



KEEP BOOKS® & LIBRITOS MIOS™ at The Ohio State University

Outreach and Engagement

Helping children everywhere discover the joy of reading.



What are KEEP BOOKS?

KEEP BOOKS:

- ☑ Are developed, written, and leveled by educators at The Ohio State University to help children learn effective reading strategies and to encourage reading at home.
- ☑ Help parents become involved in developing a child’s love of reading and in reinforcing beneficial early reading skills.
- ☑ Provide a way for schools, districts, and child care organizations to send books home with kids to keep.

About KEEP BOOKS Outreach and Engagement

KEEP BOOKS has participated in many projects designed to reach out to the Ohio State community, the Columbus area, and organizations throughout the world. We hope to continue to increase these efforts by partnering and becoming involved with other projects and organizations in outreach.

Here are some examples of the many projects through which the program has distributed both KEEP BOOKS and Libritos Míos (Spanish KEEP BOOKS) to children.

Local teacher uses KEEP BOOKS® to extend a Heart to Honduras

When Becky Armstrong and her daughter, a senior in high school, traveled to Cancias, Honduras, they had no idea that a life-changing experience awaited them. Part of a group from the Upper Arlington United Methodist Church in Columbus, OH, the two traveled to the small community with a program called Heart to Honduras. In one trip, a team of surgeons and doctors from the United States treated over 1,700 patients, while people like Armstrong touched the lives of many more.

The major objective of the trip was to provide medical attention to those in Honduras who would not receive it otherwise. As she traveled along, supporting these efforts, Armstrong was also able to help get books into the hands of young children with the help of a literacy program at The Ohio State University called KEEP BOOKS®.



Armstrong and her daughter traveled with the medical team and provided activities for children outside the clinic. As they waited for medical treatment or for their loved ones, Armstrong sought a way to alleviate their fear or anxiety. Being a teacher, she understood the importance of reading in the lives of these young children. Through her years in education, she had become familiar with KEEP BOOKS, a program that aims at getting appropriate books into the hands of young children. For the Spanish-speaking children of Honduras, Libritos Míos, or Spanish KEEP BOOKS, were a perfect fit. She provided Libritos Míos for each child at the clinic and several curious children from the surrounding community.



The children were thrilled with the books, and she was surprised by how well they could read them to her. Though Armstrong speaks very little Spanish, she was given a list of different phrases that would be valuable throughout the journey. One just happened to be “Read it to me.” She would ask the children to read her the KEEP BOOKS in Spanish and they would happily comply.

It was not long before she could see the interaction the children had with parents, grandparents,

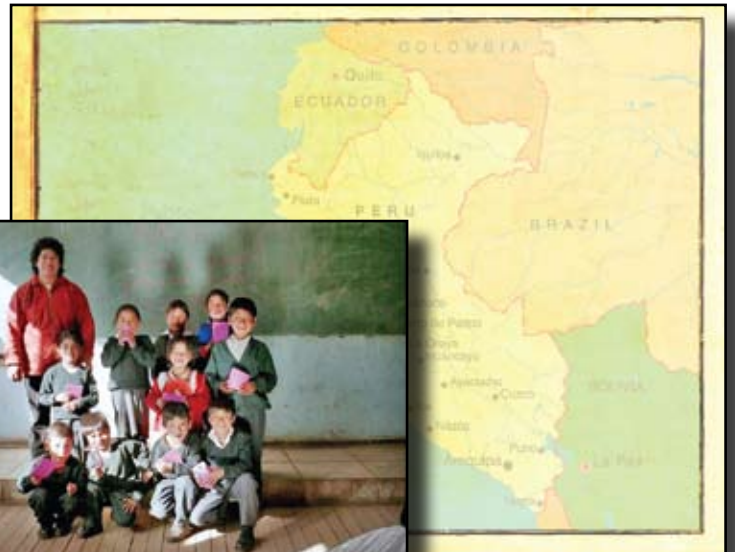


and other relatives while reading the books. Parents seemed to be thrilled with KEEP BOOKS as well. Armstrong had also taken several KEEP BOOKS in English. One man in particular was attempting to read every word in English. “I was teaching him some English and he was teaching me some Spanish,” she said.

Armstrong said the trip was an experience neither her nor her daughter would soon forget. “We grew very attached to them [the children], even with the language barrier,” Armstrong said.

KEEP BOOKS Go to Peru

A group from the Columbus area traveled Huancavilica, Peru with the mission of outreach through improvement in the quality of education. As part of this effort, the group brought KEEP BOOKS into the lives of approximately 250 children in 3 schools. After dusk, a single bulb lit the room in the school as the children struggled to read their books and the board. The group helped to shed a little light into the lives of these children through the lessons they taught the children in Spanish. Libritos Míos, Spanish KEEP BOOKS, provided a great tool for supplementing their activities.



KEEP BOOKS provides small comfort for children affected by Hurricane Katrina



KEEP BOOKS were distributed at Hillsboro Elementary School in Hillsboro, Texas to approximately 375 children that were relocated in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Hillsboro Elementary received a number of students from Louisiana whose families were housed at a nearby Baptist campground. This campground served as a temporary home for approximately 500 people evacuated from various Louisiana communities. The school collected clothing, bedding, and school supplies for the new students that were relocated to Hillsboro. Additionally, it prepared kits for the parents of these students that included reading materials for both the parents and their children. Hillsboro Elementary strived to provide parents and children with a “wonderful escape into literature during an awful time.”



Columbus soldiers use KEEP BOOKS to help children learn English in war-torn Iraq



Columbus soldiers stationed just north of Baghdad at Camp Taji, Iraq, go beyond what most would consider their demanding daily military duties. United States soldiers regularly travel to schools that are now trying to regain a sense of normalcy in war-torn areas to bring them much needed school supplies and support. KEEP BOOKS recently began to make a small contribution to this effort by providing books for distribution to Iraqi children. These children have started to learn small amounts of English as part of their lessons. KEEP BOOKS will help them begin to learn the language while giving them a small glimpse of American culture.

KEEP BOOKS helps Ohio State Human Ecology students discover that learning and literacy know no boundaries

While most college students traveled to a sunny hot spot for spring break, Erin Westlake spent her time off on a trip that she feels changed her whole outlook on life. For the second time, Westlake traveled with the College of Human Ecology and donated her time to children in struggling parts of the world. “This experience has been another chance for me to see life through a new perspective,” said Westlake, “It has also allowed me to see alternative career paths. Life can be so streamlined, everyone following similar paths, but this doesn’t have to be the case. This trip opened my eyes to an international field of opportunities that I hadn’t considered before.”



Last year, Westlake traveled to Tijuana, Mexico. This year, she enrolled in a unique course offered jointly by the College of Human Ecology and College of Engineering at The Ohio State University. This course, Honduras Service-Learning Experience, opened students’ eyes to information that could not be learned solely in the classroom.

Seventeen students traveled to the Montana de Luz orphanage near Nueva Esperanza, Honduras on March 18-25 as a service trip. Their goal was to make life a little brighter for the children in Montana de Luz, who are all living with HIV or AIDS. Many of these children became orphaned after losing one or both parents to the disease.

The students donated their individual talents to the cause. While engineering students worked to update the orphanage’s water quality, electrical system, water irrigation, and computer lab, human ecology students designed an on-site preschool area and curriculum. They also traveled to several schools in the area, visiting and reading with children. The students collected supplies for the preschool through donations and developmental funding for the college.

KEEP BOOKS, small books designed by educators at Ohio State for young children to read and keep as their own, were one of several resources the group used to work with the Honduran children. KEEP BOOKS, a non-profit literacy program in the College of Education, has partnered with the College of Human Ecology to provide Libritos Mios, or Spanish KEEP BOOKS, for the students in the program for the past two years. Children in the orphanage and schools were able to read with Ohio State students and were then given books to take home and keep.

“Sitting with a child and sharing a story is very powerful,” Westlake said. “The children were quick to grab a book and find a lap. When they were through





with one story, they would find another. They were so excited to be sharing this experience with us. It was a way to form a relationship with a child you hadn't known before. I think I had every book read to me at least once or twice!"

With the merge of the College of Human Ecology with the College of Education, Galloway sees promise in getting more students involved in the program. While space at the orphanage does not permit a greater number of students over spring break, Galloway is considering a trip at a different time of year.

Ohio State students left their mark on Montana de Luz in many ways. They made sure that daily needs were met like clean water and electricity. Likewise, they gave those at the orphanage the things that all children deserve—smiles on their faces and books in their hands.

KEEP BOOKS partners with Ohio State's Recreation and Physical Activity Center to create a take-home book program at Camp Recky

Children that attended Camp Recky at The Ohio State University's Recreation and Physical Activity Center were able to continue reading long after the school bells had stopped ringing for the year. Camp Recky provided a wonderful way for children to play, learn, and have fun during their summer vacation. KEEP BOOKS helped to make reading part of the fun by providing



books for all children ages 5-8 to read at camp and then to take home to keep. Each Friday, the students were given a new book to add to their home library. By the end of the summer, each child had 10 books of his or her own.

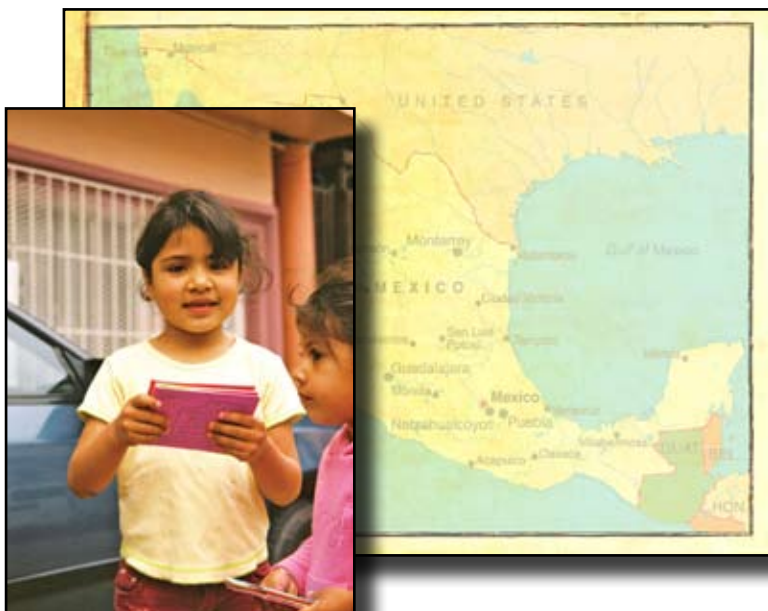


KEEP BOOKS south of the border



College of Education and Human Ecology students spent their Spring break in an orphanage in Tijuana reaching out to families and children in need. Part of their efforts involved providing the gift of reading to children in the orphanage and the surrounding impoverished community with KEEP BOOKS. Students read *Libritos Míos*, Spanish KEEP BOOKS, with the children and then gave them the books to keep as their own.

KEEP BOOKS were also included with donations of clothing, food, hygiene products, toys, books, and school supplies. These donations were put into kits that were distributed to expectant mothers and families in the impoverished areas in Tijuana.



We would like to continue efforts like these and expand our network to help more children discover the joy of learning to read!

