



Overview of this Children's Home

Background & Mission

In 1999, Mamá Carmen and Papá Jorge González opened the doors of their own home to abandoned children living on the streets. Word spread in the community about what Jorge and Carmen were doing for these children in the community. Not having enough space in their own home, Mamá Carmen and Papá Jorge used their retirement funds to purchase a small property 24 years ago in Tijuana. There, they built Casa Hogar Sion, a home so that they could care for as many children as possible in their new space.

Casa Hogar Sion is located in Tijuana and serves children between the ages of 4 and 23 years old. Although some children are brought there for short stays of 1 to 2 years. Most of the children will live there for 5 to 10 years or more. Thanks to the efforts of affiliated churches, independent groups, private and corporate donors, Casa Hogar Sion currently has seven buildings, all the children go to school and some of the older children are in private schools or in technical careers. Also, they have a computer lab with 10 new networked computers, taking advantage of this resource, classes are given five days a week. Mamá Carmen not only wants to protect and care for her children, but also wants to provide them with opportunity and hope by focusing on education and leading by example, mom, dad and staff care for their children and their children's children.

Recent Accomplishments

- The vehicle registration cards of the three vehicles used to transport children to school were renewed.
- New tires were purchased for two vehicles used to transport children to school.
- Six metal shelves were purchased to store and organize non-perishable food in the warehouse.
- Eight large garbage cans were purchased for both the interior and exterior of the kitchen.
- Six young girls have benefited from scholarships to continue their high school and university studies.
- They have received funds to support caregivers, as well as to pay for the services of a psychologist for the children to receive ongoing psychological therapy.
- Initiated the BLR program for children to obtain the habit of reading.



The Thrive Assessment

What is the Thrive Assessment?

In 1959, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, nutrition and more. We have codified all 13 Rights, as well as a Finance Standard and a Governance and Human Resource Standard, resulting in a total of 15 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 with each partner home to chart the progress of each standard. Our team works with caregivers to outline next steps which and compiled into an Improvement Roadmap.

Current Thrive Scale

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT GOVERNANCE STABLE ENVIRONMENT 10 8 **FINANCE** HEALTHCARE 6 4 **SPIRITUAL NUTRITION DEVELOPMENT** WATER & **DIGNITY & ELECTRICITY** FREEDOM SAFE FROM **EDUCATION ABUSE & NEGLECT EOUAL CITIZENSHIP OPPORTUNITIES HEARD & GUIDANCE PARTICIPATE** 1 YEAR AGO **6 MONTHS AGO CURRENT**

Strategic Initiatives

CIVIL PROTECTION SUPPLIES

| PROJECT SUMMARY | As a result of Civil Protection's recent visit and the changes in the state regulations, the staff of this agency recommended maintenance work on the gas pipes and fire extinguishers, as well as to renew the emergency lamps, among other supplies. For this reason, the home's desire is to comply with the new regulations for the welfare of the children and all those who live here. |
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| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | \$28,271.73 MXN \$1,665.98 USD |

BATHROOM REPAIRS

| PROJECT SUMMARY | At Casa Hogar Sion it is a priority to provide the best for the children. Therefore, in order to keep all of the restrooms in good condition, it is necessary to make repairs and change the fixtures in six restrooms so that the children have decent facilities. |
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| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | \$23,339.21 MXN \$1,375.32 USD |

PEST CONTROL SERVICE

| PROJECT SUMMARY | In accordance with state regulations, Sion performs monthly fumigations throughout the home to ensure good pest control and avoid any situation of vermin infestation. Therefore, this service must be paid annually to guarantee monthly fumigations. |
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| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | \$16,200.00 MXN \$954.63 USD |



Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

At Casa Hogar Sion, a family atmosphere prevails, since the directors and administrative staff make sure that the caregivers are good people and comply with the selection, incorporation and training process. In addition, the directors ask them to commit, through a contract that gets renewed yearly, to working in the home for at least a year. Also, to strengthen this family environment, they provide tools and skills to the caregivers, who have received training on various topics. Some of the topics include: trauma, dealing and disciplining children, behavior, traits and values of a family, all given by two external psychologists who have already been working for more than a year on these and other topics of interest with the caregivers. On the other hand, every time a caregiver appears in the institutional register, he/she is evaluated by DIF. If the results of these evaluations contain recommendations, Sion follows up on them in order to strengthen the caregiver's skills so that he/she can obtain the letter of reliability that certifies him/her as a caregiver who meets the required and adequate profile.

Sion's facilities are divided by buildings, which are separated by gender. Inside, there are several dormitories that house a maximum of eight children according to age range. In each building, the children have primary caregivers who stay with them day and night, allowing them to be cared for at all times and provide them with the support and affection they need to feel at home. Currently, there are 32 children living in this home. Most of the children do not have relatives but those who do have family have the opportunity to receive visits as long as it is authorized by the DIF. Also, each child has an updated file in which their origin data is registered.

| ☐ Continue with training and psychological support for caregivers. | |
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To continue fostering the family environment through the great work they have been doing.



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

At Sion, the management and administrative team has designed a list of general rules in a clear and coherent manner in accordance with the values and objectives to be achieved. These rules are implemented in each of the buildings where the children live, and are adjusted according to age and level of understanding. They also carry out various strategies to frequently remind the children of these rules. In the event that the children commit any infraction, positive discipline is applied through appropriate techniques to the children's ages. Within this home live several sibling groups, so in order to strengthen family ties and love, they are allowed to live together, play and spend time together in general activities. Throughout the week the children have extracurricular activities and workshops. When they have free time, they are given the opportunity to choose what they wish to do as long as it is within the allowed limits.

Regarding the caregivers, they have a day off per week, they are very committed and most of them have been working in this home for more than a year, which has allowed the turnover to be less than 10% per year. Recently, Velia and Toño have just joined the team of caregivers, and thanks to their hard work, significant progress has been noted in the children. Toño is a nurse, he teaches the children to sing, play the guitar, and motivates them to keep their space clean. The caregivers have ongoing meetings with the director to discuss various issues and discipline. They also meet with two psychologists to strengthen their knowledge by receiving behavioral training to establish effective discipline strategies for the children. In this home, a variety of activities are implemented in which caregivers and children play daily, celebrate birthdays, participate in sports activities, have piano and singing lessons, among others. In addition, they carry out the reading program "Books Library Reading"; all of these activities are with the purpose of creating an environment as close as possible to a stable and loving family.

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SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The children are the main driving force for the directors of Casa Hogar Sion. For this reason, they have made every effort to provide the children with annual medical consultations, clinical exams and specialized check-ups (dental, ophthalmological, psychiatric, psychological, etc.) according to their needs. They recently received a visit from a group of doctors from Rocky Mountain University for a general medical check-up. Each child has a complete vaccination schedule and record. All of this health information is recorded in each of the children's files. Most of the information is recorded by the support nurse who is also in charge of administering medications. When the children get sick or an emergency situation arises, they have the support of a doctor who works at the Castillo Clinic and who is also responsible for health care at Sion. To encourage healthy habits, the children have soap and water available in the dining room and restroom areas, and they are provided with toothbrushes and toothpaste to brush their teeth two to three times a day. On the other hand, the youngest children located in the nursery area have their diapers changed according to their needs. Children are continuously checked for head lice; if found, they are treated accordingly.

In this home they have basic first aid kits in each of the bedrooms, in addition to two extra kits that are fully stocked. Casa Hogar Sion has a medical fund for medical emergencies, which is available for any health need. The adolescents have access to feminine hygiene products. They also receive guidance from the nurse, psychologist Jill and the caregivers about their menstrual cycles, what to expect, how to care for themselves, as well as teaching them how to use and dispose of feminine products. On the other hand, some measures have been implemented to orient and/or train the staff when there are children with special conditions.

| Continue with annual medical check-ups and follow-up with specialists and treatment |
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| according to each child's need. |



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The meals cooked at Casa Hogar Sion are tasty and delicious, are prepared in the most hygienic manner and are complemented with proteins. In addition, their meals are made up of two to three servings of vegetables and fruits based on the nutritional plan "Plato del Buen Comer", which allows the children to receive the adequate amount of calories per day recommended for their optimal development. As previously mentioned, for the directors of Casa Hogar Sion the children are very important and therefore, weekly menus are placed in the dining room so that they are in sight and the children are aware of what they will eat each day.

The kitchen staff has been trained in food safety and preparation, hygienic handling of food, storage strategies and cleaning and disinfection of work areas in the kitchen. In addition, they were trained in the correct use of the Plato del Buen Comer diagram, which has allowed them to create menus for each week. They recently had a visit by nutrition students from a local university and the future nutritionists supported them with training for both staff and children. The kitchen, dining room and food storage areas are free of toxic substances and pests because they are fumigated once a month. The kitchen and stove area are well ventilated. Sion continues to implement the "traffic light" technique, which allows them to keep nonperishable food in good condition and well organized.

| Have the support of a nutrition specialist to verify that children are getting the right |
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| amount of nutrients. |

Renew fumigation and pest control services.



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sion has been fully and transparently complying with all the requirements and licenses required by local authorities. For this reason, this year they have been visited by the Tijuana Fire Department and Civil Protection, which have evaluated the safety of the facilities and compliance with documentation, drills, the Internal Civil Protection Program (PIPC), and staff training on first aid, fire, evacuation and rescue. With the change in the new regulations, Sion was recommended to make some adjustments in order to continue complying with the requirements of this authority. Casa Hogar Sion has all the safety protocols and supplies required by civil protection regulations, such as smoke detectors, fire doors, fire extinguishers, meeting points, brigades, first aid kits, and other materials. In addition, they have an alarm that allows them to be safer, sleep peacefully and protect themselves in the event of a risk situation. This alarm has represented one more protection alternative for all those who live in the home.

In the home, the electrical infrastructure, both exterior and interior, is in good condition and safe. They have solar panels that have allowed them to reduce the electricity bill on a bimonthly basis; they also have generators in case the electricity fails. The interior and exterior light fixtures in each of the buildings are working properly. They have a safe drainage method that does not contaminate the drinking water supply. The sink faucets and shower heads in the buildings are in good condition, however, some improvements need to be made to some of the toilets. The home has a reliable and efficient staff that supports preventive and corrective maintenance, which also keeps a record to detect repair and improvement needs. If there is an extraordinary need for specialized maintenance, they hire qualified personnel to carry out the corresponding repairs. On the other hand, the home has a water purification plant located inside the dining room, which is safe to drink and free of chemicals and bacteria. It is easily accessible and available for the children to drink whenever they wish. All staff have received talks on the importance of drinking water quality and its relationship to health.

| Follow up on the requirements requested by civil protection. |
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| Repair the toilets. |
| Devise a written annual plan to address overall home maintenance. |



The directors of Casa Hogar Sion believe that education is a key factor in helping children to obtain skills and knowledge that in the present and future will contribute to improving their quality of life. For this reason, all school-age children from kindergarten through university attend school on a regular basis. In addition, each child is evaluated to identify the existence of learning problems, educational backwardness and to determine their academic level. For this reason, they have a teacher who supports them in carrying out the corresponding evaluations. Also, to facilitate learning, the children's home has a computer room with internet access and a library area with a wide variety of age-appropriate books. As another form of educational support for the children, Sion has funds so that the children can continue their education after finishing their time at the home, which allows them to raise adults who will contribute with their knowledge to the development of the country.

Caregivers are a very important support for the children since, in addition to taking care of the children, they are in charge of school matters. The caregivers review and analyze the children's grades and follow up with them through guidance, tutoring, help with comprehension, homework and even seek the support of a specialist who can reinforce their knowledge in any subject. On the other hand, Sion also carries out various activities with the younger children who are not of school age. Among them are reading Bible stories, playing with them, and more. These activities are intended to stimulate their skills development and abilities in a general way. On the other hand, all children have access to art materials and toys whenever they wish to use them.

Continue to manage transitional spaces (housing) available for the children so that they can pursue further education after serving their time in Sion.

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this home, the right to equal opportunities and non-discrimination is continuously reinforced. For this reason, all of the children who live here, regardless of their age, special condition, gender or race, have the necessary support to achieve an optimal and integral development. In this home they are given the opportunity to develop their education, have educational counseling, and have a wide variety of books and computer equipment. They can also receive psychological care, participate in extracurricular activities according to their interests and have a space to store their personal items. If necessary, special adaptations are made within the homes for children who require them. In addition, as part of ensuring that all children enjoy the same opportunities, caregivers act as role models for the children in their care.

In regards to the adolescents living in Sion, they are encouraged to carry out various actions and activities that allow them to acquire new knowledge and skills that they can put into practice on an ongoing basis. Likewise, they are assigned responsibilities and tasks according to the affinity of their studies, their age or natural abilities in order to prepare them for a healthy transition to adulthood that will allow them to start a stronger independent life. Once their time in the home is coming to an end, the adolescents make a written life plan, which allows them to have a broader view of their future life.

| Develop a written transition to adulthood plan to help adolescents begin the transition to |
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| independent living. |



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

At Casa Hogar Sion, mental health is one of their priorities in order to promote the well-being of the children. For this reason, they currently have two psychologists who provide psychological care both individually and in groups. In addition, one of the psychologists supports adolescents in developing a life plan to help them acquire psychosocial competencies, tools and skills to strengthen and enrich their lives. In addition, to provide guidance on physical development, caregivers speak to the children about the changes associated with puberty, and the psychologists reinforce this information and provide guidance on responsible sexual behavior. In addition, the children's home has a policy that addresses the issue of children's sexual behavior, which helps to reduce any risk situations. Recently, Sion received a visit from students from a nursing school, who provided training to the adolescents on sexuality, which further reinforced their knowledge on this topic. On the other hand, to continue reinforcing general knowledge, recently the Violence Prevention Dept. of the Municipal Police of Tijuana has been visiting to provide all the children with various trainings such as: handling emotions, use of social networks, among other topics, which has allowed the children to increase their knowledge and be more aware of the current reality.

The directors, administrative staff and caregivers have a very good and great communication with the adolescents who are currently studying a technical or university career. All of the children have caregivers, directors and psychologists who are always ready to listen to them and guide them in any subject they wish to discuss. In addition, the staff guides them to deepen their self-discovery and self-expression. In this home, the caregivers are an example of respectful behavior and follow the general rules, so they also motivate the children to replicate the same behavior and understand expectations. In addition, Sion has a written job profile when looking for new caregivers, and the caregivers are evaluated by DIF to know if they are quality caregivers for the children. Caregivers are also given frequent orientation and skill-building talks. They are also trained on topics to reinforce good behaviors with the children, which has been helping them to be better caregivers and mentors.

| Develop a written life skills program in which children can participate on a regular basis. |
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| Have a written plan for adolescents over the age of 15 regarding their education or work |

after completing their time in the home.



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

For the directors, caregivers and administrative staff of Casa Hogar Sion it is important to give the children the opportunity to be heard in expressing their needs and decisions. Therefore, every child is given the opportunity to choose what clothes they will wear on a daily basis, what activity they would like to participate in during their free time and what they would like to eat, mainly on special occasions. In addition, to help foster leadership in the children, they are assigned tasks and activities according to their age so that they can establish strategies that allow them to make decisions, negotiate, reach agreements, seek solutions, promote teamwork and be creative. It is worth mentioning that these activities have been very useful for the children since they have reinforced their self-esteem and have demonstrated their abilities.

On the other hand, Sion takes care of providing all things necessary to those children who require any support or adaptation derived from a diagnosis and/or follow-up treatment for physical, emotional or mental health matters. In addition, to strengthen this support, a record is kept for each child of all their general doctor visits or appointments with medical specialists as part of their development and evolution plan. Likewise, every time the children are taken to the doctor, the staff explain to them and their caregivers the procedures that will be performed and allow the children to express their doubts in order to avoid a situation that could trigger a traumatic situation.

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Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

It is a priority to care for, educate and watch over the integrity of the children who live in Sion so that they are prepared for responsible citizen participation. For this reason, the staff ensures that from the moment the children arrive at the children's home they have documentation that proves their identity, such as a birth certificate and Mexico Unique Population Registration Code (CURP). Currently there are two children who do not have this last document, so Sion's staff is working to obtain it as soon as possible. At Sion, the children are taught to repair the damage committed through the assignment of tasks or additional activities to help them become aware of their actions and the consequences. They are also motivated to fulfill their personal responsibilities on a weekly basis, assigned according to their age. In addition, through the teaching, practice of values and the good example of the caregivers, the children have been taught processes of ethics and democracy, thus strengthening what the children learn in school in a theoretical way. In addition, the children are invited to help others inside and outside the home, so they have been motivated to participate in community service activities. Likewise, the children are given the opportunity to go on school trips and special events outside of the home as long as it is authorized by DIF. Adolescents over the age of 15 have the support of Brother Rafael who teaches them how to carry out transitional activities for independent living.

In Sion they observe national and local holidays with various activities in which the children are given the opportunity to enjoy a celebration, eat sweets and have delicious meals according to the festivity. Recently the children enjoyed a bonfire where they ate delicious hot dogs, tostilocos and watched a movie together. Lastly, the home is free of debris, except for the area where they are working on welding, however, the children know that they cannot go near that area.



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Preventing abuse, neglect and protecting the children from harmful practices and violence is one of the best practices that Casa Hogar Sion carries out. Therefore, both inside and outside the facilities they try to have as much security as possible, including security cameras that are monitored from inside the home. The facilities are very well lit on the outside and their level of security in terms of the surrounding community is good. The neighbors are friendly and attentive to the home, contributing to a safe environment. Within the home there are dormitories that are separated by gender and age, in accordance with Mexican law. In addition, there is a private and safe space for the children to bathe, go to the restroom and get dressed. In addition, guidelines and policies have been implemented within the regulations for the protection of minors, which focus on caring for and preventing children from being physically, sexually, verbally, psychologically, or emotionally abused. In addition, it is established that an adult who is not a caregiver may not be alone with the children and there are written rules for visitors. All visitors must register before entering the home, thus ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the facilities. Sion has an established process for verifying references and background checks of staff and frequent visitors through the use of a criminal clearance letter and a request for references.

On the other hand, each time a new child joins the children's home, psychological evaluations are carried out in order to orient them and help them work through their traumas. Likewise, all children over 5 years of age have been given the opportunity to receive orientation on abuse and age-appropriate reporting methods by the Municipal Police and the State Prosecutor's Office. Caregivers are constantly reminded that corporal punishment is to be avoided and that disciplining children by withholding food or raising their voices is prohibited. All staff have been trained in positive discipline techniques, body care alternatives, and how to identify, prevent and avoid abuse. The staff at this home accompanies the children at all times in case there is a need to leave the home.

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SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children living in Sion have the right to speak in their native tongue, freedom and dignity, cultural and sports practices, religion, resources and specific forms of social coexistence with the people around them. In line with the above principles, the children are supported to have sufficient clothing and underwear, their own toothbrush, clean towel, their own bed, as well as clean blankets and sheets. In addition, toys and materials are available for all of the children. allowing them to do activities according to their age. On the other hand, the children are taught to take care of themselves and to be self-sufficient to the best of their ability. Likewise, the children are bathed daily and appropriate precautions are taken for the care of the younger children.

The constant work on values, education and positive discipline provided at Sion has allowed them to motivate the children to be kind to one another. In addition, they are informed in advance of the consequences of breaking the rules of the home. The children are given the opportunity to do extra work in which they can earn an allowance or privileges. Within Sion there is a safe outdoor play area suitable for children of all ages. This space is very useful because it is used for soccer, biking and other sports.

Consider giving teenagers the opportunity to work in the community, in a safe environment, and keep the money they earn.



SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The directors of Casa Hogar Sion are a great example of love for God. For this reason, they make sure that Bible readings and stories are a fundamental part of the children's spirituality, as well as for personal reflection and meditation for the children, caregivers and staff in general. Papá Jorge and Mamá Carmen have been guiding the children under an education based on God, which has allowed them to carry out various actions and activities that have strengthened the bonds of brotherhood, service and values. Being Pastors of a church, the directors are very committed to encouraging spiritual learning through the reading of daily devotionals inside each of the houses. They also take the time to pray before meals, as well as during special celebrations.

At Sion, the children are encouraged to participate in religious services, as well as in organizing and carrying out activities that allow them to provide a service to the community. In addition, spiritual and religious books are available and accessible to all the children in the home and in each of the buildings. They also give all of the children the opportunity to put their spiritual learning into practice. On the other hand, there is a great deal of respect when some of the children do not wish to participate in a spiritual activity. At the home, they use the internal spaces of each building or the dining room for meditation and prayer.

Continue the great work being done in this category.



SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Maintaining healthy and transparent finances is part of the strict guidelines that Casa Hogar implements on a daily basis. They follow very good accounting practices by recording income and expenses on a daily basis through a specialized program called Ark CONTPAQi, which is continuously updated by Mayra. These actions have allowed the records to be available for review when required. All receipts are stored at Sion and a profit and loss statement is created. All this information is stored in folders that are very well organized and complete with as much evidence as possible.

In Sion they have generated controls for the proper use of available funds, so to minimize misuse, they try to label the expenses to be incurred. They also reconcile with the bank account on a monthly basis and have an internal control of the roles and tasks designated to make deposits, make purchases, among other activities. They are supported by an external accountant who assists them in filing tax returns in accordance with regulations by Mexican law. In addition, the accountant audits the finances, validates the home's accounting records, and answers any questions Mayra may have. On the other hand, Sion works with an annual budget for daily operations and additional expenses as they arise. In addition, they make plans and budgets for major construction.

☐ Continue the excellent work they have been doing in this category.

古古 Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

For the directors of Casa Hogar Sion, the caregivers are valued and appreciated for their human qualities and for the great work they do on a daily basis. For this reason, they have a vacation and leave policy, which is granted at the agreed upon times. Each of the caregivers has a complete file containing information and documentation such as the job description, appointment letter, background check, ongoing training, job promotions, and a letter of no criminal record. On the other hand, caregivers have been trained on attachment and child development, family values in an orphanage setting, the importance and practical ways to facilitate child participation, CPR and first aid. Another way of supporting, caring for and guiding Sion's personnel is to hold constant meetings to discuss concerns and improve processes, as well as to resolve doubts in order to ensure a good working environment. Likewise, when new caregivers are hired, they shadow an experienced caregiver to learn what the job is about and to observe the activities being carried out.

This home has all their permits, audits and government requirements. They also have the documents requested by DIF, which are on display in the main office, being an example of transparency and institutional strengthening. They have an active Board of Directors that meets at least twice a year. They also have an organizational chart that allows them to establish the lines of work. On the other hand, according to the legal statutes stipulated in Sion's Articles of Incorporation, it is mentioned that the property and modifications are insured and cannot be sold for their own benefit; the property must continue to exist in accordance with the purposes and objectives for which it was created.

| Continue | with th | e areat | work they | have | been | doina. |
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Current Improvement Partners



Espere

Espere partners with ACHF to provide caregiver support through trainings, workshops, and roundtables on ways to support the well-being of the children. Additionally, they offer support to therapists working in our partner orphanages.



BLR

BLR helps kids love to read. They do this through getting books that match their interests, expand their interests and spark their curiosity. They also develop reading goals, activities and training for kids and orphanage staff.

For a list of projects and opportunities to coordinate on go to www.ACHF.org/Projects

