

Essay by Coby Brown
Zara's Ambassador

Zara's Center is an incredible program that provides a safe and nurturing environment for children who have lost one or both of their parents to HIV/AIDS. I have volunteered at Zara's Center for many years and even though I live on a different continent, technology has made it possible for me to connect with the kids at the Center through Zoom calls. I speak with the kids about all sorts of things like school, sports and what we do for fun. My goal is to encourage them and teach them about life in America. It turns out they teach me too.

I am uplifted by their positive attitude and compassion for other people. Despite challenges in their lives, they are brave and courageous and face the future with optimism and confidence. They study hard at school and have ambitions to be successful in life. They appreciate what they have and work hard to accomplish their goals.

I have formed a special friendship with one teenager in particular named Peacemaker. I was able to meet him in person during a visit to Zimbabwe in December 2018 and we remain in touch through periodic Zoom calls. Peacemaker was a student at Zara's Center and now contributes as a counselor. He is an extremely impressive person and we share a lot in common. I have learned so much from Peacemaker and all of the kids at Zara and I have been able to apply these lessons to my everyday life in America.



Peacemaker and Coby in Dec. 2018



Peacemaker and Coby planting a tree at Zara's Center together.