

morning tears newsletter

Volume 6, No 3, July 2011

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Editorial

In this issue, we focus on the theme of optimism and hope in helping the situations of children who have gone through terrible loss and alienation in their societies caused by the imprisonment of their parents.

In response to the ongoing financial crisis, the US administration took a backwards step in the area of family planning by cutting down funding for NGO and aid-groups working for the children of prisoners this spring. At the same time, the worldwide prison population is increasing, and so are the numbers of their children who need the help that organizations like morning tears provide.

Yet, on the other side of the world, the Chinese government has recently implemented legal revisions to policies concerning capital punishment and child beggars. It is exactly this kind of high-level judicial reform that Morning tears works to make possible, and, in turn, provides the hope for Morning tears' work. The problem of children left behind often lies in structural policies that do not address the children of prisoners, and this is why Morning tears works in close cooperation with the state in each of its registered countries. We are therefore deeply grateful to the civil affairs bodies who work with us in solving issues related to child care and protection in all of our registered countries.

In reality, morning tears is an organization that works on all levels –from individual donors to global corporations; with students as with retirees; from volunteers to professional social workers, diplomats and ministers. Every day, we strive to focus this huge amount of love on one group in particular: those children who need our help. Morning tears is becoming ever more international and we are constantly meeting new volunteers speaking new languages, broadening the possibilities for the change we can make.

While we acknowledge the gravity of the issues with which we get involved, that involvement would not be possible without all of the people who take the time to do something good for others. Being 99% volunteer-driven, Morning tears invites you to continue helping us, to continue to improve Morning tears International, and to continue to improve the lives of children across the globe.

On the behalf of the children, the morning tears team thanks you!

Koen Sevenants,
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News

Resilience

Children who undergo the trauma of abuse and the incarceration of their parents must rely on one fundamental character-trait in order to overcome depression and live happy, fulfilling lives. That character trait is **resilience**: the ability to persevere and adapt when things go very wrong. Therefore, it is an important responsibility of Morning tears caretakers to teach and instill resilience in the children whose lives they are a part of. Resilience takes many forms, and must come from understanding, love, and hope; it is a concept of self, and grows with the charity and sympathy of others.

The children of Morning tears have experienced devastating events that can easily lead to feelings of hopelessness. Without understanding and support, they may blame themselves, become pessimistic about life, and lose sight of everything life has to offer in the face of overwhelming misery. Signs of depression include statements such as “I feel like life is an endless series of problems with no solution in sight” and “I feel like I have little control over the things that happen to me”. Three basic sources of resilience help children overcome adversity: I HAVE, I AM, and I CAN. “I have people who I trust and who love me without condition”, “I am a person people can like and love”, “I can find solutions to my problems”.

Morning tears caregivers must have a deep understanding of the development of resilience in children, a process that takes many years and constant support and involvement. Starting from infancy, children must learn about trust and autonomy, both in caregivers and in themselves. Caregivers display model behavior by creating positive environments with and gradually prepare children for adverse situations in life by reading and telling stories or playing games. Over time, caregivers involve children in discussions of ideas, teach them that actions have consequences, and help children with recognizing their feelings and emotions as well as those of others. By age 8, children begin to develop self-image and concepts of success; at this age, caregivers encourage their efforts in school and their hobbies outside of the classroom. These children learn empathy with the involvement of others, and the golden rule of responsibility –treat others as you would have them treat you.

Morning tears maintains a checklist for resilience in children: they are praised for their actions, have people to talk to and who listen to them, are curious and like to achieve, believe in being able to make a difference through their own actions, have a sense of humor, focus on tasks, make plans, know what they want to do, and, finally, have someone who loves them.

Eurochips

Eurochips is a Europe-based network of organizations and individuals acting to bring the children of imprisoned parents to the fore of social and judicial policy (www.eurochips.org). In May, Eurochips launched the European Prisoner Children Campaign, which calls for better prison visiting hours and conditions for children with incarcerated parents, as well as the establishment of monitoring groups that will uphold these conditions through appeal to the European Parliament.

Morning tears proudly supports this effort.



... Some further readings to understand the work of morning tears

Children of Incarcerated Parents by Kathrine Gabel and Denise Johnston (1998)

Focusing on the United States, this book analyses the emotional reactions displayed by the children of incarcerated parents. The book offers guidance to aid social workers and others working with children whose parents are in prison to help meet children's needs and prevent future offenses, delinquency etc..

All Alone in the world by Nell Bernstein (2005)

This book written by an American journalist who himself grew up with an incarcerated father and includes the personal stories of families and children who are or have been affected by incarceration in addition to a critique of the social and policy forces driving their often uncertain futures.

When a Parent Goes to Jail: A Comprehensive Guide for Counseling Children of Incarcerated Parents by Rebecca Yaffe and Lonnie Hoade (2000)

Written for both adults and children this therapeutic book aims to help children understand their parents' situation and their feelings.

Partnerships



Morning tears is very proud to announce its five-year partnerships with the Marriott-Renaissance Hotel, Chaoyang, Beijing and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Financial Street, Beijing.



Did you know that?

- For every child that lives under the wings of morning tears there is a contract between the imprisoned parents and Morning tears.
- Morning tears has very strict rules for the use of visual images in publications.
- Morning tears has a strict code of conduct for journalists that visit morning tears programs.
- Morning tears requires consent from the legal guardian of the child for activities and therapies.



Morning tears Italy

By the time you read this newsletter, Morning tears Italy will have had celebrated its opening ceremony! Morning tears Italy will continue the effort of morning tears International by supporting children locally and across the globe. Also, the Italian version of the morning tears website (www.morningtears.it) will have been launched online.



Morning tears Barbecue

The fifth annual morning tears Charity Barbecue was, by popular opinion, even better than the last. Despite a sudden torrent of rain, the event was a complete success; as usual, Belgian waffles by The Tree and food by Renaat Morel were washed down by the consistently flowing beer provided by The Tree and Vandergeeten. The Hoegaarden, Stella, and Chimay were complimented by live music and produced a crowd of dancing, smiling adults, while the many children enjoyed face-painting and a maze of cardboard boxes. The raffle was a great success, with many winners as usual, and contributed to the funding of morning tears operations. Morning tears would like to thank the Ambassador of Belgium for the use of his lovely garden, as well as all of the old and new faces in attendance, and those who made the event possible.

Thank you!



Morning Tears' strategy

In this issue, we complete our discussion of research-based minimum standards for childcare and protection. In the last issue, we finished outlining the standards in quality care concerning caregivers –the ensuring of quality childcare and protection through specific consideration of each child's needs, and subsequent professional childcare training based on an observation of those needs, both generally and per individual child. Here we outline the standards in Quality Area 7: management and administration.

Standard 7.1: Appropriate program records are maintained

Comprehensive records relating to the administration of the program are maintained

Files and records exist for:

- *Childcare plans and records of all decisions taken*
- *All personnel employed by the program*
- *All policies and procedures*
- *All financial and resource transactions and accounts*
- *Daily events that have taken place*

All files and records are accurately laid out, regularly updated and - where appropriate - accessible

Why is this important?

- Good quality, well maintained records detailing events which have occurred in a child's life can be used effectively to help children gain a better sense of their own identity over time and explain why events have taken place
- It reflects the precautions taken to avoid employing or continuing to employ unsuitable staff
- Record keeping assists the caregivers and program in charting and monitoring any undertaken work, and also building on successes and lessons learned
- Records serve as useful evidence for fundraising purposes

Standard 7.2: Children's confidential details and records are respected and maintained

Programs should have a clear policy on confidentiality and both caregivers and children are made aware of this

- *Records are securely locked away and accessed only by those who need to know about the content, and only when they need to know*
- *Information about a child is not passed on to other agencies unless absolutely necessary and then - where possible - only with the informed consent of the child*
- *Children should have access to their files and caregivers should assist them in understanding the content*
- *Children's experiences and life histories are not used without the child's informed consent. And all information that could expose the child's identity should be omitted from any publication or advocacy material*

Why is this important?

- The development of trust between children and caregivers is essential if quality work is to be undertaken
- Children have the right not to have intimate details and records of their own and their family's lives passed on to other people without their knowledge and without acknowledgment of their individual feelings



Standard 7.3: Owners and managers of childcare programs are accountable

Managers and owners of childcare programs are responsible for the services their programs provides, and monitor such services at least monthly

- Information contained in the statement of aims and objectives is reviewed regularly and progress is monitored
- It is useful to have external monitoring and evaluation of the services to gain an independent perspective on the services rendered
- Measures to enhance management accountability and promote transparent and open dialogue of issues should be established through discussions with both the children and the staff
- Opportunities for children's participation in decision-making are also developed to enhance childcare developments in the best interests of the children

Why is this important?

- The objectives, aims, and goals of the program are continually enhanced and developed in conjunction with global and local changes in situation
- Members of the management are deeply involved and invested in the social work in which they are engaged; they hold a personal stake in the betterment of civil society and childrens' lives
- By involving children in the progress of their own lives, they are given a sense of autonomy and responsibility. This is a big part of the rehabilitation of children in program centers.





Coming Home Project – Henan



What happened in the last three months (April to June)

- The Vice Minister of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China, **Dou Yunpei**, came to the Coming Home Program with a team of 18 people. He left with documents about child-protection and the child-care standards of Morning Tears to use for further study inside the Ministry.
- We had birthday parties for 11 children. Every kid received the gift they had dreamed about. Medical staff from the United Hospital Shanghai came to the center to train all caregivers in first-aid procedures.
- All the children visited their parents again in May and June in 8 prisons in Henan province. Most children were happy to see their parents, while some were too overwhelmed by emotion and did not want to.





About Finances

Passing away is something we all avoid thinking about. But you can actually help morning tears children in the process.

Morning tears is now able to receive donations through individual testaments. In certain countries, this has a number of legal and financial advantages. In the many countries where morning tears is registered, it is often the case that a certain percentage of the post-mortem assets you intend to transfer to your inheritor(s) is paid to state as tax. However, donating part of your holdings to a registered charity significantly decreases this levied tax, resulting in both a larger inheritance for your benefactor(s) and ensuring a positive social use for your assets.

Morning tears can legally advise you as per your specific country. Donations can take the forms of both money and real estate.

Please do not hesitate to contact info@morningtears.org if interested.

Relevant Actuality

On May 20, representatives from Xinjiang Autonomous Region's Women's Federation, Xinjiang Mothers Cooperation Association, Urumqi Charity Federation and 50 prisoners' mothers visited a prison in Urumqi. The goal of this action was to reach out to the prisoners encouraging them to improve for a quick and successful return to society. The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region's Women's Federation and the Xinjiang No.3 Prison signed an agreement to care for prisoners' children through cooperation with related departments.

Source: www.womenofchina.cn/html/report/130182-1.htm

A project with the intent of keeping prisoners involved in their children's lives, [Aunt Mary's Storybook](#) is a big success in American prisons. When participating in the project the incarcerated parent can read a letter, story, diary etc. into a recorder and send it to their children.

Aunt Mary was founded in Illinois by Jana Minor and her sisters after their real aunt Mary left them \$40,000 in their will. Founded in 1993, the program has expanded rapidly during the last few years. They have sent books as far as to Canada and have even had a request from an inmate to send a book to China.

Source: beaconnews.suntimes.com/5453725-417/aunt-marys-storybook-helps-incarcerated-parents-stay-connected-with-their-kids.html

An online campaign to publish photos of child beggars has been launched in China. The aim is to assist authorities in cracking down on gangs that kidnap children and to help reunite kidnapped children with their families. The Ministry of Public Security has announced that citizens can dial 110, a police hotline, if they suspect children are being organized or forced to beg on the streets

Source: www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-02/12/content_11989979.htm



morning tears Belgium

BNP Paribas Fortis
 Account No: 001-4495454-65
 IBAN: BE 18001449545465
 BIC/SWIFT: GEBABEBB

morning tears Netherlands

ABN Amro
 Account No: 45.75.13.764
 Stichting Morning Tears Nederland
 IBAN: NL81ABNA0457513764
 BIC/SWIFT: ABNANL2A

morning tears Spain

La Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions
 Account No: 2100.0233.99.0200332319
 IBAN: ES28 21000233990200332319
 BIC/SWIFT: CAIXAESBXXX

morning tears Denmark

Danske Bank
 Account No: 10490189 Reg. Nr. 1551
 IBAN: DK14 3000 0010 4901 89
 BIC/SWIFT: DABADKKK

morning tears in China

Bank of China, Beijing Xi Cui Lu Sub-Branch
 [中国银行北京西翠路支行]
 Account No: 4160-3000-1880-2623-90
 Beneficiary: Guo Zhi Hong (郭志弘)
 BIC/SWIFT: BKCHCNBJ110

morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have lost their own world.

morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have suffered or are suffering heavy emotional pain.

We focus particularly on:

- children whose parents are in prison;
- children whose parents have been sentenced to death;
- children who have been abused or neglected;
- orphans;
- children who haven't been registered at birth, and thus have no rights;
- street children.

morning tears has been operating since 1999 on an informal basis without legal structure. However, in March 2005 morning tears became a formal non-profit organization registered under Belgian Law. Currently, morning tears has offices in Belgium, Spain, The Netherlands, Denmark, France, Italy, Russia, the USA and China.

morning tears is run mainly by volunteers. These volunteers are mostly professionals from the social sector or development aid workers, although we also have journalists and engineers in our group.

The running costs of morning tears are kept very low, so that donations can go almost entirely to the children in need.