

Story

My name is **Alejandra**, I am 10 years old and I live in the Neuva Esperanza neighbourhood in **Bolivia**.

The neighbourhood where I live is very messy, full of rubbish, with dogs that bite you and thieves in the streets. **It makes me sad because no one does anything to clean it up.**

At school, I don't have any friends, but I do have classmates. Some of them are mean to me. They hit me, pull my hair, and call me names, saying that I'm useless just because I can't read. They make fun of me, **which makes me sad, discourages me, and makes me even more shy.**

In class, when the teacher asked me to come to the board to read, I was frightened because I couldn't read, and I thought of what my classmates would say about me. One day, my mother came to my school and my teacher took her aside and yelled at her. It made me sad because **my teacher said, "Your daughter just isn't able to learn!"**

One day, my cousin invited me to go to **Tapori**. She told me that there, **we learn to read, speak up and make friends.**

On the first day, I was nervous to see new faces, but the Tapori children welcomed me as if they knew me.

In Tapori, the atmosphere is very friendly, but **I was still afraid to speak up and enjoy the activities** like the other children. The children and the Tapori leaders encouraged me to say what I think and to play like the others. **On that day something changed in me.**

In the group, I made friends and felt safe. Before, I thought that nothing I said mattered.

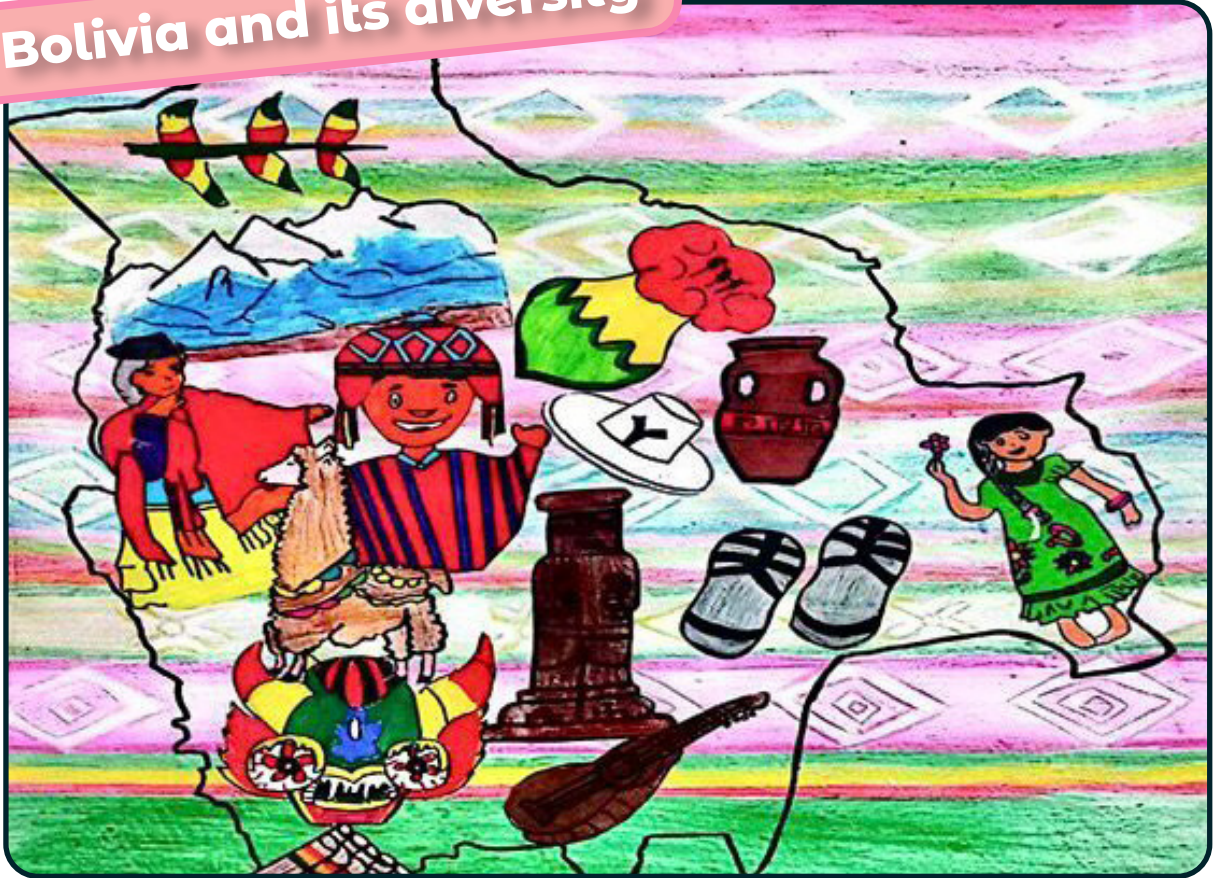
I discovered that in **Tapori, every idea counts.** I learned to pick up rubbish and not to make fun of others. I also understood **how special my mother is.** I had been hiding her away because I was ashamed of her. Now, I'm proud of her and I want her to come to my school.

Tapori taught me that I can do it too, and that **what I say counts.**

Now I'm going to tell other kids who are scared, **'Come to Tapori, you can do it too, what you say matters.'**»



Bolivia and its diversity



Bolivia stands out for its mix of cultures, seen through the different **traditions, music and dances** that are all part of the soul of its people.

On the picture we can see the **mixture of cultures**. There's a woman and a man wearing traditional clothes from the western region of Bolivia. The woman is wearing a skirt called a "pollera" and a shawl, the man is wearing a typical "camelid" wool costume, and the other woman is wearing traditional clothing from the eastern region. This illustrates **the variety of cultures** in Bolivia.

Regional symbols like the "charango", the "zampona", ceramics, and textiles all represent indigenous art and

