

## **Save the Children**

### **Delivering Success for Native American Children in Rural New Mexico**

Since 2006, more than 3,000 Native American children have benefitted from a unique partnership between the non-profit organization Save the Children, Native American communities, and the State of New Mexico, funded by a mix of state Indian Education Funds and private contributions.

Through this literacy-intensive program, students improve core skills necessary for life-long success through education. They are also gaining access to culturally focused books, stories, and other benefits. Finally, all students participate in regular physical activity and nutritious snacks essential for health bodies.

#### **Current Partner Schools:**

Ashiwi Elementary  
Church Rock Academy  
Crownpoint Elementary  
Cubero Elementary  
Dowa Yalanne Elementary  
San Diego Riverside Charter  
Thoreau Elementary  
Tohatchi Elementary  
Twin Lakes Elementary

#### **Key to Success: Strong Partnership and Local Ownership**

The formula for success is combining the best of local knowledge and experience with national expertise, program design, and evaluation. All nine current programs are partnerships with local schools serving Native American children. Tutors, Literacy Coordinators, and all other on-site program staff at each location are hired locally and encouraged to bring their own perspectives, creativity, and energy. This local strength is combined with training, expert program design, technical assistance, and evaluation from Save the Children. The combination is a winning result:

- Targeted struggling readers are making critical gains. Over 60% of all participating children achieve annual literacy gains equivalent to four extra months of school.
- Children are healthier. All participating children receive a healthy snack and a half hour of fun vigorous physical activity every day.
- Currently this partnership supports 36 on-site school staff who are locally hired. These positions are mostly paraprofessionals who can use this opportunity to begin a career in education.
- School libraries grow with new books and technology. Over \$36,000 of books were provided to the schools this year including culturally-targeted materials.

#### **Supporting the Indian Education Act**

Native American children have a wide variety of different needs and rich histories, which is why hiring locally is critical for each program. That is also why a portion of funding for books is dedicated specifically to culturally-designed materials. Bringing in local storytellers, incorporating local traditions, and other steps are being made at sites as well. In partnership with each school, Save the Children has worked to improve the fit to the Indiana Education Act, but more improvements will continue. Just last year, legislators added a requirement to partner with the Indian Education Division (IED) of the state

Public Education Department on a new plan for further steps. IED has been involved in this partnership from the start and we strongly support this new step--the process is well underway.

**Leveraging a Smart Investment:**

The schools in our partnership receive more in funding than the state provides each year for this program. *How is this possible?*

Save the Children has been able to raise private contributions, much of it from outside the state, to invest in these communities. However the states funding is critical—national fundraising is not possible without this demonstrated in-state investment. Under the current partnership, Save the Children provides one dollar directly to the state for these programs in exchange for ever dedicated dollar of state funds. In 2010, the total program cost \$800,000, with just half the funding provided by the state.

**A History of Commitment:**

Save the Children is proud of our history partnering with Native American communities and supporting Native American children in the southwest for more than five decades. Save the Children's presence in the Southwest dates from the time of the Great Navajo Blizzard of 1948 and includes assistance to children in dozens of rural communities in Arizona and New Mexico.

**For more information please contact:**

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