

Ten Ways Every Christian

can care for the

ORPHAN & WAITING CHILD



143 Million orphans and waiting children.

Yes, it's a BIG number. And it can be difficult to know how one person can make a dent in a reality so daunting. However, one Christian—every Christian—can make a difference. There are many things you can do on behalf of the orphan and waiting child. Here are ten:

1 Plead with the Father for Them

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

- Pray while waiting. Go online to find a waiting child listing (www.adoptuskids.org or www.rainbowkids.com). Print out a picture and description of a waiting child and tape it to your dashboard. Every time you find yourself waiting – in traffic, at a stop-light, in the drive-thru – pray for this child. Plead with the Father on their behalf.
- Pray as a family. Cut and paste a picture from a waiting child listing to make bookmarks for your entire family. Commit as a family to praying for this child every time you open your book.
- Pray as a church. Organize an evening prayer vigil on behalf of the orphan and waiting child. Invite other churches to join you as well. You can pray for children all over the world or you can ask your local foster care office for pictures and names of waiting children in your city to pray for (you can also get these online).

2 Speak Up For Them

Open your mouth for the mute, For the rights of all the unfortunate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy. Proverbs 31:8-9

- Keep a picture of a waiting child in your wallet or purse. When you are visiting with other believers pull it out and ask if they, or someone they know, would give this child a home. Be their advocate.
- Become a Court Appointed Special Advocate. These are people from all walks of life who volunteer their time to get to know a child in foster care and speak to the court on their behalf. Visit www.nationalcasa.org for more details and to find an office near you.

3 Give Them What They Need

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? James 2:15-16

- Give an orphanage a washing machine, a crib, or a package of diapers. You can designate financial gifts to be used for an item of your choice to be given to an orphanage in the country of your choice. To learn more visit www.helporphans.org and click on the "Gift from the Heart" link on the left side of the page.
- Organize a drive to collect school supplies or shoes in your church or Sunday School department. To learn more visit www.gainusa.org (click on "Projects") or www.shoesfororphansouls.org.

4 Support Those Who Support Them

... and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds ... Hebrews 10:24

- Mow a foster parent's yard, offer to baby sit, or organize a few days worth of meals when a new child is placed in their home. And make sure you tell them often that you appreciate what they do.
- Throw a shower for a family adopting an older child. Often showers aren't thought of for adoptive families especially when the adoption involves an older child. This will serve as a great encouragement to any adoptive family.
- Sponsor a local child welfare social worker. Commit to praying for them, taking them to an occasional lunch, and sending gifts or notes of encouragement.

5 Provide Them a Safe Place

The Lord protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked. Psalm 146:9

- Consider becoming a foster parent or emergency foster parent (for short-term placements). Attend an inquiry meeting at your local foster care office to learn more.
- Build an orphanage—it's not as hard as it sounds. Visit www.worldorphans.org to learn how a gift of \$4,000 to \$8,000 can cover the building costs of a new orphanage in one of dozens of countries. These homes are built in conjunction with a local church. Consider raising this money as a small group, Sunday school class, or youth ministry.

6 Go Visit Them

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. James 1:27

- Go on a missions trip to an orphanage. You can go on a construction trip, a medical trip or a trip to help conduct vacation bible school. Taking your family on an orphanage mission trip can be life changing. Visit the following websites for more information: www.gainusa.org, www.helporphans.org, www.hopechest.org

7 Give Sacrificially to Them

Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. II Corinthians 9:7

- Support reputable orphan care organizations on an ongoing basis.
- Give financially to a family in the process of adoption. See www.shaohannahshope.com and www.lifeintl.org for more information about financial assistance for adoptive families.

8 Cheer Them On

We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. I Thessalonians 5:14

- Sponsor a child. This includes both monthly financial support and a ministry of ongoing encouragement through letter writing. Visit www.hopechest.org or www.visiontrust.org for more information.
- Over 20,000 teenagers a year "age out" of the U.S. foster care system with no place to call home. Call your local foster care office and let them know you have the desire to be a support for a child who is aging out of foster care.

9 Give Them a Forever Family

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families ... Psalm 68:5-6a (NIV)

- You can give a child a home through international, domestic, or foster care adoption. To learn more about these three types of adoption call 1-800-FLTODAY to order a free booklet entitled *Welcome Home: Eight Steps to Adoption*. You can also download this resource, explore other information and identify key adoption agencies at www.HopeForOrphans.com.

10 Mobilize Your Church for Them

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you ... Matthew 28:18-20

- Churches all over the country are making the decision to launch ministries expressly dedicated to the orphan and waiting child. The impact has been remarkable. To learn more about how you can be the catalyst in your church for sustained orphans ministry, visit www.shaohannahshope.org or www.HopeForOrphans.com.