

August 2024 - August 2025:

WHY DO WE DO IT?



Kids at one of our Christmas events in 2024



Our second school supply event of 2025.

Can you help? We still have a need! Every penny counts! We know you've heard this from us often over the past few months, and you have probably heard it from many other groups as well. With today's uncertain global economy and rising prices, it has become harder than ever for charities, schools, youth programs, and sports to raise enough support for even their most basic needs. Reflejo De Amor is no different. We have faced challenges in fundraising, yet we continue pressing forward.

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WHY DO WE DO IT CONT.

Some have asked why we don't just reduce the number of children we help, or not feed them a lunch at our events. And while that would certainly make things easier and require less funding, the answer is simple: every child matters.

At one of our events on August 18th, a boy about eight years old approached me and asked, "Why do you do this if you don't know me?" My immediate response was, "Because God loves you, and He sent us to give you this gift so you can go to school."

The boy then shared, "My mom doesn't have a job, and my dad died during the pandemic. Many times, I have to wait for someone to help me with school supplies or other things for school. And now, I just got a backpack from someone."

That someone was a dear friend of ours in Minnesota, who provided over 300 simple backpacks. These backpacks did not have cartoon characters or fancy sequences.

To most U.S. kids they would be just plain school backpacks, but to the kids who received them, they weren't just bags, they were tickets to education, hope, and a better future.

This is why we continue to work tirelessly and why we continue to ask for your support. We know you have many choices when it comes to giving. For those who choose to partner with Reflejo De Amor, we are deeply grateful. For those who give elsewhere, we respect and honor your decision, knowing there are many worthy organizations in need. Above all, we ask that everyone please continue to keep us in your prayers.



Many of the kids at this event have parents who struggle with drug or alcohol addiction. For some, this feeding program provides the only meal they will have all day. It is such a blessing to be able to share God's love with them, while also giving them the supplies they need to pursue an education and, hopefully, grow up to have a better life than they know now.

Research shows that education can change the course of a child's future—youth who do well in school are more than twice as likely to avoid drug use later in life (National Institute on Drug Abuse). By supporting their education today, we are investing in breaking the cycle of poverty and addiction for tomorrow.

A YEAR IN REVIEW!

Since our last update, God has opened many doors for Reflejo De Amor to serve our community in meaningful ways. At the end of August 2024, we were approached by the local recovery center with a request for journals and pens to support individuals in their recovery process. We were blessed to provide these items, share God's love, and encourage the participants as they continue on their journey of healing. During this same time, a generous local vendor also donated blankets for the orphanage we partner with, allowing us to extend even more comfort and care to the children living there.

In September, we launched a brand-new website and email address to better reflect our name and mission. This step is part of our ongoing effort to move toward official charity status in Mexico while also increasing our visibility and accountability with those who support us.

We invite you to visit the new site, explore what God is doing through Reflejo De Amor, and share it with your friends and family. As a small but growing charity, we are still working through a few details, but we trust that as we continue to grow, everything will fall into place.

October proved to be a very busy month. We partnered with Walk the Talk on two house builds. The first was dedicated in honor of our dear friend Reis, who passed away in August, while the second was a rebuild for a family whose home was collapsing due to land erosion. We were able to take down their house and rebuild it on safer, higher



The blankets we delivered to the orphanage from the local vendor.



Our first house build with Walk the Talk

A YEAR IN REVIEW CONT.

ground. October also brought the completion and grand opening of the Reis Grams Classroom, a dedicated space where women in the community can learn hairstyling as a way to supplement their income. In addition, we began fundraising for our Christmas events, knowing the season would soon be upon us.

In November and December, those Christmas celebrations came to life. We hosted 9 different events and were able to provide gifts for 526 children, each one reminded of God's love and care for them.

In January we built a third house with Walk the Talk for a family of 3, and got to work with a ministry called blessing bags international. We handed out dispensas, blankets and clothing.

In June Egla was asked to help translate for a group of teenagers from a church in Utah. While doing missions in Mexico they passed out small bags of tooth brushes, tooth paste, wash cloths and soap. At the end of their mission trip they donated about 50 of these packs to RDA to use at our school events and hand out as we saw a need in our community.

Fundraising for our school supply event began in July with the goal of raising \$10,000 to provide supplies for six hundred children and food for them and their families. We weren't able to hit that goal.



The first graduating class of hair stylists from the Reis Grams Classroom



Some fun face painting at one of our Christmas events

HOW YOUR MONEY GETS USED:

2024 School Supply Event:

- Total Number of Events:
 - 10
- Total Number of Kids Served (School age kids only):
 - 400 (goal was 500 kids)

2024 Christmas Toy Event:

- Total Number of Events:
 - 9
- Total Number of Kids Served (Birth to 16 years only)
 - 526

Other RDA was apart of:

- Donation of paper and pencils to the recovery center:
 - Event Cost: \$100
- Donation of blankets to the local orphanage:
 - Event Cost: \$0 (all blankets were donated by a local vendor)
- Eglá represented RDA as a translator for a group of teenagers on a mission trip from Utah



HOW YOUR MONEY GETS USED:

2025 School Supply Event:

- Total Number of Events:
 - 14 (Goal was 15. One event had to be canceled due to lack of fundraising)
- Total Number of Kids Served (School age kids only):
 - 557 (Goal was 600+)
- Fundraising Goal for Predicted Cost of Events (including supplies, food and game costs):
 - \$10,000

2025 Christmas Toy Event:

- Predicted Number of Events:
 - 9
- Predicted Number of Kids Served (Birth to 16 years only)
 - 500+
- Fundraising Goal for Predicted Cost of Events (including toys, food and game costs):
 - Our total goal is \$10,00 to cover the cost of food for adults as well as children, but actual cost of 500 kids is \$8,500=\$12 per gift + \$5 per meal (kids only).



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE:



Spreading the word about RDA any way we can. Our sticker is now on the wall of fame at this popular restaurant.



The home page to our new website. Check it out!

Year after year, we have seen Reflejo De Amor grow. The children now count on us and look forward to our return each season, and the wider community has begun reaching out for support in ways that go beyond our school supply and Christmas events. This shows us that God is calling us to expand and share His love in new ways.

One of our goals for this past year was to include the elderly in our ministry by providing small grocery bags, known as dispensas, filled with essentials like rice, beans, and other staples for nutritious meals. While we were not able to meet that goal, we remain committed and have

- Phone : **+52 646-101-4242**
- Email : **reflejodeamor19@gmail.com**
- Website : **www.reflejodeamor.com**
- Facebook: **Reflejo De Amor**

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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE CONT:

renewed it for the coming year. We also hope to find more opportunities to connect with our community throughout the year, not just during our two main events.

On the administrative side, we are working on ways to make giving easier for our partners. Eglá and Carlos are in the process of obtaining their American visas so we can set up a U.S. bank account and P.O. Box. This will allow us to accept cash, checks, and direct in-kind donations easier, without relying solely on PayPal. Each visa costs a minimum of \$300, and Mexican requirements state that everyone in the household must apply at the same time. Our first step is to finish raising the necessary funds, after which we can move forward with the interview and waiting process.

In addition, we are pursuing official Mexican charity status, which requires a minimum monthly income of \$1,000. Although we are blessed to have a few faithful supporters who give monthly, we are still a ways from reaching the \$1,000 per month needed to begin the application process.

We know these goals will take prayer, dedication, and hard work, but we trust that God will continue to guide and provide as we take steps to grow the ministry and reflect His love even more fully in our community.

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HOW YOU CAN HELP TODAY

PRAY! Prayer is the number one way you can help. Prayers for needed funds, safety and health of our volunteers and success for our events.

Donate: Any amount will help. While our school supply events are wrapping up we are jumping into fundraising for our Christmas event.

Share: Please share this newsletter, and information about RDA with all your friends. We can never have enough prayers and support!



Our amazing team!



Left: Carlos at a house build with Walk the Talk.
Below: Christmas event.



Dispensas given out by Walk the Talk during their prayer walk.

