



# Retail Partnership

## Understanding Compassion's Holistic Child Development Model

### WHAT IS HOLISTIC CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

Compassion cares for the whole child — mind, body, heart and spirit. Below we'll break down each of those areas, but this phrase will get you started — in clear, simple language. And here are some other ways to discuss Compassion's ministry to the "whole child":

- **Poverty is not simply a lack of money.** While physical poverty is devastating, spiritual, emotional, educational and relational poverty are also prevalent in the lives of children Compassion serves.
- While many organizations focus on only one aspect of poverty, Compassion focuses on the **full development** of the child, an approach that helps **release** children from poverty instead of merely sustaining them through it.
- Compassion works through local church partners to accomplish reaching the heart, soul, mind and spirit of children in poverty.

Here, you will find each of these areas of the whole child broken down and explained in detail.

### MIND

Caring for cognitive development, or the "mind" of a child, is a powerful tool in the fight against poverty. An educated child gains confidence in his or her own abilities and will be more likely to find a job and earn fair wages.

#### Compassion nurtures the mind through\*:

- formal education assistance, which includes helping to cover school fees, supplies and uniforms, as well as providing tutoring and after-school programs at Compassion-assisted child development centers;
- nonformal education, including life-skills and vocational training, to prepare children to succeed in their own environment and culture; and
- mind-stimulating activities, such as literacy classes, young journalist clubs, and craft and music workshops.

### BODY

Physical needs are what people first think of when you mention poverty. And it is true that a child in poverty has many physical ["body"] needs. In a world where 7.7 million children under the age of 5 die every year from largely preventable causes, physical care is indeed a priority.

#### Compassion nurtures the body through\*:

- access to regular medical checkups and medical care for children suffering from diseases or in medical emergencies;
- nutritional support — including snacks or meals at the center, food supplies for families, and medical care for children suffering from malnutrition;

- education on health, sanitation and hygiene; and
- family education, including teaching parents how to plant gardens, purify their drinking water, and administer oral-rehydration therapy to children suffering from dehydration.

### HEART

Social and emotional support, or "heart" support, of children is essential in defeating the lies of poverty these children have grown to believe. Many children we serve have held adult-level responsibilities for years and know little about healthy relationships or the joy of being a child. At the child development centers, Compassion staff work to provide a safe, stable environment where children can play, explore and develop healthy relationships.

#### Compassion nurtures the heart through:

- letter writing, both from the child to the sponsor and the sponsor to the child. These letters provide concrete evidence to a child that he or she is loved and cared about;
- providing a safe, stable environment where children can play, explore and develop healthy relationships with peers;
- teaching children basic social skills, including respect for others; and
- offering encouragement and praise to the children served in our programs.

### SPIRIT

Perhaps what sets Compassion apart the most is our attention to poverty of the "spirit." Compassion believes in doing more than simply meeting the physical needs of the poor. Poverty sends a defeating, painful message into the heart of a child that says, "You don't matter." Introducing children to their loving heavenly Father is the most powerful way to reverse this message. This is one of the reasons Compassion works exclusively through churches in the developing world — God's chosen instrument to bring hope to a hurting world and to deliver justice to the poor and oppressed.

#### Compassion nurtures the spirit by:

- presenting the gospel clearly, consistently and in a culturally-relevant and age-appropriate way to each child we serve;
- leading children in Bible studies, daily devotional times, worship and Christian education programs; and
- providing ways for older children to participate in service projects, enabling them to minister and see the gospel in action.