**Our Family:**

**"Youthful Strength - Youth are the motor for community development**"

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*Nuestro Diario*

Today we celebrate the International Day of Youth. This year's slogan is "Make yourself see, make yourself hear", emphasizing the importance of the youth population in society.

Juan Enrique Quiñónez, a Youth Development specialist for the United Nations Children's Fund explains that it is evident that there is a lack of attention to youth, especially between the ages of thirteen and nineteen years old.

"Guatemala has the highest rate of children outside of the school system, evidence of a country with few opportunities. If children do not complete secondary school, their future will have limitations for finding dignified work," emphasizes Quiñónez.

Juan Pablo Romero, director of the Association Los Patojos, adds that through comprehensive social education and healthy entertainment for adolescents, they can discover and better their own lives, if necessary.

"The youth that possess confidence, good judgment, and opportunities in every sense of the word, will be a fulfilled and coherent adult that respects his/her history, country, and future generations," states Romero.

*"I study in the morning and in the afternoon I have dance class, that I enjoy very much because it allows me to express myself through the movements. Mi dream is to be an preschool teacher to teach children in a fun way."*

Katherine Beltrán

13 Years Old

6th Grade

*"This year I didn't study because there was no space in the institute, but I work as a caretaker, cleaning properties and collecting trash. The Police will stop and search you just by the way you dress but not because you are committing a crime. This is not fair."*

Josue Solís

17 Years Old

Worker

*"I am a DJ. This year I will graduate and I chose this profession because I can find a job anywhere. I also like theatre and I am specializing in juggling. With juggling I can channel my energy and reflect upon who I am. I am happy because I found a special place for youth."*

Henry Godínez

18 Years Old

Aspiring Accountant (needs to get in to the University)

*"Sport is a way to challenge ourselves positively, for this reason I want to be a Physical Education teacher. I am currently practicing fencing at the Federation, because I have the opportunity to do so. But we still lack the spaces where we can invest all of our energy."*

Daniel López

14 Years Old,

7th Grade

*"I study in the mornings, mi favorite classes are languages and natural sciences. The community needs places where we can play freely. This is why I want to be a politician, to protect the children and youth so that they have a safe space."*

Ángel Valle

15 Years Old

7th Grade

*"My passions are dance and theatre. I study and practice in the afternoons. If people see you in a breakdancing competition they applaud you. If they see you practicing in the central plaza, they see you as a delinquent or drug addict. I have my mother's support, this why I strive to be the best."*

Yorman Vega

16 Years Old,

8th Grade

[Boxes]

900,000 Youth are outside of the school system

6.7 Million are children and youth younger than 18 years old.

2.7% Are indigenous from the Mayan, Xinca, and Garífuna (Afro-Central American) cultures.

*"I live with my mom and four siblings. I am the youngest. On top of going to school, in the afternoons I invest my time in painting and dance. I feel like I have found my hidden talents."*

Jessica Asturias

12 Years Old

6th Grade

*"I like to read, math, theatre, and poetry. When I am older I want to be a surgeon. I know that I will achieve it with the help of my mom, my bother, and with the will and determination to reach my goal."*

Evelyn Pichiyá

11 Years Old

5th Grade