

## CHILDREN'S HOPECHEST

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Responding to God's desire to create a world where every orphan knows Him, experiences the blessing of family, and acquires the skills necessary for independent life.

# Partners' Manual

Children's HopeChest  
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## Welcome from Tom Davis

**T**aking the journey to walk down the road of sponsoring an orphanage or care point is not easy. It can test your patience. It can stretch your faith. And at times, it can even break your heart as it has mine.

In spite of that, it will be one of the most life-changing projects you have ever undertaken. Jumping into the lives of dozens of orphaned children who are desperately needy is right at the center of God's heart. There are few things you could do that would please Him more.

There are two reasons for this.

First, we all have this incredible truth to count on – when we minister to orphaned children we are looking into the very face of Jesus and ministering to Him! Read the end of Matthew 25 for a beautiful picture of this.

Second, when God tells us in Psalm 68:5 that he is a Father to the fatherless and sets the lonely in families, guess who gets the job to make sure that's done and done well? By caring for orphaned children, you are working toward something so important in the eyes of God. His very character is defined in taking care of orphaned children.

Whenever I have the opportunity to help an orphaned child, this question burns in my mind, "You mean I actually get to do this?" I hope you are a little like me, and that you too count it a tremendous privilege to fulfill something so near and dear to God's heart.

God has done so much to prove His love for us. Whatever we can do to bring joy to His heart is more than worth it!

The work you do with orphaned children will transform their lives now and will last for eternity. I often think of how many children will literally have their lives saved. That's not a cliché or wishful thinking – it's a reward that we are excited to share in this ministry. We are grateful for your passion, your commitment, and your love.

For the fatherless,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Davis".

## Why We Exist

Economic hardship, abuse and addiction have orphaned hundreds of thousands of children in Russia. State-run orphanages and boarding schools institutionalize children and push them to the fringes of society. Thousands of children are orphaned each day in Africa. Swaziland is a small kingdom of orphans and widows because of the 46% HIV/AIDS infection rate, the highest in the world. In Ethiopia, a country with one of the largest populations of orphaned children in the world, disease, hunger and poverty have orphaned nearly half of the 45 million children there. Uganda's war-torn past has created extreme poverty and high HIV/AIDS infection rates that affects the 2 million orphaned children that call that country home.

The result of such widespread death and illness, abuse and neglect is a planet populated by children who have seen and suffered unimaginable sorrow. Statistics show that the majority of orphaned children will encounter significant obstacles in life — malnutrition, crime, prostitution, drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide. Many orphaned children do not go to school, and many are forced to live on the street. They get caught up in child labor and the dangers of sex work.

While growing up as an orphan, children are taught few if any practical skills for daily living. As a result, the most mundane tasks remain difficult for them. Shopping, food preparation, schooling, and employment are all significant challenges for orphaned children. Few will reach their full educational potential, find employment, and establish a family of their own.

Without help, most orphaned children will never know the love of God, experience the blessing of family, or acquire the skills needed for independent life.

## Who We Are

### History

Children's HopeChest was founded in 1994 to provide practical help and God's hope to orphaned children. HopeChest began its ministry in the Vladimir region of Russia, then expanded into the Kostroma region and has now expanded to three other regions in Russia: Ivanovo, Ryazan, and Kirov. In 2006, we were presented an opportunity to minister to those affected by HIV/AIDS in Swaziland, a small country in southern Africa. Then in 2008 and 2009, our ministry expanded into two East African nations, Ethiopia and Uganda.

The ministry of Children's HopeChest is characterized by three specific emphases: addressing basic needs of a growing orphan population worldwide, providing life-skills training to prepare orphaned children for life, and assisting orphaned young people when they are teenagers and young adults on their transition into an independent and healthy adult life. The goal of Children's HopeChest is to assist orphaned and vulnerable children in ways that will help them succeed within their own cultures and become leaders in their own societies.

### Mission

Children's HopeChest mobilizes churches, businesses, campus groups, online communities, families, and individuals in response to God's desire to create a world where every orphaned child knows God, experiences the blessing of family, and acquires the skills necessary for independent life. Our holistic approach addresses the medical, physical, educational, emotional, and spiritual needs of orphaned children in a variety of contexts from state-run boarding schools in Russia to homesteads in Swaziland, from care points in Uganda to orphanages in Ethiopia.

## Values

As an organization, there are seven values that move and motivate the work of Children's HopeChest:

We are totally dependent on God.

We respect orphaned children.

We emphasize international leadership.

We seek long-term ministries.

We are transparent with our finances, fundraising, and accounting.

We seek the partnership of other ministries.

We desire the participation of volunteers, churches, and donors.

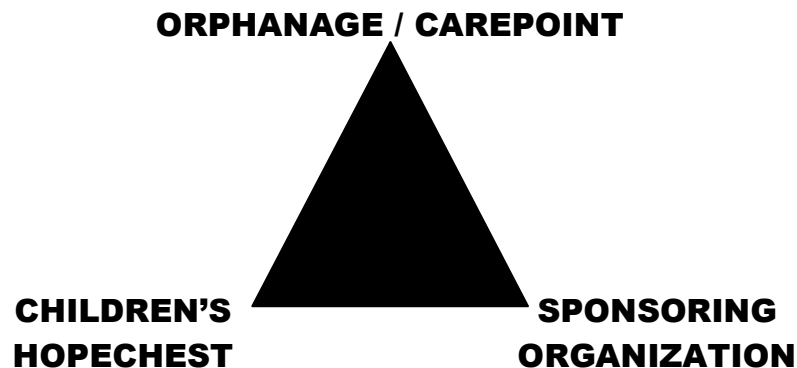
## Goals

By 2010, 40,000 orphaned children in five countries will have the opportunity to hear of God's love for them, and participate in the family, discipleship, housing, education, and job skills training programs of Children's HopeChest. 8,000 of these children will be sponsored through the participation of 110 churches. Within this time, our international trips, Independent Living, Ministry Centers, and Family Centers will experience significant growth as our staff team doubles and our budget triples. Through partnerships with churches, businesses, campus groups, online communities, families and individuals, as well as alliances with other mission, orphan care, and Christian organizations, together we can experience this exciting period of growth as more and more children are given practical help and the hope of God.

## What We Do

### Model

Sponsorship is a three-fold relationship. Its primary goal is to benefit orphaned children. The following diagram, in which each entity is vitally important to the other two, provides a picture of this relationship.



### Children's HopeChest

An organization's partnership with Children's HopeChest releases spiritual and financial resources to the children while individual orphan sponsorship brings the unique blessing of relationship. HopeChest offers you the needed expertise and resources to benefit orphaned children, as well as access to the orphanage. Not only does our staff in the US provide accountability and support, our indigenous staff on the ground, including disciplers, are responsible for the spiritual, emotional and physical aspects of sponsorship.

A HopeChest discipler or mentor is a national believer who visits the orphanage or carepoint once every one to two weeks. Disciplers conduct classes on culture, character and Biblical principles. They spend time with the children and help them with moral and ethical issues, problems and concerns.

## Orphanages and Carepoints

The various orphanages and carepoints provide a focus of ministry for both Children's HopeChest and the sponsoring organization. Specific benefits to orphans include ministry in five areas:

Environmental - A portion of the sponsor's support, combined with that of other sponsors, improves and maintains a healthy environment. This includes the purchase of clothing, shoes, furniture, books, etc. if needed.

Medical - Each sponsored child will receive regular health checkups, and medical intervention as needed. Improved nutrition is also provided.

Emotional - Each sponsored child's network of emotional support is greatly expanded. Staff at the orphanage or carepoint will receive special training that equips them to better deal with the unique emotional needs of the orphaned children they serve. Also, the sponsor's involvement in each child's life through cards and letters is an avenue of emotional support the child would normally be denied. Regular visits from disciplers will also add to emotional well-being.

Educational – Sponsorship helps provide resources for the education of sponsored children. In Africa, for a child to attend school, fees must be paid, and uniforms and books must be purchased. And in Russia, tutoring and support helps disadvantaged children reach their potential in school and in preparation for adulthood.

Spiritual – Orphaned children will see the love of God demonstrated tangibly through age-appropriate Bible teaching. A discipler will visit the orphanage or carepoint regularly to conduct classes. Your prayer and letters will also encourage a child's spiritual growth.

## Sponsoring Organization

The sponsoring organization is typically a church, but many communities including businesses, schools, foundations, campus groups, online communities, and families can sponsor orphanages or carepoints. This connection provides a more focused and intimate program of care than HopeChest would otherwise be able to provide. This relationship provides many benefits to the children we serve, to their caregivers, as well as to the sponsors.

The size and budget of any organization are not the key criteria for a successful sponsoring organization. In fact, we only maintain three criteria for sponsorship. First, the organization must be missions-minded. Second, the organization must have a heart for children. And finally, the organization must be willing to make a minimum three year commitment. When these three criteria are met, anything is possible!

## How You Connect

### Child Sponsorship

Orphaned children have very few, if any, personal possessions, but their relationship with you is one thing they can consider their own. You play a significant part in restoring trust and bringing hope. A Children's HopeChest sponsor is a caring person who wishes to commit monthly support and ongoing encouragement to one child for the duration of his or her time in an orphanage or carepoint. (In some cases, sponsorship can extend through a child's time in vocational school or college.) Sponsors not only offer financial support but also relational support through friendship, prayer, letter writing, and perhaps an occasional visit.

Individual sponsors can give their sponsorship contribution in monthly (\$34), bi-monthly (\$68), quarterly (\$102), semi-annually (\$204) and yearly (\$408) increments. Your payment schedule will be set up according to the first gift received. Reminder statements are sent out according to the payment schedule mentioned above. You will receive this statement at the end of the month. Sponsorship payments may be made by check or online through credit card and EFT contributions.

### Prayer

Become actively engaged in caring for orphans by defending, protecting, and advocating for them. We ask that each sponsor pray on an ongoing basis for the health, encouragement, safety, and spiritual growth of one's sponsored child.

### Communication

Communication flows to and from sponsors and children by two means: first, by letters to and from sponsors and their children, and second, by regular newsletters, updates, and reports from HopeChest.

We encourage sponsors to write letters both through email and by regular mail. Each time an orphaned child hears from their sponsor, they know that someone half a world away cares for them. This also encourages them to write back. However, it is important to not place unrealistic expectations on your sponsored child. The reality of our work is that we work with at-risk children. They often 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 breakthroughs in these challenges and help each child gain skills for life and healthy relationships. Through your consistent prayer and communication, we hope that they will experience encouragement and healing from the challenges they have faced. Writing letters is a major part of this effort.

## Travel

Sponsorship provides opportunities to impact a whole community – the children, their caregivers, the families of the caregivers, and the community where the orphanage or carepoint is located. The sponsoring organization is asked to send a team of five or more travelers every 12 to 18 months to visit the orphanage or carepoint. Sponsors will have the opportunity to make contacts, assess needs, fulfill Children's HopeChest programs, and initiate programs unique to that orphanage. Life-long friendships are formed on these trips. These relationships can literally save the lives of children who are at-risk.

The cost of trips is divided into two categories. Travelers are responsible to arrange for their own flights, in consultation with HopeChest staff and after approval of your trip. The second category is the land package, which includes all in-country ground transportation, lodging, meals, translator fees and expenses, staff services, administration, and incidentals.

## Transitional Programs

Most orphaned children find that the day they leave the orphanage is the most critical of their lives. The goal of our various transitional programs is to help them develop the character, integrity and skills to live an independent life and to become leaders in their communities and avoid the risks they would otherwise face from alcohol, drugs, crime, and sexual relationships. Through vocational training, counselors and social workers, as well as a support community, older orphaned children can continue the path toward education, career, family, and faith in young adulthood.

## Special Projects

Special projects address the additional needs at an orphanage or carepoint that are outside the scope of child sponsorship, prayer, letters, and travel. For example, by building kitchens and wells, or hiring social workers and tutors, the sponsor can know that the whole needs of a child are being met.

## A Call to Action from Tom Davis

You know I believe with my whole heart that God envisions a future where precious orphaned children will not suffer, where their pain is alleviated, where they have a hope and future. So my vision, while we still are on this earth, is to work toward the things that God has a heart for.

The vision that we believe God has placed on our hearts is to transform the lives of 1 million orphaned children through holistic, long-term, and redemptive programs.

Orphan care is holistic. When you engage in the life of an orphaned child, there are many facets involved. It's like a family. There are many things that they need.

Orphan care is long-term. We want to share the blessing of family. That means that we're there for the long-haul, that we're there to care for them. And the child will know that there is unconditional love from someone other than the family they have known who, for a variety of reasons, no longer cares for them.

Orphan care is redemptive. We are engaging children who have no hope, who are bound, and who live in the midst of death and destruction. With your help, we are pulling them out of those circumstances and seeing their lives redeemed.

Children's HopeChest has always been a ministry about partnering. It's about mobilizing people and giving them the opportunity to get involved in the life of an orphaned child, whether it's in Eastern Europe or in Africa. Being involved, you will see a child's life transformed because you cared.

We are excited that you are considering joining us on the adventure of compassionate living! Get ready! It'll change your life. But more importantly, it will change the lives of dozens, even hundreds, of children thousands of miles away when you and your community begin offering God's hope and practical help to orphaned children.

For the fatherless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Davis', written in a cursive style.