

ALIVE!

THE NEWSLETTER OF KIDS ALIVE® INTERNATIONAL
SPRING 2022

Finding out what works... and doing more of it

Twelve years ago I interviewed Rosalva Alvarado to be our new social worker at Kids Alive Guatemala's Oasis ministry. She was so unassuming I almost did not hire her. When I asked a question about how she felt children were treated in the court system, I immediately saw the fire she had for justice. I hired her on the spot.

Neither of us had any idea the impact she would make in Oasis, Guatemala, and all of Kids Alive International. You can read more in this newsletter how she pioneered a new model of care, which we call Safe Haven.

Our incredible teams of social workers, psychologists, lawyers, teachers, nurses, and house parents are focused on creating safe havens for children focused on two outcomes.

Justice for a child is more than a court outcome. I have learned that no matter the circumstances, what a child wants most is a family. A forever family.

No matter how difficult, our Safe Haven *Champions* work to strengthen homes, heal broken families, or find alternative families to ensure that each child has a healthy home. And we know that God is in it as we see His fruit.

What Rosalva started is not only impacting Guatemala, but also Peru as we have built out the Safe Haven model there, and it is spreading to our entire ministry. All from the vision God gave Rosalva.

I am honored to support incredible people like Rosalva, whose innovations are changing Guatemala, Peru, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Kenya, Zambia, and Lebanon.



Corbey Dukes
President

Corbey baptizing a young girl
in our Guatemala Oasis ministry.



Announcing Safe Haven

“You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm...” Isaiah 25:4 (NIV)

We are excited to announce that we are taking the model of ministry created by Rosalva and her team and extending it to other sites around the world. We call this model Safe Haven, and this is how it works:

As our reputation builds as an organization that takes on challenging cases, government agencies are bringing more children and teens to Kids Alive from situations of unspeakable hardship and pain. Some have suffered extreme neglect or abandonment, and all have endured some form of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and are in need of significant interventions.

Some children have been removed from an abusive home environment and find refuge at one of our residential centers where they can be safe, protected from abusers, and have their needs for food, shelter, education, and companionship met as they experience emotional, physical and spiritual healing.

Other children are able to stay in their homes because the abuser is not a member of the household, and we can serve them and their families from a non-residential care or justice center.

In either scenario, Safe Haven care for these children begins with an assessment – what are their needs? What types of trauma have they endured? What interventions are needed to begin the healing journey?

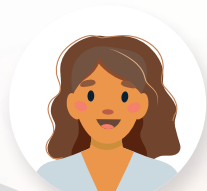
The key component of a Safe Haven ministry is the team of expert caretakers, or champions, formed around each child according to their needs for health, justice, education and emotional healing. Nurses, safeguarding officers, house parents, even security guards, provide for educational, medical, and safety needs. Psychologists and therapists use trauma-informed methods and biblical truth to start the road to emotional health.

While their healing is in process, Safe Haven provides social workers and attorneys to address their needs in the country's legal system. For example, in Guatemala, girls who have worked with our attorneys to prepare a case against their abuser have seen a 70% conviction rate compared to a national average of 7%.

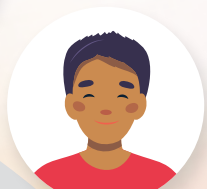
One of the ways we ensure a consistent approach to emotional healing and spiritual formation is through the use of what we call Life Declaration Cards. We know that the deep wounds of abuse create unhealthy views of identity and form unhealthy responses to the world. Many abused children are told by abusers and family that they're worthless, that they are dirty, that they will never amount to anything. And the pain of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse leads many to unhealthy behaviors such as self-harm, uncontrollable anger, addictions, and difficulty coping with life's challenges.



Psychologist



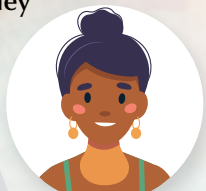
House Parent



Social Worker



Attorney



Nurse



You?

A team of champions is formed around each child according to their needs.



Become a Safe Haven Champion

Through every type of intervention, **we are replacing the abusers in their lives with a team of champions who will walk with them to healing and independence.**

And that's where you come in. Now that we have a proven model, we are looking for friends who will champion the needs of these children and help us continue and expand this work to more children, more sites, and more of the countries where we work.

Will you become a Safe Haven *Champion*, providing safety, healing, and the Good News of Jesus' love?

Your commitment of \$50, \$100, or more each month establishes you as a Safe Haven *Champion* and puts you on their team alongside the other Christian caregivers – the attorneys, social workers, spiritual mentors – who are dedicated to the emotional, physical, and spiritual restoration of our children. We can only do this work with your support and prayers.

When you join the Safe Haven *Champions'* Team, you'll receive...

- **Welcome kit** with specifics about the Safe Haven program and how you can stay informed and engaged
- **Life Declaration Cards:** the first one with your welcome packet; then one per quarter until you've received the entire set of 16
- **Introductions and stories** of individual children experiencing the miracle of a Safe Haven fresh start
- **Online devotionals** that will connect you with the important mission of Safe Haven

Won't you consider joining our efforts and becoming a Safe Haven Champion?



Life Declaration Cards are a set of 16 3x5 cards given to each child in a Safe Haven program to keep with them. Each card articulates a vital biblical truth: a value we are called to live by, or a statement about our identity in Christ. Kids Alive staff reference these cards throughout the day with the children, in devotional or Bible study times, in counseling, and even in a conflict on the playground. They provide a consistent framework on which to build new spiritual foundations of identity and values.

Finally, our goal for every boy and girl is to know the blessing of family. When possible, we seek to keep them or reunite them with their own nuclear or extended family. If this isn't an option, we work toward placing them with loving, trained, accountable Christian parents.



You can see this full journey illustrated in the video story of Maria*: www.kidsalive.org/safe-haven-video

**Name changed to protect privacy*

The Safe Haven model is currently being implemented at four sites in Guatemala and all seven sites in Peru. We are seeking resources and Champions to help us expand Safe Haven to all of our country ministries.



Sign up today:
www.kidsalive.org/safe-haven



Global Update



Dominican Republic

We are encouraged by answered prayer for God's protection during the pandemic and by the expansions we have made in our scope of care despite limited resources and difficult working conditions. We have a new nurse in our Constanza School and increased multidisciplinary training in each of our programs. Most importantly, we are encouraged by transformed lives: youth graduating from our programs ready to help themselves, their families, and their communities for God's glory (we anticipate 100 graduates this year).

Guatemala

Thirty-seven children were reunited with their families or integrated into a new family in 2021. Several of these children had lived on the Oasis campus multiple years and though their departures are bittersweet, we are filled with joy that God has provided for these children and families. In 2022 we will expand our services further as we partner with government entities to consider new possibilities for family care.

Haiti

God continues to provide for Kids Alive Haiti. We recently installed a water filtration system providing clean water for the children and purchased a bus to help students get safely to and from school each day. As the year progresses, we trust God for furniture and equipment for the cafeteria, additional solar panels for reliable power, and financial resources to develop a literacy program for parents.

Kenya

We were able to support 297 families with food, hygiene items, and spiritual care last year. Hall Mead bustles with children and teachers while demand continues to drive our mission. The school continues to expand as we have added classrooms and buses for transporting the children each day. In the coming weeks we will launch an intervention program for vulnerable children living in the slums of Nairobi.

Lebanon

Our biggest challenge this year is providing expanded services for the Syrian refugee population that continues to grow. We ask God to expand our capacity, providing financial resources for staff so that we can welcome more children into our classrooms, provide important medical care, and create entrepreneurship training opportunities for women in our care.

Peru

We have witnessed children restored to their families (12 in 2021) as our team works to help them find healing and a new way forward. We have been blessed to witness 45 families served through our Family Centers catch a vision for their identity in Christ and seek opportunities to bless others in their community in His name!

Zambia

We have two new programs that focus on children who are overlooked by other institutions. In March we officially launched a program providing early education and care for young children whose mothers are imprisoned. In the coming months we will launch a program to nurture children living on the street, providing them with a chance for emotional support, academic remediation, and relationship with Christ. Our existing program to help girls who are victims of sexual abuse continues to provide short-term housing as they pursue long-lasting healing and we seek permanent placement in healthy families on their behalf.

Welcoming Patrick Lutta



Kids Alive is happy to welcome Patrick Lutta, principal of Lutta & Company Associates, to the Kids Alive International Board of Directors. Patrick has assisted our team in Kenya with legal issues over many years, helping bring justice and holistic care for children and families there. We look forward to his contributions in an international governance and advisory role.

"There are a lot of groups around to help children – and many of them do great work. But Kids Alive takes a different approach. Our strategy is designed to help children and families break the bonds that would hold them down while disrupting the systems that would keep them in poverty and abuse. When you look at the problems as systems where the structures re-enforce each other, you can begin to address the issues at their root. That's the best hope for people trying to get out of a bad situation and on to a better road for life."