de Amor?

It is a good idea to have an answer prepared for this question. Think about why you care about the kids at Semillas, what has you take the time out of your busy life to make a difference for them, what is your connection?

This is also a great conversation starter. “Can I tell you why I support Semillas de Amor?”

What makes Semillas different/ special?

Institutionalized children face a negative impact on all aspects of their development (intellectual, physical, behavioral, social-emotional). It is difficult to reverse the damage done at an early age to these children. In order to reverse and address the negative impacts we created whole child development structures that support the all aspects of a child’s development and life of the child.

This includes but limited to:

- Therapy with specialized psychologists
- Participation in NeuroNet, a program that helps stop damage done by institutionalization
- Our sharing circle where we discuss issues, good and bad, and everyone has equal time and opportunity to speak up and share their concerns, thoughts, or opinions
- Instilling values that will support them for success through the teaching of the *Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Compassion and Citizenship*
- A canine therapy program with our 7 dogs that include 3 Tibetan mastiffs and 4 rescue dogs. These dogs teach the children about compassion, tenderness, connection to animals and nature, and being kind. On top of that the dogs give the children love, affection and comfort.
- Creating programs that has the children give back to the community including reforestation, trash pick up, civic activities and our very special Holiday “Pay it Forward” program where our kids wrap gifts throughout the year to give away to the poor children of the community
- Teaching the kids to respect the earth through living green. We have solar lamps outside, solar hot water, worm fertilizer, worm composting and regular compost, organic veggies, free range chickens

These whole child development initiatives have helped empower our children and we have seen huge improvements as the programs get created, evolve, and grow.

Why did international adoptions stop in Guatemala?

We are often asked if any of the children at Semillas de Amor are eligible for international adoption. Sadly, the answer is no. The Guatemalan government closed international adoptions in 2007.

International adoptions stopped in Guatemala primarily because of political reasons. Guatemala was pressured to sign the Hague Treaty which essentially shut down all adoptions in Guatemala. There are no international adoptions in Guatemala and very few national ones taking place. Thus the children, who would have been adopted, are forced to stay and be raised in state run and private institutions.

