

## A Big Hug and a Big Smile

*Angie Davis and her husband, Jody, live in Walnut, Illinois*

**I texted my husband from Guatemala, "By the way honey, I signed us up to sponsor a little girl. Her name is Melanie and she is beautiful."**

It was my first Impact Trip, and the people of Guatemala had really touched my heart. We had been wanting to sponsor a child for a long time, and it seems God had a specific one in mind for us.

The guest house host pulled up pictures on her computer of children who needed a sponsor. Within a few clicks, there was a little girl with a great big smile wearing an oversized knit hat. I instantly fell in love.

I was told I would get to meet Melanie, and I was so excited. The three days that it took to work the home visit into our schedule seemed like forever. Finally our team was able to go to where she lives with her grandmother, aunt, and younger brother.

I introduced myself with the help of a translator. "Would it be ok," I asked Melanie, "for me to be your sponsor?" She got that big beautiful smile on her face and gave me an enormous hug! It was the best hug ever! We shared some gifts we brought, gave her family a food basket, and took

some pictures. Then, our team gathered in a circle with Melanie and her family. We prayed for them and they prayed for us. It touched my heart that Melanie and her family wanted to pray for us too.

Then it was time to leave. I hugged the family, and then Melanie. Someone in my group quipped, "I don't think we're gonna get Angie back in the van!" I think I cried all the way back to the guest house.



*Meeting Melanie*

After my trip, I told my husband all about Melanie. He wanted to meet her too, and to see all the things at Impact Ministries that I was so excited about. When I returned to Guatemala with him the next year, Melanie gave him a big hug and flashed that big smile at him, and his heart melted. She's part of our family, now and always.

I pray for Melanie and her family. I pray that they stay healthy and safe. I pray that she stays in school and studies hard.



Mainly I pray that Melanie keeps God in her heart and trusts Him as her Lord and Savior always.

I think about Melanie all the time and wonder how her day is going. We keep in touch through her school; she sends us pictures and messages online and we do the same. It's all translated for us, as she speaks Poqomchi and Spanish. It's always exciting to hear what she's doing and how school is going.

It's so hard to put into words what sponsoring Melanie has meant to my husband and I. It's so much more rewarding than you can even imagine.

Sponsor a child like Melanie at [impactminusa.org/sponsorsoft](https://www.impactminusa.org/sponsorsoft)



Want to meet your sponsor child? Check out the Sponsorship Team in August 2023 or May 2024: [impactminusa.org/teams](https://www.impactminusa.org/teams)



*Praying with Melanie's family*

# The Privilege of Prayer

As a sponsor, you have the amazing opportunity to change your sponsor child's future – not just through your monthly donation, but also through your prayers. Whether you pray in person with your child in Guatemala, or from 3000 miles away, you have the privilege of petitioning our Heavenly Father on behalf of your sponsor child.

But what should you pray for? Here are a few thoughts:

**Pray for your sponsor child's mind and heart to awaken to the hope there is in Christ.** So many children in Guatemala have been told that they will amount to nothing, undermining their natural inclination to dream about the future. Pray for your child to believe that God has great things in store for them, because believing this changes everything.

**Pray that your sponsor child would come to know the Lord's salvation and experience His restoration in their life.** Only Jesus can break the continuum of poverty. For children who are already believers, pray that they will experience intimacy with Jesus, learning to live wholeheartedly and sacrificially for Him, and allowing Him into the deepest parts of their lives.

**Pray for your sponsor child's family.** Home is meant to be safe and nurturing, but in many homes in Guatemala, broken relationships, unfaithfulness and betrayal are the norm. Pray for harmonious relationships in the parents' marriage and among family members.

**Pray for safety and protection.** When students come from dysfunctional families, the incidence of abuse is alarming. It really is a secondary symptom of spiritual and physical poverty. Even children who come from loving families need prayers for safety and protection, though. Simple things like cooking meals or getting to and from school can be dangerous in a country like Guatemala.

**Pray for the health of your sponsor child.** In a country where healthcare is inaccessible to most, physical pain can be a huge barrier to spiritual and academic growth. Something like an abscessed tooth can be incredibly painful and can paralyze a child's ambitions. Pray for resources and volunteers for the Impact Medical Clinic so that medical and dental issues can be treated promptly and pray that God would keep your child healthy and well.

**Pray that your sponsor child would be able to concentrate on their studies and grasp the concepts presented to them.** Many of the children start school without knowing any Spanish, the language of instruction. Children can also find it hard to focus when life circumstances feel out of control. Pray that teachers would come alongside your sponsor child in their academic and spiritual journey and that school would be a place of refuge for them.

As you pray, God may bring other things to mind. You can also ask your child if there is something specific they'd like prayer for. Your sponsor child is praying for you too! What a privilege to hold each other up in prayer.



Find more information about how to write your sponsor child at [impactminusa.org/writeyourchild](https://www.impactminusa.org/writeyourchild)

# Their words shaped my life

Sonia Beb teaches Grade 7 at Vida Chamché school

**I remember it precisely – learning that I had a sponsor.** I was in Grade 2 and my teacher called me up to her desk to tell me that a letter had arrived for me. I was so excited! The first thing I wanted to know was who it was from. I opened it, and the words read:

*Dear and Beloved Sonia, I hope you are well. We want to wish you a happy birthday. We are sending you a special gift for your birthday. With love, John & Joanne*

My heart leapt for joy, because I had been eight years old for some time, and no one had acknowledged my birthday, much less given me a card or a gift. I had a somewhat complicated childhood and the suicide of one of my brothers marked our family. I was the youngest of eleven siblings, and I felt forgotten.

From that day on, I began to receive a birthday letter, a Christmas letter, and even gifts each year. These cards became a treasure for my heart. I felt loved by my sponsors, and their words were always encouraging, telling me that God had great plans for me. I never had the privilege of meeting my sponsors in person, but I always knew they were there for me.

During the course of my life, I made some decisions that separated me from the Lord; however, the words and prayers of this wonderful couple continued to shape my life. "God has great plans for you, our beloved and dear daughter," they would write. Their support over the years – not just financial, but emotional and spiritual – allowed me to achieve God's plans for me.

These days, I deliver sponsor letters to my own students. It fills me with joy, because I see their smiles and their enthusiasm in telling their sponsor a little about their lives. I am able to learn a little more about my students as I transcribe their letters into Sponsorsoft. Through this, I know that my students have a special person in their lives like I did – a sponsor who is listening to them, and who they can count on.



Will you help each Vida child experience the impact of having a sponsor in their life? See children still waiting for a sponsor at [impactminusa.org/sponsorsoft](http://impactminusa.org/sponsorsoft)

(Above): Teacher Sonia now delivers letters to her own students

(Left): Young Sonia receiving a gift from her sponsors; Sonia with her classmates

## Yes, I want to impact a child's life!

Sponsor a child for \$40/month       Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ children for \$\_\_\_\_\_/month  
Please make checks payable to **Impact Ministries USA**.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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In the event gifts exceed program requirements or a program is discontinued, funds are used where they are most needed to fulfill ministry purposes. Impact Ministries USA is recognized as a non-profit organization by the IRS under IRS Code: Section 501(c)(3); Tax ID #80-0678702. A copy of the latest financial report, state registration information and description of programs and activities may be found at [impactminusa.org/state-documents](http://impactminusa.org/state-documents)



**Donate Online**

Recurring donations by Credit Card or E-check (ACH) can be made at: [impactminusa.org/donate](http://impactminusa.org/donate)

# News and Updates

## **We have a new junior high program!** ▶

Agua de Vida Chijulhá School welcomed Grade 8 and 9 students for the first time this year. As in Chijacorral, Mocohán and Purulhá, elementary students attend the morning session, and secondary students attend in the afternoon. We're excited to watch this program grow.



## *Impacting Guatemala through:*

- schools
- churches
- medical & dental clinics
- orphan care
- sponsorship
- discipleship
- short-term missions

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## Donate Online

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## Sponsor a Child

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## Update your Info

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*"Sponsorship Impact"*



◀ **We're celebrating clean water at Vida Nueva, Vida Chijacorral, Vida Mocohán and at the Chisac property.** These deep water wells, dug by Servants Hearts Ministries, provide life-giving water for the students at our schools, the little ones at our children's home, and our visiting teams. Thank you to all who have given and prayed for clean water for our kids!

**The multi-purpose home for our older children and the office building at the Vida Children's Home were dedicated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony!** We praise

God for how this space will allow us to better serve orphaned and abandoned children in Guatemala.



◀ **Thank you to Love Sews Ministry** which sent personalized quilts to each of the children in the Vida Children's Home. Can you envision them snuggling into bed with their own quilt each night? While they're with us and wherever life takes them, these quilts will be a precious reminder of God's love and care.

**So far in 2023, Guatemala has welcomed church teams, school teams, medical and dental teams, and other specialty teams** - and that's not even including volunteers and School of Discipleship participants. We're so excited to have you all back! Want to join us? Check out [impactminusa.org/teams](https://www.impactminusa.org/teams)

