

# Orphan Sponsorship Program Frequently Asked Questions

## ***What is the Children's HopeChest Orphan Sponsorship Program?***

The Orphan Sponsorship Program is a ministry that provides the opportunity for an orphan to know God, experience the blessing of family, and acquire the skills necessary for independent life. Specific benefits include the opportunity for orphans to meet and overcome many of the challenges they face. Enhancing a child's environment, emotional network, health, and spiritual development alike, a child who feels abandoned is given special attention from a sponsor who truly cares.

## ***What is a Children's HopeChest sponsor?***

A HopeChest sponsor is a caring person - or group of people - who wishes to commit monthly support and ongoing encouragement to one child for the duration of his or her time in an orphanage. (In some cases, sponsorship can extend through a child's time in vocational school or college.) Sponsors not only offer monthly support, but encouragement through prayer, letter writing, and relationship.

## ***What benefits go to a sponsored Children's HopeChest orphan?***

Your sponsorship covers five categories including spiritual, emotional, environmental, educational and medical.

## ***How much does it cost to sponsor an orphan through Children's HopeChest?***

The cost to sponsor an orphan through the Orphan Sponsorship Program is \$34 per month or \$408 per year.

## ***How much of my \$34.00 monthly support will actually benefit the child I sponsor?***

Children's HopeChest has been blessed with low overhead to date. Historically, we have consistently been able to apply \$0.80 on the dollar to ministry activities. The sponsorship funds are used in three major categories at the orphanage: direct assistance, discipleship, and birthday/Christmas gifts. The funds are distributed in the following way:

Direct Assistance to Orphanage	48%	\$16
Discipleship Program (includes letter translation, classes at orphanage, visits by discipler, supplies)	26%	\$9
Christmas and Birthday gifts	6%	\$2
U.S. Admin	20%	\$7
Total	100%	\$34

## ***What is a HopeChest discipler?***

A HopeChest discipler, is a National believer, who visits the orphanage once every one to two weeks. They are responsible for the spiritual, emotional and physical aspect of sponsorship. Conducting classes, helping orphans write letters, listening to hopes, fears and dreams of the children is part of their ongoing visits. The disciplers extend the relationship to the orphans in a way that few people can. They are the hands and the feet of the ministry.

## ***Will every orphan in a Children's HopeChest-related orphanage become a sponsored child? Otherwise, won't orphans without sponsors feel left out?***

As a matter of policy your gifts are joined with the gifts of other sponsors, together they fund the care of all the orphans at the facility. This blending of gifts with others makes it possible to ensure that all the children residing within the facility are cared for. Your support means that money an orphanage would have had to spend on child care can be combined with sponsorship funds to raise the level of care for each and every child.

We have found that one of the most beneficial aspects of sponsorship for the orphan is the relationship built between the child and their sponsor through letter writing. To ensure a sponsored orphan feels cared for, we encourage sponsors to write to their sponsored child at least once every three months. Letters can be sent to our Colorado office or through email. Also, we believe we have a biblical mandate to present the Gospel to every child possible through age-appropriate Bible teaching. All in all, your Children's HopeChest sponsorship will impact not only your sponsored child, but also many others. And because we will actively seek to link every child who would benefit from sponsorship to a sponsor, we believe the possibility of a child feeling "left out" - although it cannot be completely avoided - will be minimized.

### ***May I send my sponsored child a small gift?***

Gift giving, while well intentioned, has several unintended consequences that have a negative effect upon your sponsored child. Many orphanage directors, staff and sponsors have expressed concern regarding gift giving and asked that we not allow gifts to be sent from the U.S. However, a birthday and Christmas gift is automatically provided for your child through your monthly sponsorship giving.

### ***As a sponsor, how can I best express my love and care for my sponsored child?***

The most powerful influence you have in a child's life is through your consistent letters, prayers, and giving.

### ***How do I correspond with my sponsored child?***

Letters can be sent by U.S. mail to: Children's HopeChest - P.O. Box 8627 - Pueblo, CO 81008-8627

Letters can be sent by email to the following addresses: (according to region)

[Vladimir@hopechest.org](mailto:Vladimir@hopechest.org) (Ref # beginning with RU03)

[Kostroma@hopechest.org](mailto:Kostroma@hopechest.org) (Ref # beginning with RU12)

[Ivanova@hopechest.org](mailto:Ivanova@hopechest.org) (Ref # beginning with RU10)

[Ryazan@hopechest.org](mailto:Ryazan@hopechest.org) (Ref # beginning with RU20)

All other regions - [Sponsormail@hopechest.org](mailto:Sponsormail@hopechest.org)

Please include your child's full name and reference # on the envelope AND letter when sending handwritten letters and in the subject line when sending letters by email. We encourage you to write letters to your sponsored child in both forms. Each time they hear from you, they know that someone half a world away cares for them. This also encourages them to write to you.

### ***How do sponsors receive communication from their child and about their child?***

There are two major ways communication flows to sponsors – first in letters from their sponsored child, secondly in letters/information from HopeChest about their sponsored child.

The Orphan Sponsorship Program is designed to touch a broad range of orphans and needs. We've targeted as many children as possible. The depth of the program comes through the personal touch of the sponsors. Because we want to keep administrative costs to a minimum, we report once a year to the sponsors through a Yearly Update on the child. This will include a recent picture and general information on the well-being of the child over the past

year. It will also include a report on how sponsorship funds were used to help the orphanage that particular school year.

Orphans love to receive letters, but because of their limited emotional development and lack of parenting, they do not always know how to respond to sponsors in an appropriate or timely fashion. Our national staff encourages each child to write to their sponsor at least twice a year. Our challenge comes when a child simply will not write. At this point, we ask our disciplers to write a letter to the sponsor on the child's behalf.

The reality of our work is that we work with at risk kids. These children do not have the necessary skills to handle even the simplest emotional or physical tasks. It is our hope that through loving, caring, prayerful sponsors, our staff will be able to make break throughs in these challenges and help each child gain skills for transitioning into independent adult life in order to have healthy relationships as adults with family, friends, and co-workers.

At any point that a sponsored child has a significant change in their life (leaving or transferring from the orphanage, running away, etc.), HopeChest will notify the sponsor and sponsoring church/business.

Please see the Letter Writing Guidelines for further explanation on how sponsors communicate to their sponsored child.

### ***How are letters delivered to my sponsored child and how long does it take?***

HopeChest is making every effort to make letter delivery easy and accurate. We have set up email addresses and are now in the process of ensuring that letters find their way to the child as efficiently as possible. We are limited in the way that we can send handwritten letters because of the difficulty we experience in customs. So, handwritten letters are sent with travelers and given to our overseas staff. The letters are then translated and delivered to the orphanage on a staff scheduled visit.

Although handwritten letter delivery is slower, the kids do enjoy these letters. However, there is a way to send letters in a more timely manner. Letters sent by email are delivered within two to three weeks of their arrival date, depending on the day of the week the letter is received and the next scheduled visit to the orphanage. Often letters will be delivered sooner if the staff is going to the orphanage the same week the letters arrive. Please note that letters are not delivered in the months of June, July, August, December and January. Orphans are not at their orphanages during the summer, and as a result letters cannot be delivered to them between June and mid-September. Letter delivery is also limited during the holiday months of December and January due to staff not visiting weekly and children visiting relatives, etc. We apologize for the delay of letter delivery during these months.

We encourage sponsors to write letters in both forms. Each time they hear from their sponsor, they know that someone half a world away cares for them. This also encourages them to write back.

### ***If a sponsor wants to give additional money for birthday and Christmas gifts, is this possible?***

Any additional gifts given to the birthday/Christmas gift fund above the sponsorship amounts will be added to the birthday/Christmas gift fund to help with gifts for unsponsored children.

### ***What are your letter writing guidelines?***

Do (to benefit your child)

- Correspond at least once every three months with your sponsored child. Our suggestion is: One letter, One page in length, Once a month.
- Tell them about things you enjoy doing in your spare time.
- Tell them about your job, school and family.
- Share your walk with Christ with them.
- Share your dreams for your future.

- Tell them about your hobbies and interests.
- Tell them about interesting places you have visited.
- Include pictures of your family and about your life.

Don't (to protect your child and yourself)

- Promise anything you can't keep. This includes mentioning that you'd like to visit 'sometime.' To a lonely child this means you are coming in the next few weeks.
- Make any type of suggestion that you may want to adopt them or bring them to the U.S.
- Give personal mailing information or phone numbers for your privacy.
- Share personal financial information with them.
- Send gifts.

### ***How do I start?***

You can begin your HopeChest sponsorship by requesting a child information packet and filling out the form that comes with it. If you already have a child's packet, the form will confirm your selection of that orphan. Your sponsorship begins when this form and method of payment are received by Children's HopeChest.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact a HopeChest Sponsorship Representative by phone (800 648-9575 Press 2) or email ([sponsor@hopechest.org](mailto:sponsor@hopechest.org)).