



**"I missed it when you weren't coming.
When you weren't here, it was kinda boring.
We kept saying we wish you would come back."**

- Kylicia and Kourtney, sisters who attend Story Garden in Gamerco, outside of Gallup, NM

We have all missed being with other people this past year, often wishing that others could come back to see us. These young Street Library (called Story Garden in some places) participants are not alone in that feeling, but they experience the impact of that boredom and loneliness in some of the most severe ways. Isolation is one aspect of poverty that families face even when pandemic conditions are not in effect, and this past year of increased restrictions on movement, public places, and safe ways to be with others has made it worse for children in these situations.

"You can do different activities every Friday. We might never have done it before and it might be fun. We don't do those activities at school and at home. ... It's fun doing art because you can make your own creation. You can paint anything that you want to. You can create anything. You can make your own imagination." - Kiara

Street Library breaks this isolation. It gives children and their families opportunities to be creative, to imagine beyond a daily reality that can be unjust, and most importantly to connect with others.

Adopt an ATD Fourth World Street Library!
Connect and engage with children's
imagination through these difficult times.

"I like to meet a lot of friends and make friends. This is the best day ever."

- Fatima, Story Garden participant in Brownsville, Brooklyn, NY

"I like Story Garden because you can play with friends, you can make crafts and paint. It is super fun just to talk with your friends."

-Vera

With so many uncertainties this year, it was important to pay attention to the insights and wisdom of children for how to get through difficult times. Taporí activities allowed children to share their hopes and dreams with others by mailing drawings and messages to those they could not meet. Safely run Story Gardens restarted in the summer, immediately providing a way to reconnect with families cut off from community and support over many months. Parents knew their children needed the interaction, learning, and creativity they find at Story Garden, and asked ATD Fourth World teams to work out with them how to restart the program. Children were excited to see the facilitators, and told them that friendship and kindness, learning and creativity, safety and play are the crucial pieces of Story Garden.

"I like when you bring toys and the big blocks. ... When you're not here, me and my friend just walk around to the park all by ourselves, until a dog bit him. That's why we don't go anymore."

- Paxton

"I like doing the activities. I like the books. I love Story Garden and that's the only way that keeps me happy. When I come from school, I ask 'Hey Grandma, are we going to Story Garden?'"

- Brandi



While the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way Story Gardens happen for now, it has not stopped Story Garden, or changed the founding principles of learning and building with people in the community, prioritizing those who are most on the edges. In the year ahead a mobile Story Garden will continue to develop, reaching families with educational and creative experiences in remote areas of Northwest New Mexico and Navajo Nation. In Brownsville, Brooklyn, expanded partnerships, community outreach and participatory evaluation will impulse the Story Garden and its community impact.

By adopting a Street Library, you're helping ATD Fourth World connect with families and children who need this opportunity for development and growth more now than ever before. Thank you!

Here are a few ways your contribution will make a difference:

\$50 contributes to art materials for one weekly Story Garden in New York City or New Mexico (**\$100** contributes to one in each place!)

\$200 covers the printing cost of a high quality educational kit for 100 children

\$500 helps with travel expenses and a newly equipped mobile Story Garden vehicle to visit families living 2-3 hours outside of town in New Mexico

\$1000 covers the monthly stipend for a full-time team member facilitating Story Garden



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