



2300 Montana Avenue, Ste 301
Cincinnati, OH 45211

(513) 661-7000
info@coeduc.org

www.cooperativeforeducation.org

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty through Education

Hello!

We are grateful you and your family are considering Cooperative for Education's **Heritage Tour**. With 20 years' experience bringing travelers to Guatemala, we believe that time spent there is an incredible way to connect to her culture and people. This is even more true for those already deeply connected to Guatemala through adoption.

We are busy designing a fun family vacation for you, but we also want to help you develop or strengthen your love for Guatemala, appreciate her culture, give back to the people living there, and even heal, if necessary. In order to do so, we strongly encourage you to consider the following topics and discuss them with your co-parent (if applicable) and child or children. **You know your child best, and you are the best person to prepare him or her for this experience.**



- What **emotions** are you feeling right now about returning to Guatemala? How do you expect to feel once you are there? Will you be happy, sad, excited, wary, or (most likely) some mix of everything?
- Many people in Guatemala live in extreme **poverty**. For example: living in a house made of rusting aluminum sheets with no electricity or ventilation, cooking over an open fire (breathing in the smoke), sleeping on the floor or in a twin bed with multiple family members. Some families have no toilet and instead use a latrine or worse. During the tour, you will most likely see people—even children—begging in the street. Imagine meeting these people or families. What do you think you or your family members would think, do, and feel?
- What will it be like to be **surrounded by people who look like your child(ren)**, being in the majority for perhaps the first time? How will your child react if people assume he or she speaks Spanish?
- This trip is not designed to be a searching or reunification trip, so we won't be providing time during the trip for searching for or meeting with biological or foster families. If this is something you plan to do, we ask that you extend your trip after the tour (*not* before). But you or your child(ren) may overhear other travelers on the tour talking about their plans to meet up with **searchers, biological parents, or foster parents** after the tour. How will you and your child(ren) feel about and react to these conversations?

Thank you for taking the time to carefully consider the highs and lows you and your family might experience on a Heritage Tour. We look forward to hosting you in Guatemala!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leslie Jenkins Reed".

Leslie Jenkins Reed

International Service Coordinator

Cooperative for Education

leslie@coeduc.org | (513) 661-7000 ext. 115