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**ChildFund Partners with 'Gene Simmons Family Jewels'
KISS rock star travels to Zambia to meet several children he sponsors through
ChildFund**

Richmond, VA – June 19, 2012 –Gene Simmons, star of "Gene Simmons Family Jewels" and leader of the rock band KISS, recently traveled to Zambia to meet several of the more than 140 children he sponsors through ChildFund.

The visit became the premise for an episode of the TV series that airs June 25 on A&E. Plot synopsis: Gene thinks he's traveling to Africa to go on safari with his wife Shannon; however, she has other ideas in mind. Shannon has arranged for Gene to meet 12 of his sponsored children.

"We originally planned to go to Africa on a Safari, but Shannon had bigger plans, which ended up being a better experience than I ever imagined," Gene said upon finishing the trip.

"Even though we came here with a TV show, none of that seemed to matter anymore after we got to Zambia," said Gene.

Shannon added, "Poverty and starvation... once you see it in person, you can't walk away."

And they didn't. Gene and Shannon brought school supplies, soccer balls, backpacks and clothing. Shannon even gave one young woman the shoes off her feet.

During their time in Zambia, Gene and Shannon also met a young man, Edward, being raised by a single mother. Edward gave Gene a VIP tour of the village, including where he goes to pump water for his family and where he attends school. Gene plans to donate a house for Edward and his mom – one that is made of concrete and not earth.

It was a humbling experience from beginning to end. "It really makes you appreciate the little things," Shannon said. "I will waste less, spend less and appreciate more."

The trip to Africa, Gene said, "is a stark reminder that life doesn't treat everyone the same." Gene already is looking at other ways he can make a difference.

ChildFund supporters like Gene and Shannon help change those circumstances. Although the children didn't recognize Gene as a celebrity – even when he handed out KISS swag – he's a rock star in their eyes because he is their ChildFund sponsor.

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ChildFund International is a global child development and protection agency serving more than 13.5 million children and their family members in 31 countries. For more than 70 years, we have helped the world's deprived, excluded and vulnerable children survive and thrive to reach their full potential and become leaders of enduring change. As a member of ChildFund Alliance we create supportive environments in which children can flourish.

[To sponsor a child in need, visit the ChildFund website.](#)