

# These Are Our Children

Saving the Children of Kenya, one dream at a time



These Are Our Children is a one-hour documentary film that reveals how the devastating effects of poverty, HIV/AIDs, and violence on Kenyan children are successfully being reduced through local grassroots interventions.

Known for its exquisite natural beauty and safari adventures, Kenya has recently experienced violent conflicts, poverty, famine, and disease, putting millions of Kenyans at risk. Kenya's children are especially susceptible to the effects of these adversities because they often face them

adversities because they often face them alone. More than one million children in Kenya have been affected by the HIV-AIDs crisis. Many are taking care of sick parents and siblings; thousands more are living with the virus themselves. These children have also had to deal with recent episodes of violent national conflicts: in 2006 inter-ethnic and gang violence resulted in the brutal deaths of thousands.

The post-election violence of 2008 involved mass killings and the displacement of thousands of families from their homes into hastily erected camps, where many still live. And over 300,000 children live on the streets, stealing, begging, and prostituting themselves for food and money. The physical effects of disease and violence are apparent to those wanting to help rebuild these young lives, but the psychological affects to these children's minds and hearts go largely unnoticed and unfortunately, unaddressed.

The infamous settlements of Nairobi are home to millions of people living in tin and cardboard shacks that lack sewer systems and running water. Children sleep on cardboard covered by plastic bags. If they're lucky, they can earn the equivalent of thirty cents through begging, doing dirty and dangerous work for street vendors that will allow them to eat once a day.



If they're very lucky, they won't be beaten, raped, or killed. But in the midst of this poverty, teachers, parents, volunteers, and community organizers work for nothing, or a small stipend to bring education and emotional support to the children of their communities.

***These Are Our Children*** does not ignore the overwhelming problems Kenyan children face on a daily basis. Yet, through hope and hard work, we learn from the children and the adults they work with that schools and grass-root organizations are creating a future in which all children can realize their dreams to be teachers, pilots, doctors, generals, and world-famous soccer players.

## About the filmmaker Joanne Hershfield



Joanne Hershfield has produced numerous social documentaries over the past twenty years. Her films have screened at international film festivals and copies are held in over 200 university libraries in the United States, Canada, and Australia as well as by non-profit agencies. Among her films are Women in Japan: Memories of the Past, Dreams of the Future which challenges stereotypes about about what it means to be a woman in Japan; The Gillian Film, a moving portrait of an exceptional young woman who works at a local veterinary clinic, rides horses, takes dance classes, and is developmentally disabled; and Men Are Human, Women Are Buffalo, a compelling film that combines interviews and shadow puppetry to tell five moving stories about domestic violence in Thailand. Hershfield is a member of New Day Films.

***These Are Our Children*** is distributed by New Day Films.

For information on ordering DVDs please visit [www.newday.com](http://www.newday.com), or call **1-888-367-9154**.

RUNNING TIME: 55 min High Def Video

PRODUCER: JOANNE HERSHFIELD, PERENNIAL FILMS

SCREENINGS: ATHENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, APRIL 2011

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