



AFFIRMING JUSTICE:
TRANSFORMING LIVES & SYSTEMS IN
Guatemala



For the past 15 years, Kids Alive Guatemala has worked tirelessly to support some of the country’s most vulnerable children—those who are survivors of domestic sexual violence—by providing a path toward healing, courage, and justice.

Guided by trust in God and a deep recognition of how much justice matters to Him, we have seen remarkable progress. These affirmations of success strengthen our resolve, inspiring us to continue this vital work with renewed hope and courage.

A powerful validation of these efforts comes from the recent testimonies of Guatemalan government officials featured in a video, including members of the public prosecutor’s office and the judiciary. Their voices highlight the significance of this work, offering an objective lens on the progress being made to protect and empower children while addressing systemic challenges.

JUSTICE FOR EVERY CHILD

At the heart of our mission is the belief that every child deserves safety, healing, and the opportunity to seek justice. Fifteen years ago, we began working with International Justice Mission (IJM) to represent children who had suffered from domestic sexual violence. While IJM's efforts were focused on Guatemala City, we recognized the overwhelming need to advocate for children in other regions, where many of those in our care lived.

“These children had no assistance, no recourse, no advocacy for justice,” shares Corbey Dukes, CEO of Kids Alive International. ***“We knew we had to step in because God cares deeply about justice for the vulnerable.”***

Despite warnings that pursuing justice would be futile or dangerous, we partnered with the local prosecutors' office and committed ourselves to walking alongside these children on their journey to healing and empowerment.



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TESTIMONIES

The voices in the video are not those of Kids Alive staff—they are Guatemalan government officials, including members of the prosecutor's office and a judge, who have worked with us in the pursuit of justice for children. Their statements affirm the effectiveness of our approach, acknowledging how these collaborative efforts are transforming lives and improving legal outcomes.

One prosecutor's office member remarked, ***“What Kids Alive has put together is moving the ball forward, creating real change in how these cases are handled.”*** These testimonies are significant because they demonstrate that the progress being made is recognized by those within the system itself. Such recognition from within the legal system underscores how collaborative efforts can lead to systemic change. It reinforces the need to empower the legal system to adopt and replicate effective practices.



EMPOWERING THROUGH THE PROCESS

Advocating for justice has required perseverance, innovation, and trust. With early efforts led by our social workers advocating alongside the government prosecutors' office, the conviction rate in these cases rose to an impressive 70%. This progress laid the foundation for expanded work in the years to come.

In 2019, we partnered again with IJM to establish the Esquintla Justice Center, enabling us to provide legal representation directly to children. This step improved outcomes by expediting cases, reducing courtroom trauma, and achieving stronger sentences for perpetrators.

Our therapeutic tools, like the comic book *Soy David*, have been essential in helping children prepare for the challenges of testifying in court. While the process can be difficult, many have found it empowering and expressed pride in their ability to face their trauma and seek justice.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Our work is far from over. Esquintla, one of Guatemala's largest cities and a hub for child abuse due to its coastal location, remains a focal point for our justice initiatives. However, our vision extends beyond individual cases. By mentoring prosecutors' office members, collaborating with government agencies, and engaging influential leaders in the legal community, we aim to inspire systemic change throughout Guatemala.

As one prosecutor's office member shared in the video, "Every child deserves to be cared for by the system they seek justice from." This belief motivates us to continue equipping others and replicating effective models to ensure no child seeking justice is left without support.

FAITH IN ACTION

The testimonies from government officials are a powerful reminder that this work is making a tangible difference, both for the children we serve and within the broader legal system. These affirmations give us the courage to press forward, knowing that every step taken is part of a greater story of healing and transformation.

As Corbey mentioned, our work reflects the call of Amos 5:15: ***“Love good, hate evil, and turn your courts into true halls of justice,”*** a verse that has guided our efforts over the years. These affirmations of progress encourage us to persevere, knowing that the fight for justice is one worth continuing.

Together, we can help create a future where every child has the opportunity to heal, thrive, and see justice realized.

