



ANNUAL REPORT 2019



#StrongerThanHIVStigma

About CHOIDS

Caring for Haitian Orphans with AIDS, Inc. (CHOIDS), was conceived out of the knowledge that human life is fleeting. With a little work and a lot of compassion, our organization was created to house and care for HIV+ orphaned children in Haiti and employ HIV+ women as "mothers." If we don't care for them, who will?

We carry out our mission by offering a home environment to HIV+ children that have lost their parents or have been abandoned. We provide basic necessities, education, medicine and opportunities that the children in our care may not have had otherwise. Most importantly, we provide a space where they can simply be kids!

What We Do

Our mission is to continually enhance the quality of life of HIV+ orphaned children and women through education and care in a family-centered environment.

We **PROTECT** the children and young adults in our care from potential harm by offering them a safe place to live and go to school.

We **PROVIDE** necessities and opportunities for the children of CHOIDS to help them lead healthy and meaningful lives.

As our children age, we **PREPARE** them for life's next steps through education and skill-building so they may have successful transitions into adulthood.

A Note From Our Founder



Dear Friends of CHOAIDS,

Thank you for having supported our children. Last year was yet another hard year for many people living in Haiti, but we thank God for keeping our kids and staff safe. One of our staff members told me, *"You know what, with all the violence and political instability, we, Haitians are living on 24-hour periods."* That was all too real for me to hear because I lived through such moments, growing up in Haiti. I'm grateful that God has put me in the position to help a small number of HIV+ children and create jobs for a small number of HIV+ women offering them a means to feed their families. I cannot imagine what their lives would be like if CHOAIDS did not exist, nor can I can imagine CHOAIDS without them. And we have you to thank for that.

Again, thank you for your continued support. Please remember that we are a group of volunteers and that all the funds you give go toward the care of our children and monthly stipends for our staff. Know that we stretch every dollar to meet the needs of the children, and a little goes a long way. So we invite you to join our journey and engage in this good work to support our children as they fight HIV disease and stigma. Partner with us and watch as our children evolve into wonderful human beings.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie F. Denis Luque'.

Marie F. Denis Luque

Founder & Executive Director



In Summary

2019 was an innovative and productive year for CHOIDS. We focused on staff development, increased organizational structure/policy development, provided sustainable educational/vocational preparation for our children, and maintained the overall health and wellbeing of our children. With the support of our generous and faithful sponsors and engaged partnerships, we continue to support our children to discover their passions, skills, and purpose in the community. By empowering our staff and children, we have created safe spaces for people living with HIV to live, grow, learn, and be loved.

In 2019, we partnered with Bien-Etre Sociale (IBESR) to ensure the proper files are documented and up-to-date. IBESR, or social services in Haiti, has assisted us in structuring a safe environment for our children. To align with IBESR standards, we (1) increased on our security measures (e.g. hiring a security guard); (2) are developing and updating organizational policies and procedures; and (3) promoting staff training opportunities for professional development. While we made impactful strides, we continue to face barriers that challenged our strategies. Collaborating with the IBESR is positively reinforcing our organization's resiliency.

We are forever thankful for our supporters. Thank you to our new supporters and our long time friends who have sustained our efforts for 10+ years. Your support has reached the lives of HIV-positive children, that now have the opportunity to live full and healthy lives. You all are truly blessings to CHOIDS. As we move forward with a new year, we continue to keep our vision alive to create a stigma free environment where HIV-positive women, children, and families can enjoy opportunities to work, receive quality healthcare, and live meaningful lives.



Jordany



Harold



Zachary & Jordany

Congratulations & Accomplishments

Three Cheers for the Graduates!

In 2019, Zachary, Jordany, and Harold graduated from Centre Urgence Technique located in Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti! They were given the opportunity to learn technical window installment skills by one of our donors. Creating opportunities to invest in our young adults' life skills is one of our primary focuses as we begin to transition our older children out of the pediatric-focused care CHOIDS provides.

Education & Partnerships

We increased our staff this year and hired a math and physics tutor, a nurse, and welcomed a volunteer Florida State University undergraduate practicum student. We also partnered with two organizations based in California, *Chanje Movement*, and *Tongue Out*, a dental, medical, and vision care nonprofit.

Our children had several groups of visitors in 2019 who brought various donated items, including shoes, medical and hygiene supplies, and three new Chromebooks. Upon receiving the Chromebooks, we purchased internet access for the home to support the children's school-related research projects.

Finally, we are happy to report that **80 percent of our children passed their school exams**, and those who did not are receiving focused tutoring support for their learning development needs.

Mon Gen Mon

Mountains Beyond Mountains

Health

2019 year proved to be very challenging as a number of our children fell sick. Early in the year Oscar had a skin condition that related to his viral load. Richardson was diagnosed with a hernia, which required multiple surgeries and special treatment. Ruth C. had a psychiatric episode, and a number of the kids fell ill with skin infections (scabies, fungal infections, rashes). Edison had a reoccurring ear infection, but after seeing a specialist, they located and removed a bug from his ear. Fortunately, all of the children were able to receive care and are doing better, with occasional relapse. A number of the children have changed their anti-retroviral treatments as the previous therapies seem to (1) cause side effects and (2) are ineffective. A couple of the children continue to be closely monitored for infections, viral load suppression, and overall health.

Electricity

Stable electricity remains a challenge for the organization. In efforts to support having stable electricity, our sponsor, Michelle, purchased a generator, inverter, and batteries. Michelle also graciously donated fans, snacks, and a solar freezer.

Political Instability

Political unrest in the fall caused the children to miss close to 300 hours of school. The unrest has also limited accessibility to purchase household items and to travel. Despite the challenges, we are grateful that our children and staff remain safe.



Wilka

"FUN" RAISING

At CHOAIDS, we like to mix it up! Here are a few fun ways we raised funds to support our children and staff this year:

Coasters for Kids

In August of 2019, pediatrician, [former] board member and friend of CHOAIDS, Dr. Aimee Simpson, raised money while enjoying roller coaster rides with her family. Together, the Simpsons raised money and rode 87 wild rides!

#Giving Tuesday

Post Thanksgiving, Facebook hosts a matching fundraising event for the Tuesday following Black Friday, known as "Giving Tuesday." Each year, we connect with our community of supporters on Facebook to make the magic happen for our kids!

Mothers-to-Mothers

Caring for our children would not be possible without the dedication of our House Mothers. Leading up to Mother's Day, we hosted a campaign for donations to be made in honor of mothers in support of the CHOAIDS motherly caretakers.

How you Can Help

Hosting a virtual fundraiser is one of the easiest ways to help support CHOAIDS. Considering hosting a Facebook fundraiser for your next birthday, or collecting pledges for something you love doing!
(ie. \$ for miles hiked, miles biked, etc)



Marie (Executive Director), John (Board Member), and kids on a field trip.



The Simpson family enjoying Fury 325 at Carowinds.

The beauty of this work is watching how much and how quickly children can transform into healthy young adults right before your eyes. It just takes proper medication, consistent care and support plus a whole lot of LOVE.



2015



Esther



2019



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"Ton Ton"

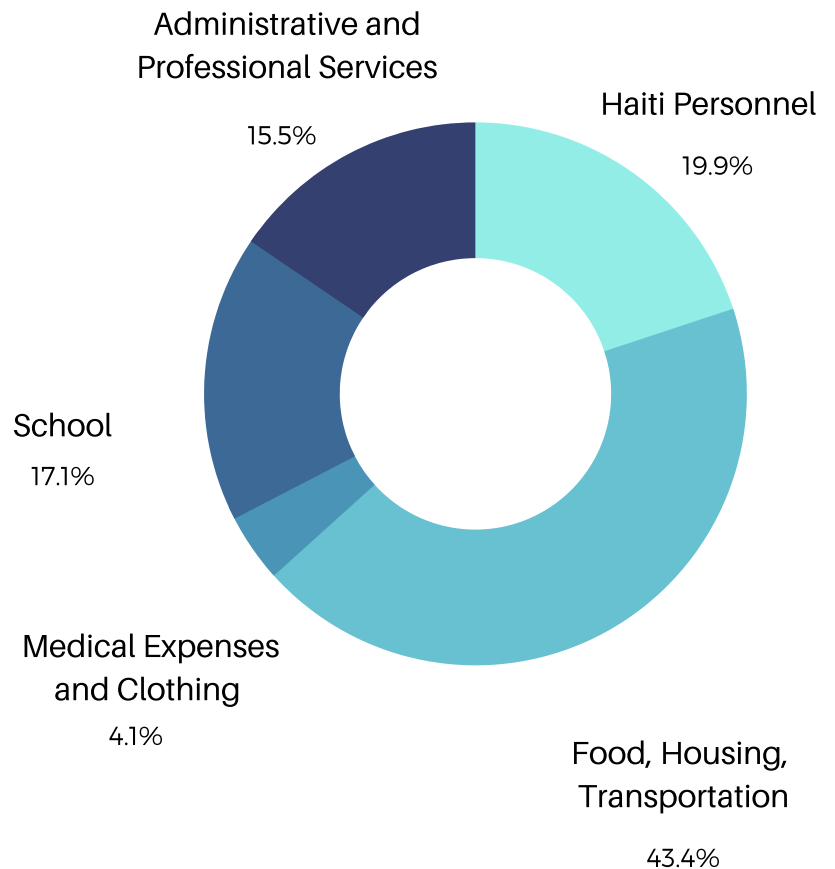


FINANCIAL REPORT

ANNUAL PRIMARY EXPENSES

Our Commitment to Transparency

Throughout the years, we have remained committed to promoting financial transparency. For CHO AIDS, every dollar counts and all donations are used to maximize the benefit for our children and young adults. Should you have questions regarding our financial status, we encourage you to review our latest 2018 tax returns on our website.



**Total 2019 Operational
Costs: \$133,106**

MEET OUR TEAM



Without our supportive, versatile, and gifted Haitian staff, our operations would not be possible. And what's more, many of our staff members are HIV+ as well. Working with us means a chance to do good work without dealing with stigma-induced slander in the workplace, a big win! Your contributions not only support HIV+ orphaned children, but also our much needed Haitian caretakers including our house mothers, social worker, program coordinator, nurse, driver, and security guard.

Approximately 20% of our annual budget is allocated to paying our Haitian staff.

Considering ways to help our organization grow and continue serving HIV+ children in Haiti? Here's more on **HOW TO...**

SHARE YOUR GIFTS

Financially giving is the most effective way to ensure our organization stays active. Contributing to our general fund (goes towards things like food and housing), or giving to our school fund (goes towards tuition, mandatory uniforms, and supplies) are great options and 100% tax deductible. Contributions can be securely made through **www.choaids.org** or mailed to **P.O. Box 5135, Tallahassee, FL 32314.**

HOST A FUNDRAISER

Fundraisers can be such a fun way to bring people together over a common cause. Consider hosting a fundraiser at your community church, school, or business. Our friends have raised support through events like candle and coffee sales, bike-a-thons, and concerts. For virtual and fun ideas reach out to us. We love a good brainstorm session!

TELL A FRIEND

As a volunteer-led organization, we rely heavily on word of mouth. If you like what you see here, we encourage you to help us spread our mission by sharing our story with your friends and family! Need a few digital or printed copies of a CHOIDS brochure for your organization? Just let us know!

VOLUNTEER TIME

We're always looking for volunteers! As the saying goes "many hands make a lighter load." Our current volunteer needs include web design/support, passionate public speakers, and administrators. Email us with your interests at **info@choaids.org** for more details. We'll work with you to fit your interests with our needs!

BECOME A SPONSOR

We cannot describe how impactful it is to sponsor a child. You can support a child for a monthly contribution of just \$35. Our capacity to sustain a robust sponsor package is limited, but we can send pictures and updates on the child you choose to sponsor. Email us to opt-in to receive pictures, click "donate" and select "sponsor a child" on our website to change a child's life.

AMAZON SMILE

Has quarantine been great for your relationship with Amazon? Through **Smile.Amazon.com** you can not only delight your mailman with daily deliveries to your doorstep, BUT also support CHOIDS with no added costs. Simply search "CHOIDS" and click to automatically support us with each subsequent purchase.

CHOIDS is now an approved **East Ohio Conference United Methodist Church Advance Special. UMC members are invited to send donations via your EOCUMC remittance form designated to CHOIDS fund #9922. Thank you!



Thank you for believing in our mission! We look forward to sharing our passion with you through another great year. We invite you to continue in our journey with us to fight HIV/AIDS stigma in Haiti while providing opportunities to the children, young adults and women we work with.

Plus, a HUGE thank you to our staff, board members, and collaborators for your dedication to our mission, your incredible work ethic, and ability to roll with the waves to meet the needs of the children in our care. A truly amazing team!

A few things we're focusing on in 2020:

- Welcoming at least two new children to the CHOAIDS family.
- Seeking more opportunities for our young adults to learn technical and professional skills.
- Implementing more efficient and cost-effective operational procedures.
- Broadening our scope of organizational partners and collaborators on-the-ground in Haiti as well as in the United States.
- Developing more opportunities to support HIV-related educational trainings.
- Recruiting for board membership and volunteer positions.
- Exploring homeschooling options as well as safe and fun extracurricular activities.
- Developing internal procedures and emergency management protocols.





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