

Chance for Children Educational Concept

Vision

Street children in Accra should be given love and security and the opportunity for academic and vocational education, so that they will be able to assume responsibility for their own lives.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Fundamental Values

We believe...

- Every human being is a gift from God
- Every individual deserves recognition and respect, regardless of gender, race, age, or religion

We strive to...

- behave respectfully to one another and to others
- value individuality
- promote education
- support each child's psychological, academic, social, and physical development
- foster each child's individual abilities
- respect and protect children's bodily integrity
- create a peaceful, loving atmosphere
- foster critical thinking
- create a balance between learning, work, and relaxation
- teach children to learn and follow the rules of their culture and society
- foster a mindful attitude toward plants and animals

1.2 Educational Philosophy, Methods, and Procedures

a) Fostering the children's self esteem

- Use of praise; emphasis on the child's strengths and positive traits
- Setting achievable goals and work requirements
- Weekly conversations to establish clear goals

b) Supporting the children's reintegration into their families

- Building trust among family members
- Children visit their families every two months

- Semi-annual meeting between the responsible team and the child's family members
- Family members are included in decision-making about the children's schooling and choice of future work

c) Preparing the children to take on responsibility

- Children take on formal job assignments
- Children are responsible for taking care of their own belongings
- Teenagers assume staff assignments on weekends

d) Building the children's social, factual, and personal knowledge and skills

- Each week, CFC's departments jointly undertake a case study to evaluate one child's progress and set goals for further work
- The children's grades and progress reports at school are discussed
- Discussion of any conflicts among the children; training in conflict resolution
- We foster self-discipline in children's behavior

e) Teaching the children to handle money

- Children receive a daily, weekly, or monthly allowance, according to each child's ability to handle money
- We provide workshops in financial literacy
- Children receive a pocket money allowance and guidance in using it
- Children are encouraged to take outside jobs

f) Promoting the children's individual decision-making about their vocational training:

- One-month interships in various firms after graduation from school (duration of schooling is determined according to the ability and age of each child)
- The youths look for their own apprenticeships or work-study positions, with support from the CFC team
- CFC staff hold conversations with the youths in which their ideas are discussed and taken seriously; CFC then supports implementation of the ideas

g) Promoting the children's relationship with God

- The children live according to Christian values
- The children attend weekly worship services as a group
- The children participate in workshops on religious education

2. CFC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

a) CFC's work on the streets

Target group: All children who live in the streets

Goal: Build street children's trust in the social workers and help them find the courage to face each new day. Give them the chance to reflect on their life situation and make plans for possible alternative perspectives on their lives.

Intervention: CFC staff make rounds by day and by night in various neighbourhoods in Accra where street children are numerous; workshops; individual conversations; group activities; referrals to other NGOs

b) The Drop-In Centre

Target group: Boys and girls, ages 6-14, living on the street. (Note: CFC cannot accept children with substance abuse problems or severe psychiatric illness.)

Goal: Give children a respite from the daily struggle to survive on the streets and enable them to achieve new perspectives for life on, or away from, the streets.

Interventions: medical first aid; an opportunity to wash and shower; a safe place to sleep; recreational activities; handcraft workshops; academic lessons; and hot meals.

c) Hebron House

Target Group: Boys, ages 6-18, who are unable to return to their families and who are enrolled in school or an apprenticeship program.

Admission requirements: Fulfilment of internal criteria (see attached list of criteria): independence, personal hygiene, social and academic competency

Goal: Ensure that the boys have a daily routine, go to school, take responsibility for their daily life and develop themselves in various competency areas. Every six months, the support team evaluates each boy carefully, and new goals are set.

Interventions: Formal job assignments; outings; age-appropriate and theme-oriented workshops; meetings; tutoring; supervision of household chores; supervision of schoolwork; celebration of rituals and Christian holidays

d) Girls' Dormitory

Target Group: Girls aged 6-18 who are unable to return to their families and who are enrolled in school or an apprenticeship program.

Admission requirements: Fulfilment of internal criteria (see attached list of criteria): independence, personal hygiene, social and academic competency

Goal: Ensure that the girls have a daily routine, go to school, take responsibility for their daily life and develop themselves in various competency areas. Every six months, the support team evaluates each girl carefully, and new goals are set.

Interventions: Formal job assignments; outings; age-appropriate and theme-oriented workshops; meetings; tutoring; supervision of household chores; supervision of schoolwork; celebration of rituals and Christian holidays

e) Older youths in supervised cooperative living situations

Target Group: Boys and girls who have completed their schooling or are in job training programs

Goal: Ensure that the youths in the co-ops live responsible, self-directed lives and gain experience in living with others.

Interventions: Workshops; monthly meetings of all the youths with the social workers; weekly visits from social workers to the co-ops; visits to work-study placements; monthly allowance, occasional opportunities to work in other departments of CFC.

f) Children in families

Target group: Boys and girls from extremely impoverished circumstances whose family members cannot raise or take responsibility for them without support.

Goal: Ensure that the children in these families have a structured daily routine, are enrolled in school, and occasionally take part in CFC workshops.

Interventions: Workshops; monthly family visits from social workers; monthly financial support; holiday celebrations as a group

3. OTHER IMPORTANT THEMES

3.1 Collaborating with Parents

Working together with parents or other family members is very important to CFC. The children and their parents should make progress toward mutual reconciliation. It is important to us that our work with the children be transparent. To achieve this, we run semi-annual parent events and schedule individual meetings with parents whenever an important decision needs to be made. Parents are always welcome at CFC.

3.2 Work with Families of Origin

A high priority for CFC is that the children eventually be reintegrated with their original families. We see this as a goal that cuts across all parts of the organization and defines the work of all CFC's departments. The only condition is that the family of origin be willing to take on the child, whatever his individual characteristics, and be capable of assuming responsibility for him or her, especially with regard to supervision. CFC is in position to offer families financial support and to assign social workers to work with them. The support is continued either until the family is once again capable of caring for the child, or until the child reaches independence (for example, upon completion of an apprenticeship).

3.3 Foster families

Integrating children into foster families is a recurring topic. CFC encourages foster placements for children who have no close relatives able to take responsibility for them. In such cases, CFC works in conjunction with “Social Welfare” to locate and choose foster families.

3.4 Team Growth and Development

We meet regularly to reflect on our educational work and to evaluate ourselves in order to continue to develop as a team. Exchange and cooperation with other NGOs that work with street children is also very important.