

# ALIVE!

WINTER 2019

THE NEWSLETTER OF KIDS ALIVE® INTERNATIONAL



## Kids Alive's Three R's: Rescue, Redeem, Restore

Did you know that the term "The Three R's" dates back to the end of the 18th century? It originally referred to the basics of education, "Readin', (W)ritin', and 'Rithmetic." At Kids Alive, though, we use the term to refer to the journey we take with wounded and vulnerable children: "Rescue, Redeem, and Restore."

The word "rescue" is often defined as "to free from confinement, danger, or evil." In our work around the world with vulnerable children every day, this rings true. The children we encounter need to be rescued from exploitation, hunger, neglect, traumatic abuse, and sometimes even war.

More than just sympathy, vulnerable children need to know that there is a hopeful life apart from their daily reality, and that there are people who are committed to offering that hope. Rescue might mean nutritional support, family intervention, removal from an unsafe home, and sometimes, legal support in pursuing an abuser. We know that our God is in the rescue business, because He says:

In your distress, you called and I rescued you.  
Psalm 81:7 (NIV)

But what then? What happens after a child is rescued from danger into safety? Kids Alive's work isn't done after rescue, because we believe this is when God works to redeem the darkness and emptiness of a child's past. To redeem, to "get or win back" or "help overcome something detrimental," is a long road requiring time, patience, and faithfulness.

We continue our mission not just to rescue these kids, but to stand by them as they see God working in their lives. Loving homes, counseling services, medical care, and sharing the good news of the Gospel are all part of helping precious children to see that their story isn't over.

Once a child is rescued and begins to see how their story can be redeemed, restoration becomes the goal. For Kids Alive, restoring means "to bring back to or put back into a former or original state; to renew." And this kind of restoration is only possible because we serve a God who is in the business of making all things new! We rejoice in the restoration that only He can bring. We fully believe that...

...the God of all grace...will himself restore you  
and make you strong, firm and steadfast.  
1 Peter 5:10 (NIV)

Kids Alive's "Three R's" might sound like lofty goals, but we believe each one is important to a hurting child. And Kids Alive continues working to rescue, redeem, and restore – all because of the power of Christ to transform lives.



kidsalive.org

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## Building on the past...fueling for the future

Every year at this time we feel the pull to look back over our shoulders at what God has done in our ministry during the past year, while also looking expectantly to what the coming year will bring.

Kids Alive currently serves more than 5,100 children all over the world in schools, residential homes, care centers, and other programs. Nearly 800 staff members, from teachers to house parents, medical staff to program directors, pour their lives out for each child in our care, showing them a love that can only come from Jesus.

And on this foundation, we continue relying on God to direct us to new kids, in new ways, for His glory.

### Trauma-Focused Intervention

Since so many kids we serve have been through traumatic and painful past experiences, our staff are being equipped with tools to help them process their pain and begin to heal. New trauma-based counseling training at many of our sites means our caregivers are even better prepared to do the emotional "heavy lifting" with the children.

*Children like Camila\* need us to be prepared.*

Camila desperately needed to be rescued from horrific circumstances. Living on the streets with her mother, all she knew was poverty and exploitation. Thankfully, a nurse at a local hospital recognized that her health problems were likely the result of sexual abuse and that she needed to be taken to safety.

**But as we know, the effects of abuse go far beyond the physical,** and when Camila first came to the Kids Alive home, she was afraid of adults, aggressive, violent, and non-compliant.

We began intensive intervention that included medical care, trauma-based therapy, legal support, and the search for stable family members. The process was painstaking, but slowly she began to understand that she was safe and loved, and that violence was not an acceptable way to respond. She enjoyed school, which gave her something to focus on and motivate her growth. **And we rejoiced when she eventually accepted Jesus as her Savior!**

What a privilege it's been for us to see Camila's story of hopelessness redeemed by our gracious God. But even this isn't the end of her story. Even though healing has started, we need to stay focused on the long-term health of the children we rescue.

*\*name changed to protect privacy*



## Family Intervention

In Camila's case, we located stable, loving relatives who were willing to bring this precious girl into their home. Part of our commitment to her is to work closely with the family to ensure they are well supported and that Camila is continuing to heal and grow. This can be a long process, but it's vitally important to a child's well-being.

### **Keeping a child in their own family when possible is critical for a sense of identity, history, and community.**

Even though poverty might be a constant struggle, coming alongside a loving family with support and resources will be much more effective than removing a child from his or her home. Our Keeping Families Together program recognizes that, assuming there is no danger, *a child should be with family.*

While some of our kids must remain in residential care for their own safety or because we can't locate relatives, we've begun to shift some of that care into our Families Together (foster family) program. In the coming year, we'll be growing and refining our ability to locate, evaluate, train, and follow up with loving Christian families who are willing to give our kids homes and remain accountable for their quality care.

Our Families Together flagship program in Guatemala has already begun providing loving homes for kids who either have no relatives or who have no one stable enough to care for them. In the future we hope to expand this effort to other countries, offering more children an alternative to residential care.

Though we are grateful to see how God has worked in mighty ways, we hunger to see even more growth in 2019. There are always more vulnerable children to reach and new areas of ministry to consider, so we pray for the endurance to say with the apostle Paul, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

**The work and mission of Kids Alive would never be possible without our committed donors, those who give generously to the cause of rescuing vulnerable children. So we move forward together, arm in arm, united in our resolve to reach as many children as possible and show them the deep, deep love that Jesus has for them.**



**Prayer is powerful! This year join the Kids Alive family in praying through 2019 for each country we serve, one per month. You'll learn interesting facts about the country's history, customs, challenges, and prayer needs. Just visit us at [www.kidsalive.org/prayerguide](http://www.kidsalive.org/prayerguide), enter your email address, and we'll send you the link to download your 2019 Kids Alive Prayer Guide!**



## Could God be calling YOU to serve with Kids Alive?

Missionaries are a vital part of the Kids Alive vision for reaching vulnerable children and orphans all over the world! Every day, these dedicated men and women serve as the hands and feet of Jesus, literally and figuratively wrapping their arms around “the least of these.” They serve with us as we “Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.” 1 Chronicles 16:24 (NIV)

Because we serve in many different locations and cultures, we need many different types of missionaries on our team – singles, families, retired couples, professionals, skilled tradespeople. And though their jobs may be varied, each missionary is committed to rescuing some of the most vulnerable children in the world and introducing them to Jesus. Here are just some of the ways our missionaries serve in the field:

- **Communications** (Sponsorship coordinators and translators)
- **Spiritual, emotional, and mental care** (Counselors, youth workers, trainers)
- **Education** (Teachers, curriculum developers, career counselors)
- **Skilled trades** (Construction, agriculture, computer repair)

- **Project management /administration** (Program directors, ministry startup managers)
- **Medical staff** (Doctors, dentists, nurses, public health workers)

Are you equipped in and passionate about one of these roles? Could God be calling you to serve with us? We encourage you to contact us so we can talk about the exciting, challenging, and rewarding work of being a Kids Alive missionary!

