



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
CANADA



www.soschildrensvillages.ca



WELCOME TO
SPONSORSHIP



A MESSAGE FROM MIKE HOLMES

SOS Children's Villages is the most important building project there is. It builds a foundation that will last a lifetime.

SOS Children's Villages gives children a place where they can be a kid again. A place to play, laugh, learn, make friends and do all the things a kid should do. The children are cared for by an SOS mother. They live in a caring, loving, secure family environment where their needs for food, health, shelter and education are met.

More importantly, children who were once abandoned have a place where they know they're not alone. You have made all that happen by becoming a child sponsor.

This booklet is a guide to sponsoring an SOS child, with information on how child sponsorship works and helpful tips on keeping in touch with your child over the coming years. But the most important step in the process was your decision to sponsor a child. You won't regret that. I've been a child sponsor myself for years.

Thank you for becoming a child sponsor. You have made a huge difference in the life of an orphaned or abandoned child.

Mike Holmes
SOS Children's Villages Canada Spokesperson



WELCOME TO THE SOS FAMILY



Thank you! You've just started something wonderful.

All around the world, there are children who are alone. They're alone for a lot of different reasons: they've been abandoned by their parents, they're orphaned, they're forced to fend for themselves.

SOS Children's Villages believes that no child should be alone. And so do you. That's why you've sponsored a child.

Thanks to your sponsorship, kids who were alone, abandoned, orphaned have the gift of a normal life. And the children who grow up in SOS Villages have the opportunity to become better citizens and better parents and can positively impact others. That can change the world.

You've just started something wonderful.

"It was a joy and a privilege to be able to visit my sponsored child in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. To see the love and care of the SOS mothers and Village staff towards their children reinforced the value and importance of sponsorship and donations."

Ann Bourke, SOS sponsor and volunteer

Your sponsorship is bringing hope to a child in one of our SOS Villages around the world. And your support not only helps us to make a big difference to that child, it's about something even bigger. Your sponsored child will know that someone, even on the other side of the world, is thinking about them and caring for their well-being.

Welcome to the SOS family and your journey with your sponsored child. We thank you for making the decision to do something that will transform the life of a child.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SPONSOR?

Around the world, SOS Children's Villages provides loving homes for children who have been abandoned and orphaned where basic needs for food, health, shelter, and education are met.

By sponsoring a child through SOS Children's Villages, kids who were alone and abandoned, or at risk of losing their families, can grow up safe and loved and have the opportunity to become self-sufficient.

Through your monthly sponsorship contribution, money is earmarked to support a child in a specific SOS Children's Village and gives you the opportunity to follow the progress of that child.



SOS Children's Villages offers two types of sponsorship:

Child Sponsorship:

When you choose to sponsor a child, you are giving an orphaned or vulnerable child the opportunity to grow up with the love and security of a family. Child sponsors receive information regarding the progress of one individual child living in an SOS Village.

Village Sponsorship:

When you choose to sponsor an SOS Village, you contribute towards the support of all the children living at an SOS Village by supporting its ongoing operation. Village sponsors receive updates about the people, activities and events at the SOS Village.



KEEPING IN TOUCH

As a child sponsor, you will receive two letters a year: one in the summer that includes an update on how your sponsored child is doing and one in the winter which will include an update on the events of the past year in your child's SOS Village along with a recent photo of your sponsored child.

You're more than welcome to write your sponsored child! Feel free to send them letters or a Christmas or birthday card. Don't worry about any language problems if your sponsored child lives in a non-English speaking country: there's always a member of staff to translate.

"My husband and I sponsored two children from India for many years. Now I have arranged a legacy gift so that the children in other SOS Villages will get the care they need 25 and 50 years from now."

Maria Virjee, SOS sponsor for more than 20 years

Please bear in mind that we don't oblige your SOS child write back to their sponsors, so don't be disappointed. Also, some children may not be able to write back to you due to their literacy, comfort level writing in English or because letter writing is not part of the culture in certain countries. Many of the older children, especially if they are learning English as a second language, do write to their sponsors, but it's entirely their decision.

You will find the mailing address for your sponsored child at the bottom of the SOS Village Description included in your sponsorship package.

Questions?

You can get in touch with us by calling SOS Children's Villages Canada at 1-800-767-5111 or emailing us at sponsor@soschildrensvillages.ca

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How can I update my personal information or cancel my sponsorship?

You can change your personal information by calling us at 1-800-767-5111 or emailing us at sponsor@soschildrensvillages.ca. You can contact us there if you need to cancel your sponsorship for whatever reason, whenever you want, without giving notice.

Can I visit the child I'm sponsoring?

You're welcome to visit the SOS Children's Village. To do so, we would ask that you contact the National Office in that country (details are in the village description in your sponsorship package) about a month before you go, to arrange a mutually convenient date and time.

How do I write my SOS child?

Write a letter to your sponsored child as you would any child. It is best to keep your letters simple, short and to the point. You might want to describe where you live, for example, or the weather, your hobbies and interests or how you celebrate special occasions.

Postcards or photos of where you live or where you go on holiday are always interesting and can be used as part of a geography lesson in school.

Remember your sponsored child may come from a different religious, cultural and economic context, so when sending them letters and pictures, be sensitive to their culture and society.

Can I send gifts to my SOS child?

SOS Children's Villages advises against sending gifts as, sadly, they don't always arrive at the intended destination. Similarly, your sponsored child shares a home with their SOS siblings and not all of them receive extra gifts from their sponsors on special occasions like a birthday.

What we suggest, instead, is that you send a money gift. Each sponsored child has their own savings account to be given to them once they are independent. You can contribute to this by contacting the SOS Children's Villages Canada office. This can be done by cheque or credit card and 100% of the funds go into the child's account.

If you'd still like to send your sponsored child something, may we suggest slipping a packet of stickers or some other small gift inside a card or letter? Our children love to personalize their things and it's something that they can share.

For further information on sending gifts to your sponsored child, please check our website or call/email our offices.

Where does my money go?

Your sponsorship money goes to support the child or SOS Village you've chosen to help. Each SOS mother receives a housekeeping allowance, which she uses to manage her own household budget and care for her children.

Over 80% of your monthly sponsorship contribution is sent overseas in support of your sponsored child and his or her SOS family. The rest of the money is used in Canada to administer the program and help match other children in need with new sponsors.

100% of any additional gifts you make are sent to the child's savings account which provides your sponsored child with assistance when they leave the care of SOS Children's Villages.

"I have seen SOS Children's Villages' work many times first hand and around the world. I have seen that funds raised go to children in need. SOS Children's Villages, in my experience, is a very good steward of the money and resources entrusted to them."

**Jeremy Hooper, CA, past volunteer Treasurer,
SOS Children's Villages Canada**



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CONTINUE TO LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY TO ORPHANED AND ABANDONED CHILDREN

You can continue to help SOS Children's Villages by leaving a gift in your will. This is a wonderful, practical way to carry on supporting the children in our care. For more information, please give us a call at 1-800-767-5111.

"Every big thing in our world only comes true, when somebody does more than he has to do."

Hermann Gmeiner, founder SOS Children's Villages



About SOS Children's Villages

Since 1949, SOS Children's Villages has been guided by a basic principle: a loving home for every child. We are the world's largest charity working with orphaned and abandoned children.

Through our Children's Villages, SOS offers orphaned and abandoned children a family and a loving home with a mother to care and support them in a safe environment where their needs for food, health and shelter are met.



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