



POSITION STATEMENTS

GCF is a Child Protection Organization promoting the rights of children through a comprehensive model and specific programs contained in our mission.

GCF operates from the conviction that children have the right to grow up in a family and this principal is embedded in the GCF vision:

Children in Secure Families

The GCF position statements are based on the principles of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), the UN Guidelines for Alternative Care and more specifically within South African Constitution and Bill of Rights and the mandate of GCF's registration in compliance with the South African Children's Act 38 of 2005. True to GCF's Christian ethos, no child, family or organization in need of services will be excluded based on religion, race or gender



THE CHILD

- GCF defines the "child" as per Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC), as "every human under the age of 18 years"

THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

- GCF will in all its programs and services take into consideration the child's chronological age, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing, their safety, security and opportunities to grow and develop.

THE RIGHT TO FAMILY

- GCF upholds the right of every child, to reside with his/her parents or family. A child who is parentless, or who is temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family shall be provided with alternative family care.
- GCF does not view "poverty" as sufficient reason to remove a child from parental care.
- GCF promotes "family" as a place of nurture, care, respect and honour, rearing and protecting children, where all members have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and commitment to each other and therefore takes a firm position against cultural and social practices within families that are harmful to children.

ALTERNATIVE FAMILIES

- GCF is resolute about the thorough screening and preparation of potential foster families and a matching process where a child is placed in the care of a family that can best meet their needs.
- GCF believes that the provision of early intervention and prevention services strengthens Kinship and "at-risk" families and keep children safe.
- GCF adheres to the Hague convention with regards to promoting local adoptions and inter-country adoption as a last resort only.

Child Participation

- GCF will uphold the right of every child to be heard and will be given adequate opportunity to be part of the decision making regarding his/her care plan and placement.
- Where children are unable to speak for themselves, GCF will speak on their behalf and the child's best interest principle will apply and will be upheld by a team of professionals, within the ambit of the Children's Act and other legislation as well as the GCF Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policies.

TEMPORARY SAFE CARE OF CHILDREN (TSC)

- GCF promotes TSC with holistic services as a transitional phase for children who have been found in need of care and protection and long term institutional care as a last resort, in a residential facility with appropriate programs.
- GCF's admission panel ensures optimal information gathering for the preparation of an Individual Care Plan for every child with a focus on reunification or alternative family care placement.
- GCF promotes a therapeutic program for children in TSC as well as access to healthcare, early learning and education.
- GCF encourages appropriate contact between families and children.

EXIT PLANS

- GCF pursues reunification and reintegration of children with parents and family and alternative families with the view of stable placements and relationships that last a life time.
- GCF is committed to keeping siblings together and separation only in extreme circumstances when regular visits are promoted to maintain relational connection as far as possible.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- GCF adheres to policies and procedures with regards to the protection of privacy and confidentiality of all matters regarding the child in care, their reason for admission and their family situation.
- GCF will adhere to its media policy with regards to the use of photographs and publishing information on the social media and press.

LINKING AND LEARNING

- GCF acknowledges that various stakeholders play a role in child protection and will actively share information regarding programs and practices, including training and in turn learn from other others, locally, nationally and in African and other developing countries.

GOVERNANCE

- GCF acknowledges its responsibility to donors, stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- Within the confines of the protection of privacy of children and families, GCF provides its services in a transparent and participatory manner.
- GCF adheres to strict governance and fiduciary standards.