

## MEMORANDUM



January 2014

**From:** Miracle House Administration, US & Kenya  
**TO:** All concerned parties regarding Miracle House affairs  
**RE:** An update of upcoming necessary changes Miracle House must make to align with Children's Department and New Constitutional Rulings in Kenya

As always, it is the desire of Miracle House the organization and its leadership to function in the highest level of integrity and to honor the governing authorities of the land.

Miracle House began to serve children out of a heart of love and a calling from God. We have done our best, by God's grace and provision, to feed, clothe and educate the children God brought to us.

In the beginning our requirement to take children into our program was: each child had to have only one parent and that parent being sick (HIV positive or other terminal illness). We began in Limuru with 23 children in 2006 and in Webuye in 2008 with 35 children. Our mission was to care for the needy and orphaned children alongside the guardians. Children came to Miracle House during the day and returned to their guardian for the night. We provided food, preprimary education, (for a time even held classes for class 1-3), provided for uniforms, school fees and tuition for our children attending primary schools in the region. Our plan was to develop our ten-acre parcel of land outside Nakuru for full time care for our children. We dreamed of giving them a safe and loving home (out of the dangerous slum environment) where we could educate them and teach trades as well.

Through the years we began to realize some of the information given to us originally by guardians was changing; basically some of the guardians had lied initially about the children's family situation. We continued to serve the children, resolving they were still 'needy' even if they were not orphans. We took the advice of a friend in similar ministry and adjusted our entry requirement to only orphaned children. Even so and with documentation, somehow the stories change through time. As the years passed we have found ourselves in difficult positions when the guardian was no longer available for the child, the reasons varied; abandonment, death, insanity and imprisonment. Our dilemma, looked like this: When the children had finished their evening meal and it is time to go "home" to the guardian and there is no longer anyone there for them, what do you do?

The best we knew to do was to arrange for a house, a house mom, and additional care for the children in these situations. As we progressed, the number of children in this situation increased. Soon this was the case in both Webuye and Limuru. At a point we even moved one family of children from one location to another because of available space for boys and girls in separate rooms. Our intentions were pure and good; doing the only thing we knew to do, to keep from sending a child out to the streets.

When meeting with the Children's Department, we were advised against this because we didn't qualify and weren't registered as a Children's Home officially in Kenya. We began trying to re-locate the children to family members where available and to well wishers (people willing to help on a temporary basis) in the community when there was no family. We have been making progress in finding relatives, but they are not able or willing to care for the children full time. We have spent days and weeks trying to reach family members in remote areas as much as 4-5+ hours from our centers. I'm thankful for the work of the Miracle House staff, as it was my privilege to visit some of these distant family people on my last trip. I witnessed our children being able to see or meet grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins they haven't seen in years. One group of siblings was even able to see the grave of their father, which was important for them in processing his death. Over the holiday several of our children stayed with their people and enjoyed their time together. We were pleased at the progress we were making in connecting our children with their people. Still, these extended family members are not able to take the full time responsibility for the children. For elderly or other relatives with their own families, the financial requirements to feed and educate their own children are a strain, and even more when talking about adding a group of siblings to a household.



In mid December 2013, there was a meeting held by Children's Department with county and government representatives, this bringing to the table the regulations of the new Constitution and its implementation. One of our Miracle House teachers attended the meeting as the administrative staff was traveling with me to other locations. (This meeting fell between the Christmas celebrations of Miracle House in Webuye and Limuru. So what was very new and fresh information and shared briefly at the Limuru celebration and guardian meeting 13th Dec., was yet unknown at the Webuye celebration and guardian meeting the week prior.) It became apparent at the Children's Department meeting that it is necessary to completely remove all children from any type of overnight stay at Miracle House, even in emergency and desperate situations and all children returned to their region.

The grace period we had been given to find placement for the children had come to an end. Unfortunately, we still had some children that we had found nowhere to send them. So in desperate situations we moved quickly to make decisions for children who have nowhere to go. In most cases we have had to take an option to send them to boarding schools. Our staff is currently working quickly to make arrangements with schools for these children. This is not a bad option but it is more costly and takes them from our care to an environment where we will not be able to speak into their lives as regularly as we have been. We love our children and desire to be with them and encourage them, not just pay their school fees. Please pray with us, as we do not currently have the funding for this additional expense.

During the school breaks throughout the year in April, August and December we will have the children spend their break time with their extended family members that have been located, as we had already begun implementing. In a few cases well-wishing community members have volunteered to take in the children during break time, until family options where the children will be safe, can be found. We will be working closely with the Children's Department on these special cases. We have several individual children and also a few family units of 2, 3, or 4 children that we will be bring before the Children's Department for help and advice. We continue to work to build good and open relationships with the Children's Department and other government agencies designed to protect children and advise those of us who are called to bring aid to the desperate, needy and orphaned children of Kenya.

In the big picture, we realize our goals and desires to provide full time care for our Miracle House children will not be able to happen as we originally planned. Although they are "needy" most actually have some living family member. The Children's Department guidelines require children with living family members to stay with their people. Our dream of one day moving to Base Camp in Nakuru with our current children just is not a possibility. Most of our children do have extended family somewhere, this is a blessing and we are thankful for family, but it does change our view into the future. Some of our children live with elderly grandparents who have been waiting and greatly desire for us to care for the children full time.

It has always been our desire to keep our Miracle House children connected with their people, but our dream of having a 'home' for these children is not possible. This reality applies to most of our current children. Although, it is possible and still our desire to have a "children's home" for other children who are completely without any family, but first we must find the path of continued care for those we already serve. We are thankful to God for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our children! We are thankful and humbled to work with and be supported by sponsors, donors and prayer warriors around the world. This work is not done alone, God is at the helm of the ship and many give time, resources and energy to its sailing with the children being our goal.

It is our desire to continue ministering to our current children, who we have loved and cared for now for several years. We know these children are indeed "needy" and we don't want to abandon them or their care.

Immediate changes include; no longer housing or teaching any one at Miracle House. We will operate feeding and outreach programs only. Having said this, we realize the facilities we have both in Limuru and Webuye are larger than necessary and our staff is also more than will now be needed. In the next few months there will have to be changes and adjustments. It is with a heavy heart that I realize we will no longer be able to give the care we would like for our children in the most desperate situations, those who need full time care. We also will have to once again move from our now nice and comfortable accommodations that provide plenty of space for our children to a smaller facility to save the money for additional school fees for boarding students. We will also need to reduce our staff that will no longer be needed for the services we can no longer provide.



Please pray with us, as these are not easy decisions to make. It is only by the grace of God, our commitment to integrity in all things, and responsibility to honor and abide by the laws of the land that we make these difficult decisions. We will move forward! We will, in every step trust God to lead us and guide us – He is ALL we need!

We are working on individual and family cases and will provide our current progress and plans for each of our transitional cases to the Children’s Department. We will be asking for their assistance in ways to help these children into the future.

To our children, our staff, our guardians, our board of directors, our sponsors and supporters: we say thank you! Thank you for standing with us in this season of change. We will choose to see this not as negative, but as opportunity! We will remain positive as we seek the Lord for direction. We will keep you up to date as information is available. God has great and mighty plans for Miracle House! As I frequently say: “He loves these children even more than we do!” “He is their/our Provider!” We will continue to serve children out of a heart of love and a calling from God!

#### AN ENCOURAGEMENT ~

I will share with you... the Lord is already revealing some new ideas and direction that will allow us to continue to care and provide for our current children (in a bit of different way) and enable us to minister to more children in the future. All of this at Base Camp, Nakuru... AND we will be visiting and checking on the children at their respective schools on a regular basis.

Please pray with us for confirmation, process, plans, preparation, funding for progress at Base Camp and the straight path to the way forward for our future! We are meeting with Children’s Department representatives as well as the Ministry of Education as we enter an information seeking process. We ask and receive, seek and find, and as we knock ... will be delighted to share how the doors are opening!

We are not fearful, we are faith-full – we know a FAITHFUL God!

We are “Bringing hope and healing to the hopeless and helpless” –

We are “Motivated by the heart of God, meeting the needs of the children of Kenya”

~ FAITH – HOPE – LOVE ~ FOOD - CLOTHES – EDUCATION ~

We know “He is FOR us, not against us”! He is our Way Maker!!

We are MIRACLE HOUSE!

Blessings,

Deanna Bjork, Founder and the  
Administrative Staff of Miracle House (US and Kenya)