

Heart for Orphans

Providing loving, nurturing, Christ-centered homes and programs for orphaned children.

FALL 2021 | ISSUE 20

It started in 2003 with a dream: a place where youth who will never be adopted can live and learn about God's design for family... a small, family-style home with Christian house parents who will treat them as their own... house parents who model a healthy marriage and healthy family. This is our Transition Home program. Because how can a child who has only lived in an institution know what to look for in a spouse? How can they go on to become good parents themselves unless someone teaches them this? Eighteen years and ten homes later, the Transition Home is still our flagship program. It's where a young person can heal from their painful past. It's where they learn to live. It's where they learn that they are hand crafted by a Savior who loves them just as they are.

Shortly after Nina came to live at our Transition Home, Ruth's House, she learned she was pregnant. She had been living with her boyfriend, but he kicked her out. She lived at Ruth's House for six months when the boyfriend begged her to come back. She believed him and left Ruth's House to move in with him again.

One cold and snowy morning our housemother Tonia received a phone call from the train station. It was Nina. She was sobbing. Her baby was due any day and Nina was desperate. She had nowhere to live. Could Tonia possibly forgive her and take her back? Of course she would! It turned out that the boyfriend only wanted her back because she had inherited a small, broken-down cottage in the village. He wanted her to sell it and give him the money. But the cottage wouldn't sell, so he kicked her out again.

Tonia happily took her in. Within a few days Nina gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. But Nina grew up in an orphanage so she knew nothing about babies. She had no idea how to feed or care for her precious daughter. Tonia not only took care of Nina, but she also took care of the newborn in order to teach Nina what to do. Over

time Nina became a loving mother herself. She grew in maturity, too. She was loyal and responsible, so she eventually assisted the house parents in running the home.

Nina never forgot the love and kindness that Tonia showed her. The gentle way she taught Nina without ever growing tired of her, made such an impression on Nina. It helped her understand that there is a God, He loves her very much and He has forgiven her. Nina eventually repented of her sins and asked the Lord into her heart.

Nina is now 30. She married a wonderful man and they have four beautiful children. She is a devoted mother who also cares for her handicapped brother and mother. Both Nina and her husband are missionaries and active in their church. More than anything, Nina has remained a grateful and giving person, passing on the love to others that was shown to her many years ago.

Our Transition Home program provides orphans a loving family environment where they can heal from the trauma of their past

DONATE AT HEARTFORORPHANS.COM



ORPHANAGE OUTREACH

Children who grow up in government orphanages are terribly lonely. Even though other kids surround them, they are likely to feel lost in the crowd. Rarely does a child get individual attention unless they have special talents. Often it's simply bad behavior that gets them noticed. So when the Heart for Orphans team comes for their weekly Orphanage Outreach program, the kids are very excited. They truly enjoy the music, games, crafts and Bible lessons we provide. But even more than that, they get the individual attention that they so desperately crave!

Orphanage life is tough. Fights are commonplace. Our team teaches the children how to interact in a kind and compassionate way and to handle conflict constructively. They trust us, so many of them will open up and share their hurts and their dreams. We love on them and treat them with respect and kindness. And we teach them about a Savior who loves them.

The past year has been challenging because the orphanages were closed due to COVID. The kids would call us often and ask, "When are you coming back?" Even the staff missed us during the lockdown! This fall we hope to revive the Orphanage Outreach program we've had in nine orphanages.

Our Orphanage Outreach program works hand-in-hand with the Transition Homes. The kids in the orphanages get to know us throughout the school year. Some come to stay over the school holidays. Then, when they graduate from the orphanage, they want to come to live in our Transition Homes. It is while living in the Transition Home that they see the difference in the way we live our lives. It is here that they develop a lasting relationship with the Lord. It is here that their loneliness is exchanged for belonging.



SUMMER CAMPS

During summers our house parents take the orphaned teens to Christian camps. Some camps are simply tents in the forest while others are cabins at a campground. Usually, different church youth groups organize these camps. The atmosphere is always filled with God's presence and a sense of excitement.

Each day they have a full and fun schedule. There are sports, music, drama, and crafts workshops, times of fellowship, and times of prayer and reflection. There are usually two worship services, one in the morning and another in the evening. Different guest speakers are invited to share their inspiring life stories. At night teens sit around the campfire and share funny stories, sing and worship Jesus.

When orphans come to these camps, they feel God's love, peace and presence. They meet other teens who are believers and life-long friendships are made. They get inspired to walk with the Lord. They learn how sinful activities can lead to difficult consequences and how exciting life can be when you follow the Lord.

Our house parents often tell us how camps have helped their teenagers want to change their lives. For many young people it is the beginning of their new life in Christ.



CONNECT WITH US:



HEARTFORORPHANS.COM

TEEN OUTREACH

Since Friends Club began several years ago, there is one young man who hardly ever misses a meeting—Sergei! Sergei loves Friends Club because it was there that his life changed dramatically.

Sergei was placed in the orphanage when his mother lost her parental rights. She drank heavily and neglected Sergei and his siblings. The children were starving. They had to steal food from the neighbor's garden in order to survive. At one point a family came to the orphanage that wanted to adopt Sergei and his sister. But his grandmother brought the children back home rather than allow them to be adopted. While at home, things had gotten much worse with his mother. The children watched her slowly die of alcohol poisoning. Sergei was devastated.

Typically orphanage graduates only receive a certificate, because their education is considered substandard. But when Sergei graduated and moved into the trade school dorms, he also took night classes to get an official high school diploma. He graduated top of his class.

One evening our outreach team came to the trade school dorm to invite the teens to visit Friends Club and Sergei went. There was not only lots of laughter, games and music, but they also discussed serious issues. They asked questions such as why am I here? What is life all about? Do I have a purpose for living? Sergey began to think about his life. He realized he had a choice in the way he lived and ultimately, his future. He was so intrigued with our staff and the way they lived that he decided he wanted to change. He wanted God to change him, too. So during a Friends Club meeting he surrendered his life and gave it to the Lord.



Orphaned teens living in trade school dorms have lots of free time and very little supervision. Many of them also have deep-seated feelings of abandonment, so they often make pretty bad choices. Choices that can sometimes be deadly. Friends Club provides a fun and healthy outlet for bored and troubled teens. Our Friends Club facility is a storefront located close to the trade schools. Four nights a week it is open to area teens. Each night there is a different theme: Cooking Club, Movie Night, Bible Study and Friends Club. In the summer there are Christian camps, games and outdoor activities to attend.

Nowadays, Sergei introduces himself by saying, "I am a child of God!" He graduated from trade school with excellent grades and, at 17, is attending college. Everyone is amazed at the changes in him. He is a kinder person. He is more responsible and is always the first to volunteer to help, even for the dirty jobs. Our staff can always count on Sergei to be there and to be willing to do whatever is needed. God has blessed Sergei with both a sharp mind and a servant's heart.



Housefather Andrei proudly walked Marina down the aisle.



Everyone at Michael's House celebrated!

WEDDING *Announcement*

Sometimes lives change in our Transition Homes in more than one way! Zhenya and Marina grew up in orphanages. While living in Michael's House, they both found God, and they found each other. When they decided to marry, Zhenya wanted to give Marina the wedding she always dreamed of, but they had very little money. They prayed and knew that God would provide. The church sprung into action. They blessed them with a beautiful wedding! Everything they needed, including the food, was provided! Thank you Lord for answered prayer!

LEGACY GIVING

5 WAYS YOUR GIFTS CAN MAKE AN IMPACT LONG AFTER YOUR LIFETIME!

*You can make a difference in the lives of orphans for many years to come!
Here are 5 ways your legacy gifts can make a difference in the lives of orphans...*

1

WILLS AND BEQUESTS

Include a provision in your will or other estate plans. A bequest costs nothing now, yet gives you the satisfaction of knowing you have provided for the future of orphans!

2

RETIREMENT PLANS

By naming Heart for Orphans as a beneficiary, your retirement plan can be a tax-efficient and simple way to give. Most people do not use all of their retirement assets during their lifetime, and those unused assets can be used to provide hope and a future to an orphan!

3

MUTUAL FUNDS

If you have mutual funds and are looking to donate the proceeds, you may qualify to receive a charitable deduction. All you have to do is list Heart for Orphans as beneficiary or close the mutual fund account and donate the funds.

4

BANK ACCOUNTS

Bank accounts are a common investment tool that can help the life changing mission of Heart for Orphans! All you have to do is list Heart for Orphans as beneficiary or close the account and donate the funds.

5

LIFE INSURANCE

By designating Heart for Orphans as irrevocable beneficiary, your life insurance policy is a great way to give! This can apply to a policy that you no longer need because of a change in life circumstances or on a policy that you are still paying premiums.

For more information contact Amber at:

amber@heartfororphans.com | 757-220-3457



ATTENTION MILITARY, POSTAL WORKERS AND FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES! YOU CAN NOW DONATE THROUGH THE COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC)!

Good news! Heart for Orphans is now an approved CFC charity! Employees can participate through payroll deductions. Retirees can give through their monthly annuity and/or a credit card. Either way, the CFC's platform allows you to give more—allowing you to partner with Heart for Orphans throughout the year, and enabling you to bless more orphaned children!

Join the 2021 Giving Campaign during the official solicitation period and pledge your donation to
Heart for Orphans CFC# 80868