

# Rancho La Hermosa

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**Primo Tapia**

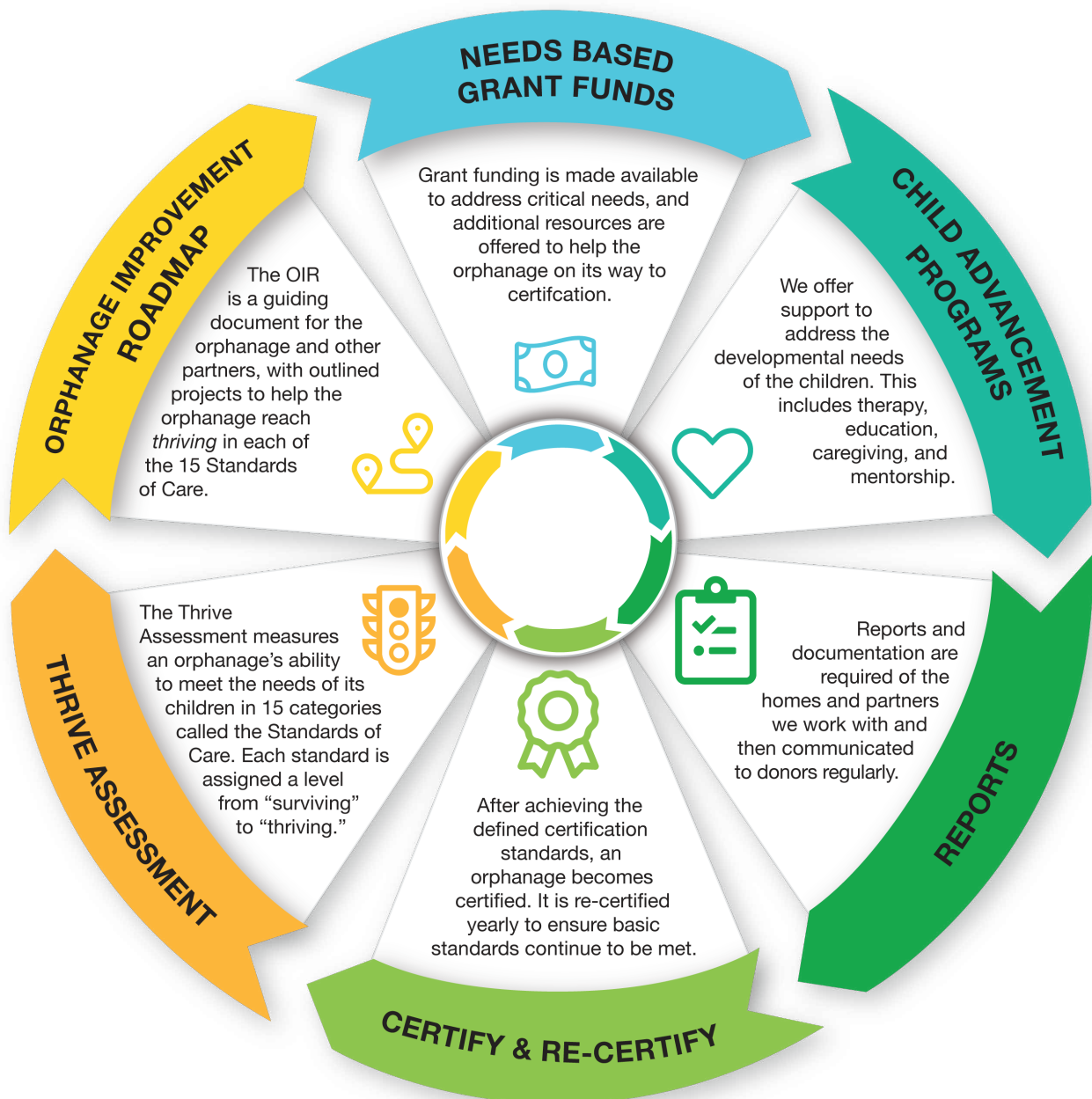


# HOME IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

**August | 2022**



# The Thrive Plan





## Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lift Orphans from Surviving to Thriving.” We are dedicated to programs that offer long-term success. Through vetted relationships and clear priorities, we help connect donors to programs that are already working.

Each Improvement Roadmap (OIR) is built with the home's leadership after reviewing the results from the Thrive Assessment. In order to provide children with better outcomes, the leadership prioritizes initiatives and works with A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) to create a plan for the next six months and beyond. The result is a document that allows donors and other parties to clearly see how they can contribute to improving the environment that will allow orphaned children to thrive.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the home's leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most homes, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our orphanage partners, and we demonstrate that commitment through grants made to help achieve strategic initiatives, coordinating with a network of partners to help address needs, and building strong, ongoing relationships with the home's leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Homes will be recertified annually, using the Thrive Assessment and building a new OIR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then reports back to donors, sharing the home's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with home's leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.



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# Overview of Orphanage

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## Background

Rancho La Hermosa Orphanage is in its third year of caring for kids! The building of the Ranch was conducted over four years. We are one of the few fully licensed and accredited orphanages in Baja. Our orphanage was born out of many years of prayer and an unwavering determination to provide excellence in orphan care. We are growing and expanding with the focus of receiving more kids and changing more lives!

## Mission

Rancho La Hermosa Orphanage exists to love and care for orphaned and abandoned children. We are a child-centric home where children in distress can find peace, comfort and stability. Our mission is to provide a healing environment where kids can learn to thrive. We strive to provide excellent care and to nurture our kids. We focus on spiritual and physical health as well as education, nutrition and equipping our kids for a productive life.



## What Makes Orphanage Unique?

Rancho La Hermosa is a beautiful blend of Mexican and American leadership. We have an amazing team dedicated to the health and well-being of our kids. We are intentional about raising kids in smaller dorm groups with loving dorm parents. Each dorm has dorm parents committed to providing the stability and nurturing environment necessary for formative healing and growth.

## Long-Term Vision

Our goal is to continue expanding our facilities and staff to care for 70 children. In addition, we will be embarking on the building of discipleship houses in town to house kids aging out of traditional orphanages. Our discipleship home will provide mentoring, educational support and care designed to launch young adults into highly productive, self-sustaining lives.

### WHAT PIECES OF THE VISION DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS?

Expanding our facilities and staff to care for 70 children.

Open the discipleship home in town.



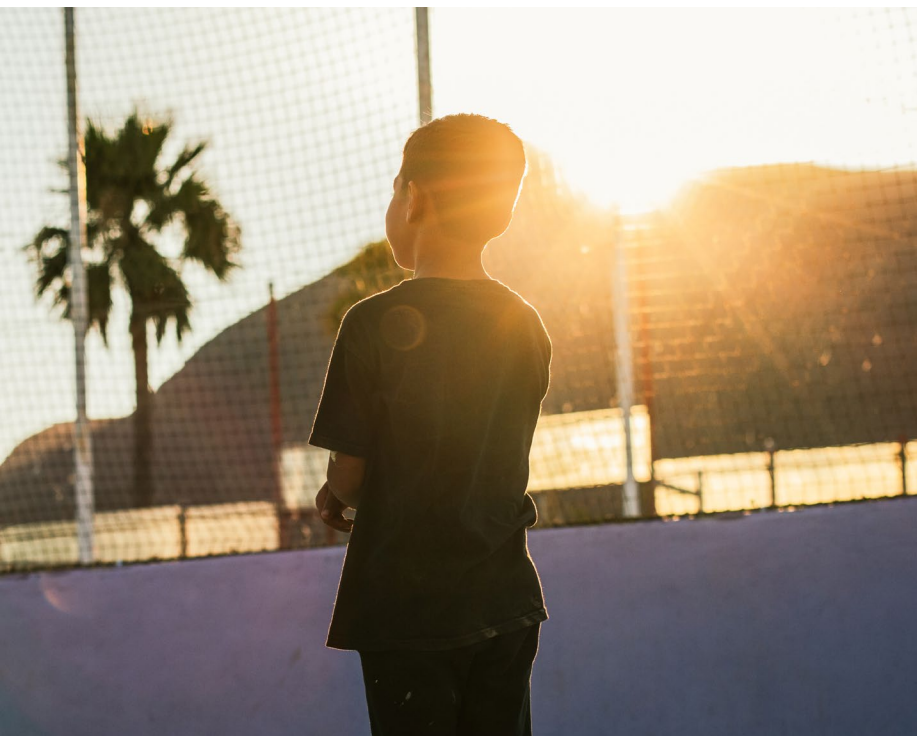


# The Thrive Assessment

## What is the Thrive Assessment?

The United Nations (UN), an international organization, has worked tirelessly to find ways to promote a better quality of life so that basic needs are met. In 1959, the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, and nutrition.

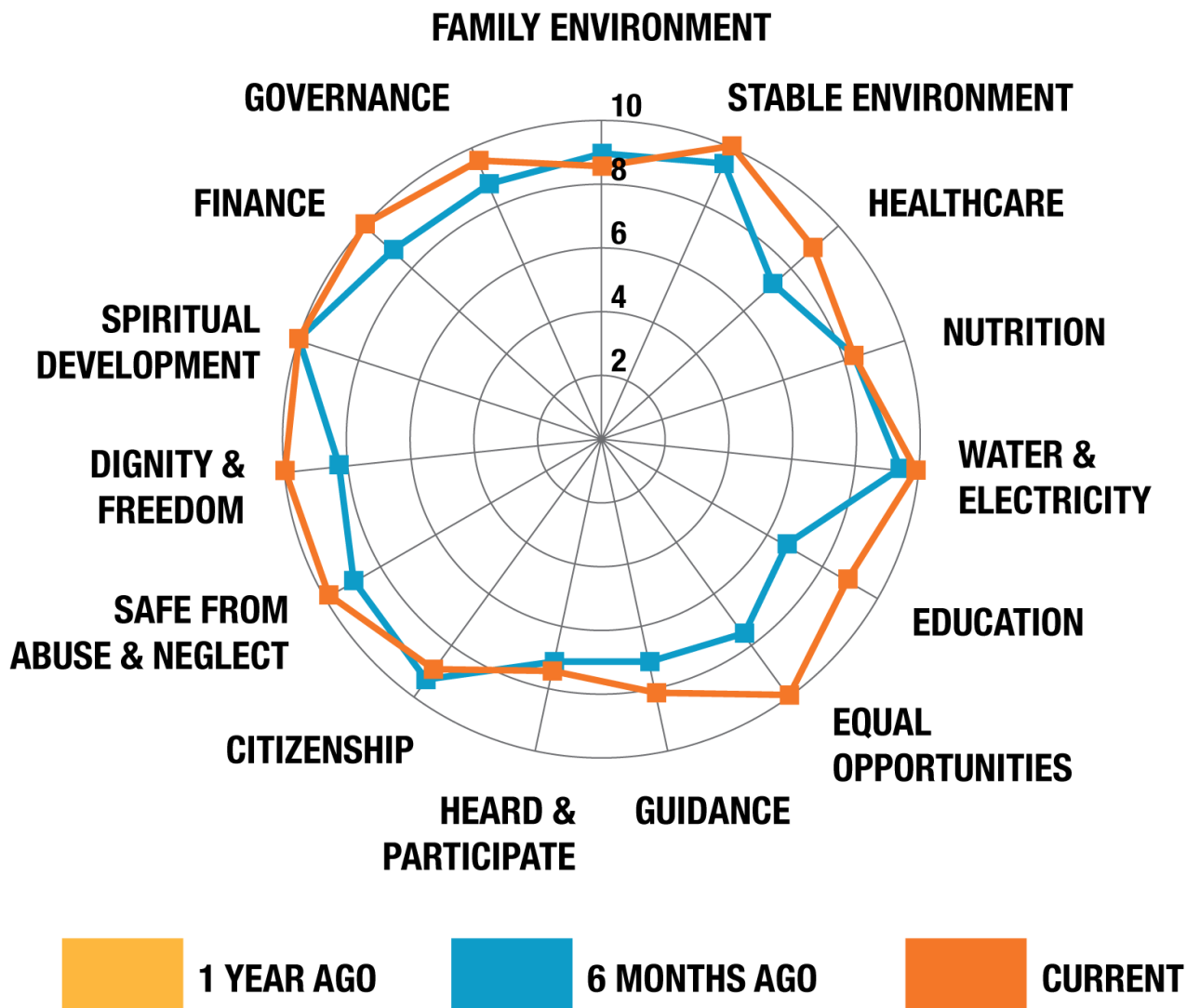
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation ([miraclefoundation.org](http://miraclefoundation.org)), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights to the children in their care. This Thrive Scale not only gives child care facility leaders a picture of how they're doing, but specific and practical steps to improve.



With permission, A Child's Hope Foundation has revised The Thrive Scale to make it adaptable for orphanages. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standard, resulting in a total of 15 ACHF standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future.

The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months to chart the progress of each standard. It, along with the Orphanage Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.

# Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage







## Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho La Hermosa is at the **THRIVING** level. Groups of siblings have the opportunity to spend time together during their daily activities and if gender and age allow it, they share the same bedroom. It is very infrequent that the children here have visits authorized by DIF from their biological family. However, in cases where visits have been authorized, the director encourages the children to maintain that relationship with their family. The staff of Rancho La Hermosa are very committed to fulfilling the mission of the home and feel it is always necessary to provide feedback and seek improvement. For this reason, leadership evaluates caregivers in their position every 6 months.

One of the possible areas for improvement with the staff is the lack of training for caregivers, especially in matters of trauma and crisis management.

For Rancho La Hermosa to improve in this category, it is necessary to create a solid training plan that helps caregivers and team members develop the necessary tools to provide better care to children. It is also necessary that a specialist train the staff in the standard of child care and as well as review the corresponding evaluations.

- ☐ Training caregivers on trauma issues
- ☐ Evaluate caregivers every three months by an expert in the standard of child care



## Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently Rancho La Hermosa is at the **THRIVING** Level. The home has a clear system of rules for all children based on positive discipline. The children know the consequences in advance if they break any of the house rules and disciplinary measures are applied according to their age. Boys and girls are treated with respect and are called by their name; nicknames or surnames are avoided at all costs. The caregivers spend quality time with the children, get involved in the children's activities and play with them at different times of the day. The home promotes their own traditions such as movie nights, walks around the property, and trips outside the home to buy ice cream or go to the park. All of these opportunities provide adventure and enjoyment for the children. To avoid job burnout, the caregivers have two days off per week. Weekly and monthly meetings are held with a psychologist to discuss the children's behavioral situations as well as strategies for improvement. These meetings also serve to help caregivers establish best practices in dealing with the different situations they face with children daily.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to continue to maintain at this level, it is necessary to reinforce the staff training plan, so that they are provided with more tools that allow family enrichment among the groups.

☐ Reinforce the staff training plan



## Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the level of **THRIVING**. Children have the necessary products for hand washing and personal hygiene. Children brush their teeth at least twice a day and have been taught the importance of maintaining good personal care. The home has the support of a local doctor in the community in case of an emergency. In more extreme medical cases, they rely on the nearest Red Cross for complete care. The home also has a first aid kit to treat accidents and minor injuries. They review and update vaccination records every 6 months to ensure children receive all vaccines in a timely manner. Some children who require specialized medical care also visit the children's hospital for follow-up on physical and mental health conditions that require continuous monitoring.

## A Child's Hope Foundation

Children's health issues are addressed as needed and they are given a general physical check-up on an annual basis. After check-ups, priority is given to those children who present serious symptoms. During this past year, preventive dental and vision check-ups have not been carried out on all children and some children have been identified who need dental care from a specialist.

Currently, the home has a fund for medical emergencies which is available for use at their disposition.

Thus far, Rancho La Hermosa continues to maintain monthly follow-ups for one girl with special needs, as well as another child for speech therapy. More than one team member has been involved in these follow-ups.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to continue advancing in this category, children must receive a complete health check-up that includes physical, dental and visual examinations to ensure their healthy development.

- ☐ Organize a complete health check-up for all children that includes physical, dental, and visual examinations



## Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level in this category. The home provides three daily meals prepared in a hygienic, appetizing and varied manner. Some form of protein as well as three portions of fruits and vegetables are included daily as part of the meals. Children are also provided portions of seasonal fruit between lunch and dinner as a snack. The director ensures that children receive tasty and healthy food in general. However, meals and menus have not been reviewed by a specialist to ensure they provide what is necessary for the healthy growth of the children.

The kitchen facilities are well ventilated, illuminated and free of pests or toxic substances. Additionally, their warehouses are tidy and products are well refrigerated. The cook does an excellent job, using creativity to serve dishes that maximize the use of existing products. However, she has not received formal training relevant to food handling.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to progress in this category, it is necessary to have the advice of a nutrition specialist to design more complete menus that provide adequate daily caloric intake, thus ensuring that children receive the necessary nutrients for their growth. They will also need to train and certify their cook in food handling.

- ☐ Receive advice from a nutrition specialist to help them design more complete menus
- ☐ Train and certify their cook in food handling





## Right to Clean Water and Electricity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho La Hermosa is at a **THRIVING** level in this category. The orphanage has clean and sufficient water for drinking, food preparation, and cleaning both personally as well as the household. Although the home is not connected to the city's water network, they always have sufficient water. Due to the work put forth to have water available, the children have been taught to take care of this resource. Consequently, they have developed a culture of conservation and always keep a reserve of water available. The children have easy access to drinking water whenever they need it. Additionally, they have been instructed in the use of bottles or flasks to maintain hydrated. In the classrooms, they always have a jug of water available for the children to drink water. They have electrical wiring and lighting in all their facilities with adequate power source. The home uses solar panels in all of the buildings and a double recharging battery that powers the entire facility. The home also has a plan to identify maintenance needs and ensures they're prioritized and addressed. Sometimes the home's own staff supports maintenance and on other occasions, external providers are contracted. During the director's most recent inspection of the boys' rooms, the need to replace two shower heads as well as a sink faucet was identified.

To remain at the current level, the home will need to replace these shower heads and a sink faucet in the boys' bathrooms.

- ☐ Change two shower heads and one sink faucet in the boys' bathrooms



## Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the **THRIVING** level. All of the children are enrolled in a public school near the home and they also have a tutor who provides school support sessions onsite.

The children have been evaluated with qualified resources in an Educational Center to identify each child's level of comprehension in reading, mathematics, and general learning. These evaluations are then used to address the needs of children who require additional learning support.

During the months of the pandemic, children also received visits from a volunteer who conducted "storytelling" sessions to help the children develop an appreciation for reading and imagination. As a result of this special opportunity, the director realized the home needs a dedicated reading area or library.

Regarding educational follow-up, the director currently reviews the grades and progress of the children. Together with the tutor, they design strategies to support each child's improvement in the areas where they have fallen behind. This approach has developed as they've recognized that practice and instruction at school is not enough.

## A Child's Hope Foundation

The home currently has computers with adequate internet connection for the children to use. However, these are only used for necessary tasks because not all children are of age or have received the necessary training to use them.

The children in Rancho La Hermosa have been given opportunities to develop artistic interests using their imagination and creativity. Despite this, they are limited in materials, supplies and toys that are age appropriate.

As a long-term care strategy, Rancho La Hermosa is working on developing an action plan that includes budget and accommodations so children can continue studying after their time at the home or after they turn 18.

For Rancho La Hermosa to continue advancing in this category, it is necessary to have a designated space for reading with at least 75 books available for the children. The children also require the support of a tutor or advisor who teaches them how to use a computer. Finally, the home needs to provide educational materials, art supplies, and toys that are age-appropriate and help stimulate the children's intellectual development.

- ☐ Provide adequate reading space with at least 75 books available for children
- ☐ Obtain the support of a tutor or advisor who teaches the children how to use a computer
- ☐ Provide age appropriate educational materials, art supplies, and toys that stimulate development.

## Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Children have a designated space for their belongings such as gifts, letters, photographs or anything that has significant value to them. Everyone has the same opportunities to attend school. The adults in the home serve as role models and are available for guidance.

In Rancho La Hermosa, they do have a girl with speech difficulties. She is currently being treated on a monthly basis by a specialist in speech therapy during medical visits to another municipality. This therapy, however, is insufficient for her needs since appointments are not frequent enough and there are no follow-up strategies in the home.

For transition to adulthood, Rancho La Hermosa currently partners with other organizations and is developing a support strategy. The focus is on young adults who reach legal age and want to find an alternative to the home, not only for housing but also education, training and guidance.

The children in Rancho La Hermosa have some extracurricular activities that support developmental milestones according to children's interests, talents, and available resources.

For Rancho La Hermosa to remain at the current level, it will be necessary to find additional extracurricular activities for children.

- ☐ To find additional extracurricular activities for children.



## Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently Rancho La Hermosa is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. In this home, the children are taught about respect by the caregivers and directors who model, teach and reinforce positive behaviors. The home currently has the support of a psychologist who visits 4 hours each week to counsel children individually as well as in group. This therapy serves to help them cope with trauma they've experienced. However, the time currently being given by the psychologist is not enough to address 100% of the children.

Once a month, the director and psychologist meet to discuss care strategies for children. These strategies are then shared to support caregivers who face challenging situations in their day-to-day responsibility. The hope is that this will result in a quality care space focused on the well-being of children. Despite these meetings, more work is necessary to implement strategies aimed at caregivers, specifically to train them in crisis management and positive parenting style in a home environment which in turn creates positive role models.

During the last three months, children of the appropriate age have had educational workshops addressing topics such as sexual health and maturation. In the case of the adolescents, no vocational guidance or Child Hope Plans have been administered to help them plan out their future.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to move to the next level in this category, more time dedicated to therapeutic or psychological support is needed so that each child has the opportunity to meet with them. It is also important to start the implementation of the Child Hope Plans or a similar strategy that helps children document their interests and receive guidance on how to prepare for the future. Finally, provide training to staff on topics of trauma and crisis management as well as care strategies for the development of child independence and self-sufficiency.

- ☐ More time for all children to receive therapeutic or psychological support
- ☐ Start with the implementation of the Child Hope Plans or a similar strategy to promote development & self-sufficiency
- ☐ Provide training to staff on issues of trauma and crisis management & care strategies for child development



## Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently Rancho La Hermosa is at the **SUSTAINING** level. The children of the home have the opportunity to participate in decision-making about several things that happen in the home. For example, they make decisions about what to wear or what to do in their free time. Children



also have a say in what they eat on special occasions such as holidays and birthdays. Additionally, they make suggestions for vacation plans and leisure activities outside the home and sometimes help decide how to observe festivities that the home recognizes.

For food, the cook announces what will be served for lunch on a daily basis. However, she has expressed in the near future a desire to publish this information for the children in a creative and fun way so that they can share their opinions and make menu suggestions.

For Rancho La Hermosa to move to the next level in this category, it is necessary to develop additional child participation strategies. It is also necessary to start the implementation of Child Hope Plans or a similar strategy so children can practice making decisions about their future.

- ☐ Develop additional child participation strategies



## Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is at a **THRIVING** level in this category. Currently, only two children are missing their birth certificates. All children have been assigned tasks according to their age and are expected to perform them daily in order to develop autonomy and a sense of ownership. The children understand the importance of using resources responsibly as well as respecting nature and other forms of life that inhabit their space. They are also taught the importance of their own role in the home and participating both actively and collectively to keep their living space in a dignified, orderly and clean state.

Children are constantly involved in service to others who are less fortunate. Generally these service activities are promoted by the religious congregation they belong to. The director and caregivers teach the children to share what they have with others and practice values such as compassion, effort, humility and hard work.

The children are aware of what is happening in their community and are free to ask questions if they have concerns about the community.

The children have a high sense of responsibility and regard for life. They apply these values especially in the care of the pets that they have at home.

For Rancho La Hermosa to continue advancing in this category, it is necessary to continue taking the required steps to obtain the missing birth certificates. Additionally, the implementation of Child Hope Plans or a similar strategy which will encourage greater autonomy and future active citizenship.

- ☐ Continue with the necessary steps to obtain the missing birth certificates
- ☐ Implement Child Hope Plans or a similar strategy



## Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho La Hermosa is at the level of **THRIVING** in this category. Children have private spaces to bathe, use the toilet, and dress. Bedrooms are separated by gender and age, and the home has a policy that no adult is allowed to be alone with any child. The caregivers and the director carry out annual training with all the staff of the home on subjects of violence and abuse prevention, positive parenting, alternatives to corporal punishment and tools to detect abuse.

The home has a psychologist who provides individual attention to children if they request it and continuously monitors children who have been identified as high-risk due to family history or previous trauma.

Rancho La Hermosa is at an optimal level in terms of security with relation to the surrounding community since the property is perfectly isolated.

The home has a code of conduct for visitors in order to provide an added level of protection for the children. However, this code needs to be shared more consistently with all visitors to the home, whether they are temporary or more long-term visitors.

For Rancho La Hermosa to remain at this level, it is necessary to maintain a solid training plan that includes children and staff on tools that allow everyone to identify and prevent abuse in all forms.

A written code of conduct is also needed so that all staff and visitors are aware of the rules and abide by it during their visit.

- ☐ Implement a solid training plan for children and staff on tools to identify and prevent abuse in all forms
- ☐ Have a written code of conduct so that all staff and visitors know the rules and conduct expected during their visit



## Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is at the **THRIVING** level in this category. Each child has their own bed and they are provided with what is necessary for personal hygiene and cleanliness. Their clothing, footwear and uniforms are in good condition. The children's bedrooms are separated by gender and are maintained clean and tidy. The director and her team encourage the children to be kind to one another and are corrected when they make disparaging remarks to others. Children know the consequences before committing an infraction and they know that there are always ways to amend any errors they might make. The home has all the security protocols required by authorities and staff have been trained in firefighting, use and handling of fire extinguishers, search and rescue, evacuation, and protection.

Art supplies are available and provided for children. They have safe, sufficient space and play areas for children of all ages. However, due to the lack of shaded spaces, children are continually exposed to harsh direct sunlight, especially during summer.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to remain at this level, the installation of a shaded space will be necessary. This installation, particularly in the balcony of the dining area, will ensure that the children are not overly exposed to the sun.

- ☐ Install a shaded space, particularly in the balcony of the dining area so that children are not so exposed to the sun



## Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the **THRIVING** level. One of the cornerstones of Rancho la Hermosa is the education and spiritual development of children. Children therefore have the opportunity to actively participate in a Christian community that has directly and indirectly supported the children's home since its creation. The children participate in community prayer, spiritual rituals, Bible readings, and Sunday school classes. The pastors of their congregation are very involved with the home and work together with the director to teach the children about God and religion. At home, they are taught about good and evil and how to make amends or compensate for their mistakes. With support, their spiritual community helps children develop a bond with God and maintain faith. The pastor plays an important role since he actively collaborates with the director regarding the activities, strategies and decisions of the home. Additionally, the pastor serves as an important role model for the children.

No next steps are needed in this category.



## Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rancho La Hermosa is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The home keeps a careful record of money inflows and outflows. Together, the director and founder have designed a system for reviewing and managing finances on a weekly basis, which has proven very effective. They have work meetings to maintain oversight and record of their income and expenses. The director keeps all invoices and receipts and on a monthly basis, reconciles their accounts together with the founder. All of these records, files, and receipts are available for review upon request.

The home also has the support and services of a certified accountant to validate its books and records in accordance with Mexican law.



The home has the necessary administrative measures to minimize the misuse of resources and is committed to transparently showing donors the use of the money they receive. Although the home operates with an annual budget, it is constantly being adjusted in order to cover unplanned expenses due. These expenses are often related to preventive and corrective maintenance expenses, license payments, certifications, and improvements related to the safety and well-being of the children. The home has a clear and efficient division of responsibilities. The director is in charge of the daily operation of the home, the founder oversees the finances and donations, and another staff member is in charge of communication and marketing, together creating a solid and organized team.

No next steps are needed in this category.



## Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this category, Rancho La Hermosa is at the **THRIVING** level. The home has the supporting documentation that the property where the home is located belongs to the organization and is intended solely to provide refuge for abandoned or orphaned children. This ensures that any construction or improvement made to the property must exclusively benefit the children. The home has all permits and licenses for operation and has trained staff in security and civil protection issues. The staff is required to receive semi-frequent training in topics such as first aid and care for sick children.

The home has a board of directors that meets at least twice a year and actively participates in making decisions that affect or benefit the home.

The director has weekly 1-on-1 meetings with staff to discuss issues of concern and process improvements. The caregivers have also received training on attachment, child development, the value of family, and how to create a family environment in a children's home setting.

All staff and caregivers have a written document with the description of their position and responsibilities. Employment contracts are also renewed every six months for all employees, which is determined by a 1-on-1 evaluation with the director.

Due to the number of children, it is necessary to have the support of one more caregiver, who can also help provide rest for other caregivers. An additional cook is also needed to cover all the needs of the children and to be able to better distribute the daily tasks.

Another important element that the director lacks is a person to handle administrative and communication tasks, as well as a driver to help run errands and delegate tasks among the staff.

In order for Rancho La Hermosa to continue to maintain this level, it is necessary to hire additional support staff to more clearly divide tasks and responsibilities with the aim of improving care for the children.

- ☐ Hire a cook and a caregiver to improve care for children
- ☐ Hire an administrative assistant and a driver to support the director with operational tasks of the orphanage

# Strategic Initiatives

## ADDITIONAL STAFF

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Due to the number of children in the home, it is necessary to hire an additional caregiver, as well as a cook, an administrative assistant and a driver to support the director in her operational activities. Having this support, the director can then divide and delegate some of her tasks, thus freeing up her time to focus more on strategy, supervision, and attending to other urgent needs.
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	\$5,000 - \$10,000

## SUNSHADES FOR OUTDOOR AREAS

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The home has safe, sufficient space and play areas for children of all ages. However, due to the lack of shade, children are continuously exposed to direct sunlight, especially during summer and sunny seasons. For this reason, there is a vital need to install a sunshade designated for the area outside the dining room so children are not overly exposed.
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	\$15,000+





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HOPE**  
FOUNDATION