

**[ DSWD MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 002,  
August 21, 1991 ]**

**GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY LIFE  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICE THROUGH FAMILY VOLUNTEERS AND  
FOSTER FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN IN LINGAP CENTERS**

Every Filipino child deserves a family which loves and cares and teaches faith and values that will instill pride and dignity in personhood and in being a Filipino. But there are children who are deprived of these and, worse, are abused by their own parents.

Shelters and professional care cannot substitute the family. There is nothing that can grow in love and faith, where there is a Lolo and a Lola, a Tatay, a Nanay, a Kuya & an Ate who give and receive love.

We are convinced that as our problems grow in complexity and urgency we need to go back to the basics — building families of work and love, of faith, caring, respect and discipline.

Let us support families fulfill their functions, serve as sanctuary of Filipino values, values that can help us face the worsening socio-economic and political threats. Let us help our families draw from their inner strengths so that they can realize their potentials and use these for common good — link them to a source of livelihood so that they can meet their physiological needs, link them to education sessions so that they can improve on their roles as family members — support them so that they can do what they need to do.

**Lingap Centers** have been established to provide substitute parental care to street children under specially difficult circumstances; as such, the Center approximates family life with the houseparents and other staff working as a team. It is in this context therefore that families will be tapped and enable children in Lingap Centers to further enhance family life. This strategy under the *Family Life Development Service* has two schemes namely, Members of Families as Volunteers, and, Foster Families. Volunteers and Foster Families could be identified from DSWD groups and Church groups who have had formation on family life.

This scheme will provide a chance to the Lingap children to stay with a family and experience family life.

Most of the children in Lingap Centers are between the ages 7 to 14 years old and have had traumatic family life experiences that drove them to the streets. Generally, they would rather be on their own than be returned to their families.

Moreover, therefore, aside from providing them family life experience, the foster families should be able to provide opportunities for them *to learn a trade for eventual independent living*.

The following are the guidelines in the operationalization of the strategy: Family Life Development Service in Lingap Centers.

## **A**

### **Members of Families as Volunteers**

This scheme is envisioned to provide Lingap Children the opportunities to relate and develop enriching relationships with volunteers e.g. lola, lolo, tatay, nanay, ate, kuya, tita, tito, to meet their needs.

These volunteers will go to the Lingap Center during their free time and day on a regular basis to undertake activities that will encourage children to relate with them as a group or individually to meet their needs such as: to unburden their fears, frustrations, and unhappiness; share their hopes and dreams; learn ways of coping with their problems; teach values; enrich their spirituality; and learn their cultural heritage; tutorial; and learn productivity skills.

#### *1. Criteria for Selecting Members of Families as Volunteers —*

- a. Positive attitude towards children.
- b. Ready to share time, resources and self.
- c. Non-abusive behavior and can be a role model to the children.
- d. God fearing

#### *2. Where Can We Find These Volunteers —*

- a. We have a rich source of lolas and lolos from our Senior Citizens' Associations
- b. For tatay and nanay from our mothers, clubs, Parent Effectiveness Service volunteers, Self-Employment Assistance recipients
- c. For *kuya* and *ate* from our Pagasa Youth Movement and Parish catechetical groups
- d. From civic and religious groups.

Touch base with DSWD's organized groups especially those living within a walking distance to the Lingap Center to defray transportation fare.

#### *3. Orientation of Volunteers —* When volunteers are identified and same have expressed commitment to the program, then the next step is orientation.

The orientation will give emphasis on understanding the dynamics of a street child, clarifying the stigma attached to children placed in institutions, how to establish a sharing/loving, and learning relationship, value inculcation and developing trust and faith in God.

#### *4. Monthly Dialogue with Volunteers —* Volunteers are considered a member of the "treatment team" and the monthly dialogue with the social workers in the Lingap Center will be a venue for enriching the capability of the volunteers, exchange of observations to help a particular child, clarify concerns, and sustain interest of the volunteers.

#### *5. Accreditation of Volunteers —* After a sustained and positive experience as a volunteer in Lingap Center, the volunteer is accredited as a DSWD volunteer and is

issued an ID signed by the DSWD Secretary

## **B**

### **Foster Families for Lingap Children**

There is no substitute for family life in the development of a child.

In addition to the following criteria please consider the qualifications of a foster family care as developed by Bureau of Child and Youth Welfare.

#### *1. Criteria of a Foster Family*

- a. the whole family is willing to accept a Lingap child as a part of the family
- b. the foster families are those engaged in livelihood activities which will give the child opportunity to learn a trade and prepare him for independent living, such as farming, weaving, wood carving, carpentry, furniture making, vending, swine/poultry raising, vulcanizing, motor repair shop, electrical appliances repair shop, etc.
- c. family is God fearing and possesses good moral values
- d. family does not practice abusive behavior
- e. a genuine interest in parenting a non-related child
- f. capability in caring for and handling children with problems
- g. healthy/harmonious relationships with each family member
- h. good moral character and emotional maturity
- i. good physical and mental health
- j. sufficient income to meet the basic needs of the family
- k. have been legally married, although single persons may be considered under special circumstances
- l. ability to help the child return to his biological family or accept his new family.

#### *2. Foster Families Can Be Identified from:*

- a. DSWD recipients/clients e.g. Core Shelter families, SEA families.
- b. Church Groups — Family Life Apostolate couples, CFMers, Catholic Womens League, other religious groups
- c. Other families meeting the qualifications of foster family.

#### *3. Licensing of Foster Families — Guidelines developed by Bureau of Child & Youth Welfare for licensing of Foster Families will be followed.*

We would suggest that each municipal and district unit should have at least one licensed foster family.

ex.: Batangas Province has 26 municipalities and at one given time we have a resource of 26 foster families to take home a Lingap child.