

iQue Pasa! ANNUAL REPORT

WHO GOD SAYS I AM!

How can you make a difference when so many families are torn apart by the devastation of drugs, alcohol and abuse? We help one child at a time, training them so they know **who God says they are**. We give them love and the physical care they need. We help with their education and provide counseling. As they grow, we continue to care for and support them, guiding them as they navigate the difficulties of becoming adults. We lead and challenge them to follow Jesus and help them pursue their educational goals. And YOU are a big part of this.



Princesses. Valeria and Lidia leaving the Home to begin the festivities at the church.

Child of God

In January of this year, two of our girls celebrated their fifteenth birthdays with a joint quinceañera. A quinceañera is like a sweet sixteen party. It is a time to celebrate a girl becoming a young woman, a very special occasion that families and friends celebrate together. Both girls were placed with us by the government, so we cannot share their real names or faces.

Fearfully & wonderfully made

One of the girls, Valeria, in pink, has lived with us since she was 11 and has spent her whole adolescence in our Home. At this point her family will probably not be coming to take her back. Valeria is a talented artist; she loves to draw and paint with great detail. She is always adding special touches to make things pretty.

The other girl, Lidia, came to our Home last February with three younger brothers. The state has determined that Lidia and her brothers could return home to their mom if she would leave her current husband. Lidia's mom is choosing to stay with her husband over being with her four children. Lidia arrived only a short time before her 15th birthday. She originally didn't want a big party but later changed her mind.

The quinceañera was a beautiful event. Friends from the U.S. donated money to cover the expenses of the dresses and party. First, the

two girls had their hair and makeup carefully done. The girls wore stunning dresses with tiaras, jewelry and hoop skirts. While they were getting prepared, the younger girls watched with excitement and fascination. Two of them, each currently thirteen years old, dreamily expressed their wishes of what their quinceañeras could be like, and how they could also share the memorable event. Once Lidia and Valeria were prepared, they were escorted to the church in the 'chauffeured' car.

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Created with a purpose

There was a special service at the church. Lidia and Valeria walked down the aisle holding lovely bouquets as the packed congregation stood. The service emphasized the importance of the girls dedicating their hearts and lives to God as they become young women. They were prayed for and dedicated. They were then introduced to the congregation as young women. The children and staff from our Home surrounded and hugged them as their proud family.

Afterwards the fiesta moved to an elegant event space in Ensenada. There was a lovely party with delicious food and drinks, music, gifts and celebrating. The children from the Home loved it.

Known

As a mom of young adult women, I watched the two girls throughout the event with a mother's perspective. Valeria appeared generally happy and enjoyed herself. She appreciated the dressing up, attention and special celebration. It was a different, bittersweet experience for Lidia. She clearly wanted to be involved, but she frequently had a look of sorrow and pain in her expression. It broke my heart that she was longing to celebrate this important moment with her mother. At one point during the evening, there was a dance for the girls with their father figures.



The place of honor. The girls at the lovely head table. The neon sign says, "Mis XV" meaning "My 15th."

Obviously their birth fathers were not part of the event. Several caring men from the Home and church took turns dancing with the girls. Lidia was wiping her eyes as she danced. It was beautiful, sad and touching, and brought tears to my eyes. The girls were celebrating an important rite of passage with a family that cares deeply for them, although it's not their birth family. God knew them in the womb and had a plan for them to be loved and celebrated at this special time in our Home without their birth families.

YOU are His handiwork

You are part of God's plan and family for Lidia and Valeria. You share in the work of teaching our children who they are in Christ. Your prayers, love and support help us to continue to care for these girls, and the other children God brings to us.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

Thank you for helping our children and young adults. Will you donate as we continue to do the good works that God has prepared for us?

by Patty Meadows



Papa Josue dancing with Lidia. The time was meaningful and emotional for her.



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Siblings **Bryana and Jorge** enjoyed dancing together at the **quinceañera**. Their older brothers arrived at our Home shortly before Christmas.

Our Busy Home Kids and Staff

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Current paid staff | 9 |
| Voluntary staff | 4 |
| Our current children | 26 |
| Children in our Home | 15 |
| DIF (government placed) | 8 |
| Private placement | 7 |
| Staff children | 11 |
| Schooling | 23 |
| Not yet in school | 3 |
| Kindergarten | 3 |
| Elementary | 14 |
| Middle school | 4 |
| High school | 1 |
| Post-high school education | 1 |

HIS HANDIWORK

2023 Highlights

26 current children

34 kids in our care last year

80+ visits to the doctor



5 different schools

1050 times Bible verses recited per child each year

Constant errands. Three or more times per week we need to pick up last-minute school items for projects and events – like playdough, poster board or cookies.

Financial Report

Home's Expenses/Paid Out 2023

| Indirect Home Expenses | MXN Pesos |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Employee Expenses | 1,256,898.50 |
| Taxes | 609,552.02 |
| Electricity & Propane | 177,880.11 |
| Water | 52,705.30 |
| Repairs/Maintenance - Home | 64,076.04 |
| Telephone & Internet | 64,798.92 |
| Automotive Fuel | 211,272.09 |
| Car Repair/Maintenance | 89,714.19 |
| Travel | 51,060.07 |
| Operations License | 179,661.92 |
| Miscellaneous | 77,437.70 |
| Fees & Dues, Memberships | 23,407.21 |
| Office | 33,615.31 |
| Bank Charges | 13,921.70 |
| Insurance | 7,139.80 |
| Total Indirect Expenses | 2,913,140.88 |
| In US Dollars | \$171,361.23 |

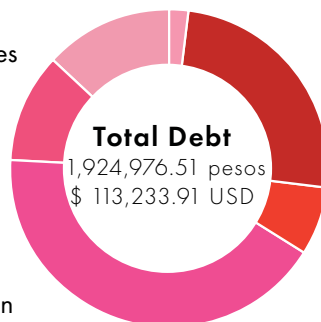
| Direct Home Expenses | MXN Pesos |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Food | 406,486.62 |
| Medical | 87,259.45 |
| Hygiene, Personal | 24,282.00 |
| Education Expenses | 201,897.31 |
| Special Events | 1,829.00 |
| Clothing & Shoes | 1,183.84 |
| Total Direct Expenses | 722,938.22 |
| In US Dollars | \$42,525.78 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| TOTAL EXPENSES | Pesos | 3,636,079.10 |
| | US Dollars (USD) | \$213,887.01 |

Average exchange rate over 2023
17.0 MXN/1 USD

Home's Debt 2023

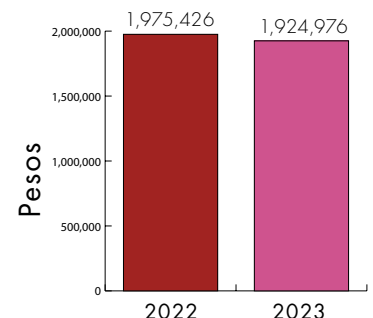
- 2% Accountant
- 25% Employee expenses
- 7% Taxes
- 42% Utilities
- 11% Debt to Espinozas
- 13% Debt to Foundation



The good and the bad: Debt decreased

Good news: Our debt has gone down since last year. Bad news: The U.S. dollar doesn't go as far as before; it takes more dollars to meet that debt.

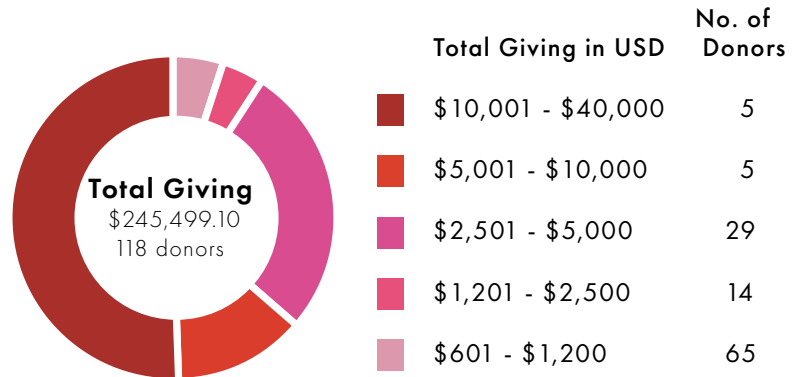
To pay off the debt in 2022 would have taken \$107,800 US. Although fewer pesos, the 2023 US dollar payoff would be \$113,233.



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Donors at Giving Levels



Information here is based on date gifts were given, as opposed to deposited.

Protector of precious smiles

Did you know that when children arrive at El Sauzal, most have had little or no dental care? This is because they frequently come from backgrounds of neglect and/or poverty. Many are in pain and in need of urgent dental care.

Meet Eli, the dentist who cares for our kids' smiles. She is related to the Espinoza family, cousins with director Erika. As a young woman, Eli stepped out in faith to attend dental school. She did not have funding and was already working to support her family. God brought Eli financial support, and she worked extremely hard, attending dental school and supporting her family.

Eli became a dentist about ten years ago. Since that time, she has been busy volunteering her services at our Home, another orphanage in our town, and a third home for developmentally disabled



STRONG



When Julio (not real name) arrived, an x-ray found a metal item embedded in his gums. Eli has been treating Julio, removing it, and giving him an orthopedic apparatus to help his bone grow properly.

individuals. She has blessed many people. Last year she stepped out in faith again and joined a program for implantology and oral rehabilitation. Again, God brought her the funding she needed to pay for it.

When a new child arrives at our Home, Eli makes a point to inspect their oral health. She has seen many dental challenges—from kids with numerous cavities and gum disease to dental malformations and more recently, a metal object embedded in one of our kids' mouths. Eli develops treatment plans for each child and comes in regularly to provide the oral care they need. She knows that as kids go through dental work they have to overcome the fear and stress of it in order to be able to eat and smile better.

We are so grateful for Eli's faithful work, and the U.S. churches and dentists that have supported her.

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And many more...

El Sauzal Foundation is 20 years old

El Sauzal Foundation is a U.S. nonprofit, established at the request of the Espinoza family. The Home had been caring for children for almost forty years at our founding, and they desired help with funding and communicating with their friends and backers. Attorney Mike Moore filed the paperwork; we became a 501c(3) nonprofit, holding our first meeting in the fall of 2004. We strive to support the Home from the U.S. as they care for abandoned and wounded children. No one associated with the Foundation receives compensation; everyone pays their own expenses to serve. We help the Home in several ways:

Aiding El Sauzal leadership:

- Give wise counsel. Wise counsel has been needed as the Home's leadership has faced several daunting challenges, such as constantly changing government regulations, the red-tape quagmire to obtain their operating license, and

pandemic-generated obstacles.

- Streamline financial reporting.
- Deal with financial challenges, like seeking different fundraising opportunities.

Helping amigos like you to donate:

- Provide tax deductions for U.S. donations.
- Seek ways to make donating easier.
- Work with companies that offer matching funds to double the impact.

Assisting with the communication between you and El Sauzal:

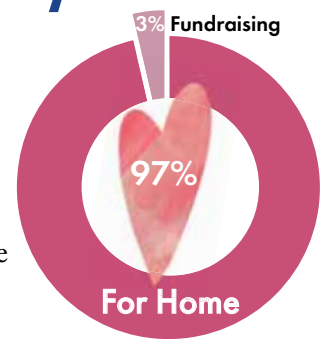
- Send newsletters and emails to keep you up to date.
- Run the Home's website.
- Utilize Facebook and Instagram to share updates.

We are always looking for new and better ways to help El Sauzal. Got ideas? Please send them to patty.meadows@elsauzal.org.



Financial Accountability

What does the El Sauzal Foundation do with the funds you send us? We use a small amount for fundraising and administration. The rest goes directly to the Home or is set aside for the Home's future use.



How we used your gifts in 2023

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Fundraising & administration | 3.4% |
| Direct to/for Home | 96.6% |

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Foundation's core values

1. Jesus is our Savior

We believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God, and we are dedicated to fulfilling God's will in all we do.

2. Spiritual growth

We are dedicated to the glorification of God and the spiritual growth of those at the Home for children.

3. Assisting El Sauzal Home for Children

We value the work, past and present, of the home's administrators. Our first priority is to assist the Home to become financially secure.

4. Helping wounded children

We value orphaned, abandoned and abused children and strive to find ways to aid them with their spiritual, physical, emotional and educational needs.

5. Cultural sensitivity and respect

We respect that the methods and style of leadership and decision making of other cultures may be different from our own.



First face-to-face meeting. Our board members always serve at their own expense, donating time, talents and travel costs. Back: Roger Christianson, Clay Warren, Don Mahoney. Front: Roy Ketring, Laurie Lehr, Patty Meadows, Chuck Keortge.



One of the Foundation's priorities is to help the Home with financial reporting and accountability. This requires careful inspection, like Melanie demonstrates here.

6. Financial accountability

We maintain financial controls to assure donors that the highest percentage of contributions goes in direct support of El Sauzal Home's operations, maintenance and improvements.

7. Relationally centered

We strive to connect supporters with the home's children and staff by providing information. We seek to develop a community of those who live at the Home, work there, and support it from afar.



Families serving together. Today two adult children serve alongside their parents. Back: Clay Warren, Clay's daughter Danielle Bergman, Pete Legan, Roger Christianson, Ron Hill, Don Mahoney. Front: Patty Meadows, Roy Ketring, Patty's daughter Heather Kim.

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El Sauzal Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 154
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www.elsauzal.org



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