

LCC Boarder/Godparent Program

A New Kind of Child Sponsorship

Global Connections has complete custody of the children who board at the Limuru Children's Centre. Due to this interdependent relationship our child sponsorship program for these boarders is of unique design to instill the following values.

1. Family

The boarders at Limuru Children's Centre are essentially brothers and sisters with the staff serving as parents. Maintaining and reinforcing these relationships are of primary importance to us since healthy family units engender healthy children. Therefore we set up our financial care like a typical family, where money is earned and put in a general pot for the care of the entire family. Money donated through the Godparent program will be put into the general fund for all the boarders.

Many sponsorship programs rent a community space and feed children one to two times a week. Because we provide shelter, 21 meals/week, clothing, schooling, medical care, and parents, our overhead is much more. We are asking that sponsors beginning in 2009 contribute \$100/month. While we recognize this to be a large commitment, this amount still does not provide the total amount needed to cover the costs of each child.

2. Relationships

Second to family is our desire for the kids to develop and maintain diverse relationships. The role of Godparent will require a long distance relationship. Letters will be sent back and forth between you and the child, thus helping you to get to know one another. This will also serve to help the child's English, writing skills, and relationship abilities. And you never know, you might become a Swahili whiz!

We would also like to do annual updates. Most sponsorship programs do provide annual updates about children to their sponsors. However, our goal is to create a reciprocal relationship. We would request that you also provide an annual update on yourself so that the children have something to hang on their lockers.

3. Growth

Our third value is to enhance growth among all parties. We want both the sponsor and child to enlarge their world-view, including understanding people from different parts of the world and other socio-economic groups.

The Limuru Children's Centre works hard to prepare kids for secondary school, and eventually jobs and university. Our oldest child is now 16 and our youngest 4. As your child hits these milestones, we will let you know. We hope you will celebrate with your child and if possible, help with the increased costs.

Questions about the program

1. How does the communication process work?

From the United States, letters will be sent to Linda Mitchell via USPS or email (205 Haysfarm Ct. Johnson City, TN 37615 or mitchell205@comcast.net.) Once every 2 months (6 times/year) starting in February, she will gather the outgoing communication and ship them to the Limuru Children's Centre. Maureen, who works at the centre, will distribute to the children, help with translation needs and oversee writing back to the Godparent. Maureen will mail correspondence from the Centre to Linda, who will distribute to the Godparents. It will be important for every Godparent to have an email account in case Linda or Rachel, our accountant, have any questions.

2. What about sending packages and gifts?

Currently we can only send things that can fit into a flat envelope. Otherwise a VAT tax is charged to Maureen as she retrieves the packages. We also want to minimize any favoritism that might arise. Only send things that are culturally appropriate and encouraging to a Kenyan child. To protect the child we will not forward materials that would be considered inappropriate in Kenya or that might threaten the child's safety. We will let you know if something like this happens.

3. Will my monthly costs increase?

We are positive the monthly sponsorship will be affected by inflation. We will let you know of the increases. Please note, since the relationship part of the program is the most essential we will not let a \$5 monthly increase keep you from a Godparent relationship with your child. Do know that

inflation, food costs, secondary school costs (when attained) and oil costs all directly affect our kids and the cost to run a children's centre (much like running a family.)

4. How is the money spent?

100% of your donation will go to the Limuru Children's Centre boarders. Global Connections will not deduct administrative expenses from your donation. This is true of all money donated with a specific designation through Global Connections. Also, money donated toward your child through Global Connections is tax deductible.

5. How do I contribute my monthly amount?

There are three ways to donate. 1) You can set up automatic withdrawals through our online donation page at www.GlobalConnectionsOnline.org – click Donate Now. On this page you can designate for child sponsorship on behalf of your child. You must select that you would like for this to be a reoccurring monthly donation. 2) Automatic withdrawals set up by filling out a form that can be obtained from contacting the Global Connections office. (phone 662-327-4676) 3) We will accept checks that cover 6 months (\$600) or 1 year (\$1,200) of sponsorship. Checks should be made out to Global Connections with sponsorship program in the subject line.

6. Why do you call us Godparents?

We are looking for people to come along side the staff at the LCC to support the children as they grow up. Our hope is that your relationship with them will enrich their lives to a greater extent than would have been possible without your involvement. This is administered through your concern for their physical, mental and spiritual well-being and growth. We ask that you pray for this child, talk with them about their beliefs and your beliefs and encourage them in their life with Christ. We pray that your life will be just as enriched. And we hope that the investment from your heart will impact the children relationally and spiritually, just as you would for your own children.

“Traditionally, the godparents were counted informally responsible for ensuring that the child's religious education was carried out and for caring for the child should he/she be orphaned. Today the word "godparent" may not have explicitly religious overtones. The modern view of a godparent tends to be an individual chosen by the parents to take an interest in the child's upbringing and personal development.” (Wikipedia, Godparent). We think this is an exceptional understanding of Godparents

and it lends a bit of urgency as our children are orphaned and therefore your role is of great importance!

Thank you for coming along side us and our kids as we hope, pray and work for a better tomorrow.