



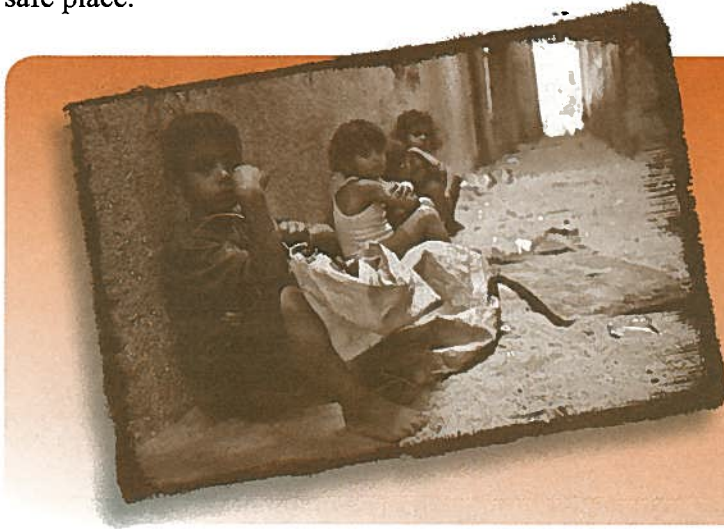
**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**

A loving home for every child

whose hand will get
to her first?

On a cold night when the lights in the city are dim, when the shops have closed down and people have gone home ... imagine being all by yourself in unfamiliar surroundings. A place where every sound is a sign of danger, where the only comfort and warmth you will find on a chilly, windy night is in a cardboard box, half hidden in the shadows of a side street.

You can hope that there are no vagrants or drunks lurking around, no rats that will squeal and run over your legs. And maybe, the nightmare will go away tomorrow. You just have to get through this night. And find a safe place.



To live like this – homeless, on the street, without family, and with no help is a tragic reality that many children face every day.

So what happens when a nice man walks up to you and offers his hand, promising you some food to eat, a shelter to stay in and a warm bed? You find it hard to say 'no thank you'. Millions of children across the world accept, and are then betrayed by their trust in the kindness of strangers.

This world can be a place filled with nightmares for the orphaned and abandoned children living on the streets. Often, the path they take is chosen for them because there are no good hands reaching out to them. They are victims of gang warfare, of violence, and exploitation of all kinds: prostitution, begging, child labor, child soldiering.

There are those who will buy and sell these children as commodities. They molest their bodies and feed on their innocence, recruiting them into peddling drugs, handling weapons, and fulfilling the lust of those who will pay for it.

Welcome to the life of a child who has no place to call home.

This was Siloni's life before SOS. Read her story in the attached insert.

Without your help, chances are that the people who do take their hands are the ones who want to take advantage of them, their youth, their innocence. . . but with your help, we can reach such children before they do!

Even as you read this letter, there are children being sexually exploited and abused, many of whom have lost their parents. It is estimated that approximately 1.2 million children are trafficked each year and more than 250,000 are thought to be involved in diverse fighting forces (as child soldiers).

But what can you do to solve this global problem? The most effective way is to help SOS extend a hand to these children before the drugs, the crime or the prostitution get to them. And being a part of the solution is easy – **continue to be a friend to SOS Children's Villages.**

Who will extend a caring hand if you don't?

It is upon the kindness of people like you to reach out to them: to give them protection from those who want to hurt them. Abandoned children worldwide are easy prey to the people who abuse them at every conceivable opportunity. These children who grow up as victims often tend to become abusers themselves, preying on younger ones.

This vicious cycle of abuse can and must be stopped. Your caring touch is the one kind act that will make a world of difference. You can be a trustworthy hand for them to grasp.

I'm hoping with all my heart that you'll help rescue more children from such a terrible fate. All little souls need a place where they can grow into healthy confident adults who can contribute positively to society. They deserve a family who will guide their upbringing. They have a deep need to be loved and accepted like any child does. And they have a right to a childhood.

Your increased support can break the cycle of violent abuse and exploitation.

You can help make sure these children turn into responsible and caring citizens. By giving abandoned children their childhood back, by giving them the love and acceptance they need and yet cannot ask for. By lending them a helping hand when they need you the most. *This is the way to break the cycle where the victims grow up to become abusers.* By making a generous donation to SOS Children's Villages.

Your tax deductible contribution can save a child's life. No matter how small the amount, it can make a huge difference. Your one little act of generosity will finally put a stop to the cycle where the abused becomes an abuser.

It will give a child like Siloni her hope to live a normal life. It will bring in its place a new cycle – where a young abandoned child gets a home, a loving family, an education and is brought up to be a responsible and caring citizen of the world.

Don't stand by and do nothing!

Be the caring touch, the end to the violence, abuse and pain that orphaned and abandoned children face. Hold out your hand, and give them back their childhood before innocence is lost.

Thanks for your support,



Heather Paul, Ph.D.
Executive Director

P.S. Please fill out and return the enclosed form with your gift in the postage-paid envelope

P.P.S. Who will take her hand if you don't? Help SOS Children's Villages save a child like Siloni from the hands of an abuser. Give a generous gift today!!