



International Adoption Guides, Inc.
A SOUTH CAROLINA Licensed Agency #100883001

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International Adoption Guides Children's Aid Project

*One hundred years from now...
It will not matter what my bank account was,
the sort of house I lived in,
or the kind of car I drove,
but the world may be different because
I was important in the life of a CHILD!*

Thank you for your inquiry into our sponsorship program, we hope that this information will provide you with everything you need to make your decision and you will soon become one of our many sponsor families!

This is a very rewarding program in many ways and one that offers several options of support and involvement on your part.

Our most popular program involves more contact with the child, in that you write letters of support to them and they write back. The children in this program are all younger and the money you give goes into an account for them to use upon leaving to get a head start in life. This program requires a monthly contribution of \$30.

Our second choice would be this same program, but for those that are not wanting the personal contact the first option offers. We look for families that just want to help a specific child and match them to one of the younger ones and or older ones where getting a letter from them is more difficult :-). This program requires a monthly contribution of \$30.

Our third option is for those that just want to help. IAG participates in the Mekele BOLSA's sponsor program which contributes \$15 per month to needy families. Families with children where without this support might have to give up their child for adoption. These families are carefully interviewed and managed to make sure the money is being used properly. If this option is the best for you, you can choose to sponsor one or more families, but no exchange of pictures or correspondence happens in this program.

All three options require a credit card to be on file for the automatic charge to be made each month. Unfortunately in order to keep our costs down, we cannot send a bill and or accept checks on a monthly basis. If you want to contribute via a personal check it is fine, but it will need to be for the year's costs in advance.

In option number one, the money you give goes directly to help a child get a head start in life after leaving the orphanage in which they currently live. As stated this program allows you to develop a personal relationship with your child, a child that desperately needs the support of an adult in their life. It is our hope that this relationship is the beginning of a lifelong friendship.

You see it is not really the money that is important to these children at this point in their lives; it is your letters of support that matter the most to them. The money will come into play later when they leave the orphanage, ready to start their lives. For the time being the money is placed into an individual account for each child in the program.

Your letters and contributions to *your* child will hopefully change their lives forever! The children in our sponsorship program are in the orphanage for a variety of reasons, poverty, family tragedy, etc. Many reasons, and again all are not adoptable for one reason or another. These children have survived in a world very different from our own, without the support and stability of a family. This is the reason they need our help and support. Together with your assistance, we will be able to help with their attitudes on life and education.

You might ask how much help can my \$360 per year be? The truth is that it will go a long way to help give them a good start when they leave the orphanage. College and or a trade school in both Ethiopia and Kazakhstan is usually free, but the costs of clothing and material is about \$200 per semester, very reasonable by US standards. This is what your money will do for these children, give them a good start and hopefully an education, and give them the opportunity to succeed in their lives. But remember this is not about the money; it is about a relationship of encouragement and support. It is this relationship that you will build with the child that will ultimately drive them in the right direction in their lives.

We ask that our sponsors commit to sponsoring a child for one year at least, however we feel you will develop a long lasting relationship with your sponsor child, and continue to sponsor them for many years to come. Certainly if it is your desire to stop after one year then you can, no problem, no guilt. We just hope this program becomes what it is designed to do, and that are able to ultimately help *your* children see a life beyond what they know. We want them to have dreams, and more importantly, we want to help them empower themselves to achieve their dreams of the future! Your friendship and encouragement will show your sponsored child that he or she is a valuable human being! And with that, the child has a chance to grow and develop a healthy mind and body!

Option two, is really the exact same as number one with the exception being we do not ask the sponsor parent to write, nor the child.

Option three as stated above involves helping families with children to enable them to keep the child and not give them up for adoption. There is no contact at all with this option, no pictures, no exchange of information. You can choose to sponsor as many families as you like at the total contribution of \$15 each per month.

Facts and about the Sponsorship Program

The children living in orphanages are sent into the world on their own when they are 16 to 18 years old. Most of them leave the orphanage without a trade or full education, and have no direction or family. For the most part they are completely alone when they walk out the doors of the only home they have known.

The budgets to support these children are very limited due to poor economic conditions overseas. In Kazakhstan, currently we are told that the budget to support the 400 children living in the orphanage housing is \$100,000 per year; this is only \$250 per child per year (less than \$1.00 per day to support them!).

The children in our program live in Uralsk, Kazakhstan in Zhas Dauren (Young plant in Kazakh) and in Mekele, Ethiopia in Fikre Center. There are over 400 children in Zhas Dauren at any given time and several dozen in Fikre Center.

The conditions in the homes include:

- ◆ There is limited health care or dental care provided to these children due to reduced financial resources.
- ◆ They have a community bathhouse where all of the children bath. This is some distance from the dorms, and they must of course walk there at all times during the year.
- ◆ The children live in groups, 18 to 20 per group. They have one director for each group and over 20 groups on the campus of Zhas Dauren.
- ◆ The children attend a school specifically designed for them.
- ◆ They eat in a community cafeteria. Due to the lack of funding the quality and nutritional value of these meals leave much to be desired.

Many of these children have lived in the orphanage system their entire lives, ineligible for adoption because parental rights have not been terminated. A few may have relatives that visit them from time to time, but have no permanent family member to care for them.

SPONSORSHIP GUIDE

CAN I CHOOSE THE CHILD I SPONSOR?

Unfortunately we have a waiting list of families wanting to sponsor a child, so the answer is no. You will be emailed with the next child we are able to add into the system to see if you would like to sponsor him or her. You can always say no and wait for the next child though.

HOW DO I GET TO KNOW MY SPONSORED CHILD?

As a sponsor, you will correspond with your child via letters, cards, and photographs. Your child may not write back as frequently as you might like since they are learning English and may not get the assistance they need to respond. In many instances the correspondences may be only a few letters per year from your child. But what is important is that your child hears from you!

HOW DO I WRITE TO MY CHILD?

When writing your letter, it is important to consider your child's environment and culture. Feel free to share information about your family, friends, and interests. However, it is best not write about the material things you own, since your child has very few possessions. And of course always include pictures of yourself and family as well! The children love to see pictures as well as the letter!!

HOW OFTEN WILL I HEAR FROM MY SPONSOR CHILD?

As mentioned above, it is common for some of the children to not write as often as they should. This is due to their inability to write in English and thus having to have it translated. Remember though that you are encouraged to write as often as possible regardless of how many response letters you receive. It is imperative to remember that you are doing this because you wish to make a difference in a child's life.

CAN I SEND GIFTS TO MY SPONSOR CHILD?

No, the program is about relationship building through letters and not about gift giving.

HOW LONG WILL MY SPONSORED CHILD NEED MY HELP?

We ask sponsor families to make at least a one-year commitment to the program. We hope your relationship will grow and your desire to sponsor your child will be for as long as they are in the system.

WHAT WILL I AS THE SPONSOR RECEIVE?

We will send you letters from your sponsor child.

HOW DO I MAKE MY CONTRIBUTIONS?

Your donation will be charged to your credit card on a monthly basis on the 16th of each month and or annual payments via check or credit card. Monthly is by credit card only.

WHAT PORTION OF MY MONEY WILL ACTUALLY GO TO THE CHILD?

All of your \$30 donation will go directly to help your sponsor child. IAG does not withhold any part of your donation for our operating expenses.

IS MY DONATION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes, IAG is a non-profit organization and upon request will issue you a yearly statement of your contributions for your charitable donations.

We look forward to watching the relationship grow between you and your sponsor child! It is life-changing event, not only for the child but also for you!

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about our child sponsorship program. You can contact me at 770.962.7860 or via e-mail at Jim@adoptionguides.org

Sincerely,
Jim Harding
International Adoption Guides