

Ethiopia

Rescuing orphans from poverty by providing the blessing of family.



Children's HopeChest was founded in 1994 in response to the Russian orphan crisis fueled by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Our proven model has impacted thousands of children, aiding them in their move toward a deepened Christian faith and a productive adult life. Children's HopeChest is a member of the ECFA, and raises approximately \$4 million in annual contributions.

BACKGROUND: Children's HopeChest is a global leader in non-adoption orphan care ministry. Our unique strategy focuses on the connection between a local U.S. church or business and an orphanage overseas. Children's HopeChest facilitates and grows this connection—allowing spiritual, relational, and financial resources to improve the quality of life for children not eligible for adoption. We place a long-term focus on restoring family relationships, providing educational opportunities, and working within a child's culture to prepare them for successful adulthood. Over 70 orphanages and carepoints in Russia and Swaziland are enrolled in our program.

ETHIOPIA: As recent as 2006, UN reports put Ethiopia's orphan population at over 6 million children. Nearly 800,000 of those children lost parents to AIDS. Quoting the report: ***"As a result, many orphans do not go to school, and many are forced to live on the street. They get caught up in child labor, taking on the drudgery of domestic service and the dangers of sex work. Many orphans have to become the heads of their own households, taking the place of their deceased parents. These young people often sacrifice their own education to guarantee a better future for their younger siblings."***

ORPHANAGE SPONSORSHIP: Over the past 15 years, Children's HopeChest has invested in low-cost/high-impact interventions championed by national leaders. By investing in those individuals and organizations who are ***already doing the work***, we can provide the relationships and funding for scaling their growth and impacting more children. In Swaziland, our current sponsor investments have increased the feeding program from twice a week, to twice a day. Then, we added a discipleship component and provided funds for infrastructure projects like wells and kitchens. Now, over 1,000 children in Swaziland have a consistent place to focus on the job of being a child—learning, going to school, and growing in faith. Through the orphanage sponsorship program, a church or business is paired with an orphanage. The sponsoring organization's decision entails four key commitments:

1. A minimum three-year commitment to the program
2. Recruiting child sponsors to provide \$34/month for every orphan living at their sponsored orphanages
3. An annual missions trip to the orphanage facilitated by Children's HopeChest
4. Praying for the children on a regular basis

Through the child sponsorship component, children are connected with a Christian sponsor who prays for them, writes personal letters, and may visit them on a missions trip. The funds contributed by the sponsor are pooled to provide three primary benefits for the orphanage and child:

1. A national Christian is hired as a "discipler" to teach character education, mentor the children, and establish healthy relationships
2. Sponsors exchange letters with their sponsored children
3. Financial resources are sent directly to the orphanage to provide for physical, emotional, social, and educational benefits

Through these contributions, the U.S. church or business impacts an entire community—orphans, caregivers, as well as the town where the orphanage is located. The greatest impact is on the kids living in the orphanage. Although improving physical conditions is often necessary, the ultimate purpose is to establish relationships that will guide a child into productive and faithful adulthood.

NEXT STEPS: Although not required, most organizations send 1-2 representatives on a CHC vision trip to visit unsponsored orphanages, meet the staff and children, and select an orphanage that best fits with the mission priorities of your organization. (The next CHC Ethiopia Vision Trip is in April 2009, we are currently raising funds for pastor scholarships as well.) Once an orphanage is selected, CHC forwards the child packets to you, along with information to promote sponsorship throughout your organization. On launch day, you make all the individual children available for sponsorship. Your people select a child, enroll, and send their first gift and child letter to CHC. Post-launch, CHC will help you plan your first missions trip to the orphanage to visit the children. CHC reports back annually to all sponsors and sends a quarterly e-mail newsletter specifically about your orphanage as well. From time-to-time, we host trainings and conferences for our partners, and all of your individual child sponsors are welcome to attend these events.



CHILDREN'S HOPECHEST
Confidence to fly and a safe place to land