

Our Mission- Purpose-Values-Principles and Methods

Our Mission Statement

Paper Houses Across the Border is a 501(3)(c) corporation and our mission is to improve the quality of life for American families and for the impoverished families living in the colonias by working cooperatively with the families and institutions in the colonias.

Our Purpose

Provide people the startling experience of mission and selfless charity in the colonias of Mexico. With God's help Paper Houses will reduce the number of starving children throughout the world by helping to instill compassion in a generation that hears and responds to the cries of those in need.

Values

1. Respect the culture of the people we serve.
2. Respect dignity of work and self-achievement.
3. Strive to improve the quality of life in the colonias by working with the people to support projects that help our friends succeed in business, home ownership, and programs that provide food, shelter and love for the most neglected.
4. Always engage in behavior that is beyond ethical reproach and respects the customs, laws, and beliefs of the people.

Respecting a culture is more than simply enjoying traditional dances and songs. It also includes accepting local methods of construction. Respecting a culture means listening to how and why things are done a certain way and not assuming that we know better.

Principles

1. Life and individual religious beliefs are sacred and respected.
2. We value customs and traditions.
3. Our role is to provide support, friendship, material, and guidance to help the people of the colonias resolve problems. Our role in the lives of U.S. families is to facilitate a meaningful relationship with the people of the colonias that improves their spiritual life and promotes happiness.
4. Our focus is the colonia (neighborhood) and we work with the residents at the basic neighborhood level
5. The children of the colonias are our most valuable asset.
6. We exist to work in partnership with the people of the colonias by servicing their needs and within their guidelines.
7. People should be treated fairly and equitably in recognition of basic human dignity and as a means of enriching life.
8. Face to face encounters, through mission experiences, are the best way to accomplish our purpose and mission.

Method of Operations

Paper Houses is *advanced* charity. Never-ending improvement in the way we operate is a continual learning process and requires repeated evaluation of our methods, the people we serve and the institutions we support. Any charity can simply pass money to an orphanage or a food kitchen. We constantly evaluate programs and solicit advice and opinions from the community on a recurring basis.

Primarily, we are *searchers*. We search at the community level for ways we can fulfill our mission, establish goals, and create projects. We work with the people at the bottom. We work with individuals, families, churches, educators, neighborhood leaders, business people and government officials (in that order).

One Person's View:

"When people are hungry, we don't need a committee. We need a sandwich. And we need a plan for the people to get their own sandwiches tomorrow."

Methods of Operation

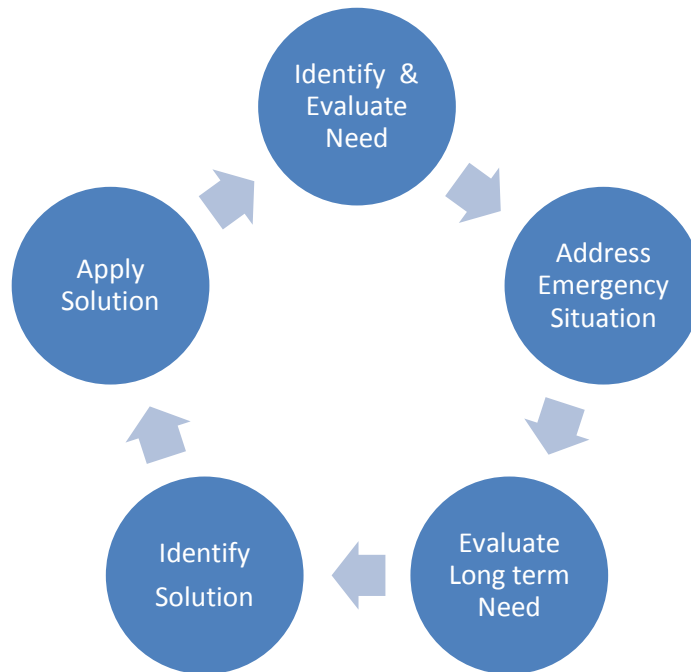
Never-ending evaluation of the need(s), services delivered, and the methods used means that we continue to improve as we learn what works best. Face to face encounters, through mission experiences, are the best way to accomplish our purpose and mission.

We pride ourselves on acting quickly.

We act within hours to begin helping. Our decisions are reached in streets of the colonias - not in an office. The board reviews expenditures and those decisions to confirm that the money is spent properly and in concert with our mission, values and goals.

The people in the field, the people we help, the board and our volunteers continually evaluate everything we do and continually search for ways to improve what we do.

We operate with the understanding that self-sufficiency and education are the keys to resolving many problems. Pride in self and pride in self accomplishment are important. We do not exist to support poor people. We exist to learn from the people of the colonias, help them through situations they cannot handle alone, and we exist to help the poor to escape poverty. Most of these people are already doing their part. They need education, small loans, encouragement, and a little help.



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Members of the Board, Volunteers and Contributors

Every suggestion, activity, goal, objective and plan must align with our mission, values, purpose and goals. We are searchers. We continually improve and expand as we find new information and better ways to work. If an issue is not in conflict with our purpose, mission, values and principles, the only limit is our imagination and ability to deal with an idea. Read the Sermon on the Mount and the works of mercy to better understand our goals.

We prioritize and focus on projects where there is a reasonable chance of success. We are fiscally responsible. However, we are not afraid to fail as we try new approaches.