



Host Family Information

Thank you so much for opening your heart and home to our children and staff. We greatly appreciate the sacrifices you and your family are making to host the choir! We hope they will be a blessing to you. These children have been selected and prepared to promote, educate and bring awareness to the countless orphaned and at-risk children throughout the world during this tour. The goal of International Children's Network and its Matsiko World Orphan Choir is to have these children become fruitful and contributing members in their own countries.

Each family that has hosted Matsiko in the past has reported hosting as a positive and motivating experience. We work hard to continue this high standard with your experience. Our goal is to provide safe and appropriate housing for our children and staff. We hope you will help us accomplish this by following the guidelines below. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at anytime.

First of all we must begin from our promise made to all nations interested by asking you to help us in communicating to all parties that NO child will even be considered for adoption.

The Host Family must be present for the Host Family Orientation. An adult from each host family must personally pick up and transport your children from the meeting. If extenuating circumstances do not allow for this, then please make arrangements with your Host Coordinator before the choir arrives.

If you have any questions or medical emergencies while the children are in your care, please contact **Don (253) 217-7531 or Jennie Windham (253) 455-1882** (cell phones always on).

There are three main responsibilities for Host Families:

- 1. Transport team members to and from the drop off point on time each day.** We must keep a tight schedule, and it is **imperative** that the children are on time. If the children are late and cause the team to be late for a performance or venue, we will ask to have the children moved to another home. The children are not allowed to ride in a vehicle with a driver under the age of 21, and every child must have their own seatbelt in every vehicle they ride in.
- 2. Provide breakfast and a sack lunch each day, as well as evening meals when they are not performing.** The kids have grown accustomed to eating just about anything. However, due to the age of the children and the amount they sing (as well as dance, yell and talk), our doctors and friends who are professional singers have advised us to have the children **AVOID EATING SUGAR AND DAIRY**. A little sugar for tea or some pizza is okay, but ice cream, milk and sugared drinks are not. The children need to drink lots of water, and 100% juice, fresh fruit and sugar free popsicles are great alternatives.
- 3. Provide a safe and comfortable environment for team members to sleep in away from other members of your family.** Sharing beds, sleeping on blow up mattresses or even sleeping on the floor with blankets and a pillow are all acceptable sleeping arrangements. Please **DO NOT allow children to share a room or bed with any member of your family**. Bedtime is at 9:00 pm. Because the children have such a busy schedule, it is important they get a good night's sleep. Please do your best to adhere to this bedtime. Some of the children **may wet the bed**. You may want to use plastic covers for their mattresses.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. How difficult is host housing for the average family?** Families always say the experience is MUCH EASIER than they ever imagined. The leaders and children help with the dishes, clean up and perform other household duties. Our goal is for you to experience the magic of the children without lasting evidence of visitors in your home. We expect each house to be better off after the children and leaders leave.
- 2. Is it possible times and dates might change?** Although we provide you with a schedule for your time with Matsiko at the Host Housing Orientation, there is always a chance something will change. We may have a last minute venue added, which provides an opportunity for us to reach even more people with Matsiko's message. It

is important for us to take each of these opportunities, but we will communicate any changes to you as soon as possible.

3. **Can we give the children gifts?** The children love to receive gifts! And the team depends on gifts in many ways. However, due to space limitations and character development, we ask you to handle gift giving in the following ways:
 - The best gift you can give the children you host is a Memory Page of their time spent with you. At the end of the tour, we put together a scrapbook for each child that is filled with their Memory Pages. Each page should be 8½ x 11 and can be given to an ICN staff member or sent to the ICN office at PO Box 7695, Covington, WA 98042. Please **DO NOT put your last name, address, phone number or email address** on the page. Also, please do not make your own album or box of photos to send with the children. They are allowed a limited amount of luggage to take home, and they do not have room for individual albums.
 - If you would like to give a gift to a specific child, we ask that you work this out by speaking with the tour director and then sending it to the ICN office at the address listed above. We cannot have children keeping many gifts because of the limited space we have while traveling. We also wish to prevent children competing for gifts or learning how to “angle” for gifts. If the gifts are sent to ICN, the children don’t see other friends with gifts and feel like they should have more gifts too.
 - You may give gifts to all of the children so no child feels like they have been left out. Please speak to the tour director first, as it may be beneficial to send these gifts to the ICN office as well.
 - Please see the attached “Wish List” for ideas of gifts that can be made to the team to be used while travelling.
4. **Will the children know how to operate simple household appliances?** At first, no. The children do not have showers and simple electrical appliances in their homes. Please take time to orient them to your home and surroundings. Things that are normal, everyday tasks for us are not for them.
5. **Can we drink and smoke around the kids?** Due to the severe abuses that many of the children have faced, we request that any alcohol or tobacco use be discreet or abstained from if at all possible while the children are present. The kids have been counseled on this, but the uncomfortable feelings that arise from abuse may linger with them.
6. **Can the kids be around pets?** Absolutely! We do ask that your pets do not sleep in the same room as the children. Since the children are not used to animals, it is best for an adult to supervise the children and pets to make sure they can handle and care for the animals properly.
7. **Can we help with laundry?** YES! Please speak with the leader in your home to find out individual laundry needs.
8. **Can we plan activities for the children?** You may plan activities for the children when they are with you in the evenings or on days off. Please check with the leader in your home before making any plans for the children. Some children may be unable to participate in these activities because of illness, misbehavior, or unfinished homework. We ask that you respect the authority of the leader staying with you and follow any guidelines they give the children. Please remember to include the leader in your plans. Our leaders are all volunteers, and they do not have the resources to pay for activities done with host families. If you want to plan an activity for the whole choir, please speak to the tour director. We must balance school, play and performances for the best interest of the children.
9. **Why isn’t my host child performing or participating in activities?** The child may be sick or not feeling well; the child may not have completed their assigned school work, or the child may be in time out due to misbehavior. Please understand that we have each child’s well-being in mind, and we appreciate your help as we work to provide them the best overall experience, even when it requires occasional time outs.
10. **Can the children use computers or phones?** The children know not to use any of these devices. This is important for the protection of your family, as well as for the Matsiko children and staff. We do allow the children to use computers and phones to communicate with their families or orphanages, but this is done **only** under ICN supervision on ICN computers and phones.

- 11. What about TV, video games and movies?** TV, video games and movies are great activities for families to do with the children. Unsupervised use should not be allowed. Please use the same guidelines as you would for your own impressionable young child.
- 12. Can the children be left unattended?** Children may be left unattended if there is an ICN leader present and the host family approves.
- 13. Can we write to the children?** If you would like to write to the children/staff member you hosted, send it to the ICN office, and we will make every effort to get the letters to them on the road. Please **do not include your address, email or phone number.** If you would like a letter in return, include a stamped self-addressed envelope.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

- 1. For the children’s safety, they are **NOT** allowed to jump on trampolines, ice skate, roller skate/blade, ride ATV’s (4-wheelers), motorcycles, horses or bicycles. These children do not understand simple risks (like putting their hands in spokes on a bicycle tire to stop it), and so there are major health and safety risks with activities like these. The children must not ride in a vehicle with a driver under 21. Every child must have their own seatbelt in all vehicles.
- 2. Please **DO NOT** discuss the children’s past history with them. For some it is very painful and embarrassing.
- 3. Please contact the Tour Directors with any questions or medical emergencies. Don (253) 217-7531 or Jennie Windham (253) 632-8181 always have their cell phones on.
- 4. Do not take the children to the doctor or hospital unless it is an emergency. Do not sign any medical forms. ICN Staff will take care of any hospital/medical paperwork.
- 5. Children must stay with the ICN staff when they are dropped off each day. Please do not call the children out of practice or meetings. Please do not go behind the stage or in dressing rooms while the choir is meeting. We need to keep the children focused and concentrated in preparation for every performance.
- 6. Once the children are in your care, please do not let others pick up or take the children out or spend the night at another home. If you are asked by a sponsor or another person for the child, please have them call ICN.

SPONSORSHIP

If you would like to sponsor one or more of the children or staff members you hosted or make a onetime donation to ICN, please fill out the form below. Sponsorship is \$35.00 per month and helps cover the costs of housing, feeding and other needs of the child. All sponsorship and donations are tax deductible. You will receive a packet in the mail with ICN information and a biography and picture of your child. You will also be able to write your child at any time and even have the chance to visit them in their own country face-to-face on an ICN service trip.

Mail this slip with your first payment to: ICN, P.O. Box 7695, Covington, WA 98042

I would like to sponsor a child for \$35.00 per month
 I would like to make a one time donation \$_____

I will be paying by Check # _____ \$_____
 Please charge my credit card once \$_____

Card type: Visa Master Card AmEx Exp. Date: _____ 3 digit code (on back) _____

Card number _____ Signature: _____

PLEASE SET UP MONTHLY AUTO PAY

Through my bank \$_____
 From credit card (\$2.00 service fee per month) \$_____

Bank Name: _____ Acct # _____ Routing # _____

Sponsor Name: _____ Child I would Like to Sponsor: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: ____ Zip code: _____ Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____



WISH LIST

- Donations to ICN/Matsiko – to be used at the discretion of ICN for most needed expenses
- Gift Cards that can be used for gas, food, medicine and other needs to help offset the cost of transporting and caring for the children. (Walmart, Little Caesar's, Target, CVS, Shell, etc.)
- Clothing to replace worn out or out of season items for those travelling – speak to the Tour Director to find out specific needs
- Toiletries: Soap, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, razors, Chap stick, Vaseline, Lotion, Pony Tail Holders, Bobby pins, Head Wraps, Hair Brushes/Picks
- First Aid & medication Items: Child & Adult Cold Medication, Child & Adult Tylenol/Ibuprofen, Motion sickness, throat lozenges, cough drops, Skin & Foot Care Medication, all First Aid Items
- Personal Care Items: Female Pads, Night Time Pull Ups, Water Proof Pads for Bed Wetting
- Other Items: Bottled Water, Travel Snacks, Laundry Detergent, Dryer Sheets, Ramen Noodles, Underwear (boys/girls sizes), Socks (kids and adult sizes)
- School supplies: Please see tour staff for most needed
- Cash Donations for needs such as cleaning costumes, medical attention, vehicle maintenance, occasional entertainment (Disneyland, museums, parks, etc), lodging when host housing is not available, etc.
- Our US staff members are all **volunteers** who have taken a year off school or work to care for the children's daily needs. Gift cards for their personal use would be greatly appreciated. You may also provide monthly support for their travelling expenses.