

# WellBeing SA Inc.

## *Guidelines and Procedures for*

### **Child Sponsorships Programs**

Relating to children's care and protection, WellBeing SA should adhere to core child protection principles for children; confidentiality, non-discrimination, coordination and collaboration, do no harm, child participation and accountability.

#### **Definition of a child**

Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)\* defines a child as, "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". The Declaration of the Rights of the Child states that the child, "by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth". It is universally recognized that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. In the community, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and such children need special consideration.

\*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**)

#### **Child sponsorship**

Child sponsorship refers to activities that provide support in cash or kind to individual children or families, through donations received by local and foreign sponsors who are linked to a particular child or family by the implementing agency.

#### **Guidelines and procedures**

Protection for children is increased when communities and families are strengthened to take care of children's needs. Therefore, sustainable programs that aim at improving family's livelihood security and access to quality services should be important considerations for agencies involved in working with children.

#### **A. Identification of children**

**1.** Child sponsorship programs should ensure that discrimination is reduced as far as possible within families and communities by ensuring that all children benefit from sponsorship programs. Thus, while an individual child may be selected for sponsorship, all the children in the family should benefit from the program.

**2.** Selection of children for sponsorship programs which provide individual or family financial benefits should be done based on recommendations made by

Adapted as per the guidelines set up by the National Department of Probation and Child Care Services of Sri Lanka  
4<sup>th</sup> March, 2005

Child Rights Promotion Officers (CRPOs) attached to Divisional Secretariats.

**3.** WellBeing SA should contact CRPOs at Divisional Secretariat level for children sponsoring. The CRPO will provide the WellBeing SA with the details and information of the children according to the number of children the WellBeing SA is able to support. Additional information of other children should not be released.

#### ***B. Contacts with sponsor***

**4.** All communication between sponsor and child must go through the facilitating agency. This communication must be screened and supervised by WellBeing SA to prevent possible exploitation and abuse.

**5.** Photographs of children should not be used in the selection process. Once the child is selected, a sponsor may receive a photograph of the child, but the WellBeing SA must ensure that the photograph is respectful to the child. For example, the child must be appropriately dressed.

**6.** Sponsors should not receive details of the address of the child being sponsored. The child must not exchange his/her address with his/her sponsor.

**7.** Visits by the sponsor to the child must be planned in advance and take place in a neutral place. The relevant CRPO/PO should be kept informed of the meeting.

**8.** All files maintained by WellBeing SA regarding the child should be confidential.

**9.** Sponsorship should not in any way be a precursor to adoption.

#### ***C. Benefits***

**10.** No political or religious conditions should be placed on the child for receiving benefits.

**11.** Sponsorship benefits should ensure that age appropriate needs of the children are met in terms of nutrition, education and health.

**12.** Where cash benefits are provided, they should range from between Rs 1000.00 to Rs 2000.00 per child. In addition, material assistance can be provided.

#### ***D. Monitoring***

**13.** A sponsorship program should be for a minimum period of two (2) years and be subject to reassessment based on the changing circumstances of the children's families.

**14.** The child and family should be assessed every three months during the period of

sponsorship by the WellBeing SA. Any concerns should be communicated immediately to the provincial Department of Probation and Child Care or the District Child Protection Committee. The relevant PO/CRPO should be kept informed as to the progress of the child or family.

#### ***E. Registration of agencies***

**15.** Agencies (WellBeing SA) willing to sponsor children should apply for accreditation with the Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Only agencies registered with the Ministry of Social Services will be allowed to apply for accreditation.

Individuals interested in sponsorship should link with an accredited agency.

**16.** It will be the responsibility of the National Department of Probation and Child Care services to inform all Provincial Departments of Probation and Child Care as well as Divisional Secretariats of accredited agencies.

**17.** Provincial Departments of Probation and Child Care and the District Child Monitoring Committees will ensure that all relevant agencies at the provincial and district level is made aware of the guidelines and procedures for child sponsorship and for monitoring their adherence to them.