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We are the adoptive parents of Rafael, a 7 year old boy born in Guatemala. Until the end of 2004 we lived in England. We are members of Guatemalan Family Association which regroups families whose children are adopted from Guatemala. When we moved to the US, it became easier for us to travel to Guatemala and we decided to do so and visit Behrhorst in November 2005. That was our first trip back together with our son Rafael. We met with Marily Giron and Mario Lopez. They took us to visit the hospital as well as the community of San Antonio.

When we reached San Antonio we were welcomed by representatives who had been waiting for us since 9:30 in the morning. It was 2 p.m. We apologized and felt very sorry. They were all smiling and eager to share their life experience with us. They wanted to demonstrate to us how efficient the help they receive is. We visited several houses where we could see the actual benefits of BPD's contribution: Onil stove, grey water filter, running water, emergency fund, school. Having visited BPD we have now a proof that our modest contribution does make a difference for the people of Guatemala. The various programs that BPD organizes are very down to earth and respond to the actual needs of the communities. The people who manage these programs do it together with the people of the community and we have the feeling of "driven from inside" with some help from outside. It is very important that people control their own destiny. This will naturally lead in the long term to a durable improvement.

Having seen that our small contribution can make a difference has convinced us to carry on. We were also impressed to see how these people are willing to make changes and improve their own lives. As well as being grateful to BPD they were also proud and rightly so of their own achievements. This will no doubt have an impact on other communities who have not made the step yet.

