Sponsored Child Communication Policy

**Letters**

Your sponsored child will write you a letter in Creole at the end of each school year. We will have these translated into English and mailed to you. If you would like to send a letter, card, or photo back to them they would love to receive it. Letters from their sponsor are a great encouragement to them and they often read them over and over again. When you mail them to our post office box, we will send them to our staff in Haiti; they will translate them and deliver them to your child. Our policy restricts communication to only letters at this time. *Regrettably, packages and other gifts cannot be sent.* Because of strict mailing and customs regulations in Haiti, anything other than a standard lightweight letter can result in high cost or be very time-consuming to retrieve once it reaches Haiti.

**Social Media (Facebook, Email), Phone, etc.**

With the growing popularity of social media, our world is becoming smaller and smaller. Imagine you are scrolling through your Facebook or Instagram feed and you get a friend request from your sponsored child. You are so excited to see the request and think “Yes, I can communicate directly with my sponsored child!” You think this would be something great, but in the world of sponsorship, it is not always.

*You are probably asking, “Why?” Wouldn’t it be more efficient in time and money?*

It possibly could, but it could also endanger the child you sponsor and maybe even their family. It can also put our Hope for Haiti’s Children staff in an unnecessary or challenging situation.

There are times that we are not sure that it is actually your child behind the account. Opportunists who know this child is sponsored could create a fake account and start asking for money, or threaten the safety of the child or their family. Social media accounts are hacked every day using the person’s own photos as bait for unsuspecting friends.

Without a well-established process of communication between the two parties, unintentional consequences may occur from differences in language and cultural norms. Something you may write in English or convert into Haitian Creole via Google Translate can easily be translated inappropriately, even with good intentions.

It may seem to be easier and more cost-effective to communicate through social media, but our policy does not allow it at this time. So, if you get a request to be friends on social media, **please don’t respond**, even to say, “I’m sorry but I can’t talk with you in this manner.” And please let us know about the contact. If it happens in Facebook or Twitter, please use the site’s “block” feature to block the person from asking you to be their friend. I know this may sound harsh, but please try to imagine what could happen if these guidelines weren’t in place and we want to ensure that all communications are filtered through our staff in Haiti so that they can help us make decisions that are in the best interest of the child. Thanks so much for your willingness to respect our communication policies. If you have any questions, please let us know by calling our office at 866-314-9330.