

Guatemala Program Update

The Guatemala Program has been undergoing some challenges at Adoptions Together due to several reasons. Guatemala's adoption system will need to undergo numerous structural changes to comply with the Hague Inter-Country Adoption Treaty, and much work is being done to craft new international adoption laws and procedures. In addition, the US Department of State is warning families to carefully consider the risks of a Guatemalan adoption due to potential fraud and is closely scrutinizing every adoption case. Thirdly, factions with the Guatemalan government are against international adoption. Most agencies are reporting new regulations being unevenly enforced, much longer waiting times for families to finish different stages in the process, and greater frustration for families.

Adoptions Together made the decision to close the program to new applications in March as we see how these different factors play out in

country and to focus our resources on helping current families complete their adoptions. We recognize how difficult adopting a child from Guatemala is right now and how much families are struggling. The Team is closely watching the situation, and we have confidence that all families presently in the program will be successful in bringing their children home. Anne Polasko, the Guatemala Program Manager, continues to travel to Guatemala on a monthly basis, bringing information and pictures back from each trip. Our attorneys and facilitators completely understand what is at stake and are focusing all of their energies on completing cases as expeditiously as possible given the longer waits, new regulations, and closer scrutiny from the US Department of State.

If you encounter a waiting Guatemalan family please know they need some extra TLC during this difficult time.



The following families came home between July and December, 2006:

Adoptive Parents	Welcomed into their home	From
Scott & Deborah	Tomas	Guatemala
Ken & Elaine	Lydia	Guatemala
Julia & Michael	Carlos	Guatemala
Debra	David	Guatemala
Noah & Victoria	Max	Guatemala
Frank & Melissa	Zachary	Guatemala
Luis & Mary	Brielle	Guatemala
Michael & Jean	Sebastian	Guatemala