



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES

# A Loving Home for Every Child



Photo: SOS program in Elenos, Greece



**Mission:** We build families for children in need, we help them shape their own futures and we share in the development of their communities.

**SOS Children's Villages** is the world's largest organization dedicated to the protection of orphaned, abandoned and other vulnerable children and youth.

Across 135 countries, and over 570 villages, SOS provides comprehensive intervention, care and empowerment. What makes SOS unique is our individualized approach to the needs of every child in our care supported by a scalable model.



SOS Children's Villages builds loving, stable families for orphaned, abandoned and other vulnerable children in 135 countries, including the United States. In addition to providing family-based care for kids who would otherwise grow up alone, SOS supports struggling families so children can stay with their parents and helps at-risk teens navigate the road to adulthood. Through family strengthening programs, long-term care for children, education and job skills training, and emergency relief efforts, SOS provides life-changing support to millions of children and families worldwide each year.



Child Rights & Safeguarding

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Youth Employability/Vocational Training

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Girls' & Women's Empowerment

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Violence & Trafficking Prevention

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Family Strengthening

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Economic Inclusion & Sustainable Livelihoods

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Sexual Reproductive Health Rights

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Enabling Agency & Promoting Youth Voices





## PREVENTION

### Strengthening families and communities

At SOS, we combine short-term aid and long-term guidance to strengthen families so they are better able to care for their children and to protect them from child labor, child trafficking, and other threats to their safety.



## LONG-TERM CARE

### Building loving, stable families for vulnerable children

Children who have no family or no family care become part of a new family at one of our SOS Villages, join an SOS-supported foster family or are cared for by relatives who benefit from SOS services.



## EMPOWERMENT

### Setting young adults up for success

To increase youth employability and unlock young adults' full potential, we provide education, life skills development, vocational and entrepreneurship training, soft skills development, access to internships, mentoring and more.



## MOVEMENT BUILDING

### Advocating for children's rights, voices and lives

We work with other development agencies, governments and communities to advance initiatives that help children and families, and to raise awareness about the rights of children and the responsibilities of those around them.



Emergency Relief & Resiliency



Child Safeguarding



Gender Equality



**1 in 10** children is at risk of growing up alone

**357M** live in areas affected by armed conflict

**263M** children and youth are not in school


**51%** of the world's refugees are children

**70M** youth are unemployed







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- A close-up, profile view of a young Black girl with dark, curly hair. She is looking off to the side with a serious, contemplative expression. She is wearing a light-colored, patterned top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus brown.
- 1 in 8** U.S. children under the age of 18 are abused or neglected
  - 1 in 17** kids spends time in foster care
  - 70%** of youth in the juvenile justice system have been in the child welfare system
  - 60%** of girls who are sex trafficked were in foster care
  - 54%** of U.S. foster youth graduate high school
  - 2 – 9%** of those who have aged out of foster care earn a college degree – at any point in life.



**The foster care crisis** is a root cause of some of the most critical challenges in our society. The child welfare system **reflects** and **reinforces** other drivers of **inequality**.

While there is no single factor that triggers family separation, the following are common drivers of instability that leave 1 in 10 children at risk of growing up alone:

- Domestic Violence
- Substance Abuse
- Exploitation
- Civil Unrest
- Demographics

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Between 2012 and 2016, the number of children and youth in foster care rose 10% - nationally - from 397,600 to 437,500. (US Department of Health and Human Services)

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Working with partners, we provide care and support **to millions of children and youth** around the world, through family strengthening, social protection, education and vocational training, health care, emergency relief, counselling for mental and social well-being, and prevention of violence and exploitation. All these areas are recognized as priorities under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. SOS contributes to SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17. However, five SDGs – **1, 4, 8, 10** and **16** – are central to our strategy to ensure the greatest impact of our work and partnerships on children's outcomes.



SOS is privileged to work with many committed colleagues from across the child rights community to bring global attention to the situation of children without parental care. In a historic first, the United Nations General Assembly selected its theme for the 'Rights of the Child' resolution for 2019. The resolution will be tabled at the UN General Assembly in 2019.



## The Americas

	136	SOS Children's Villages
	148	SOS youth programmes
	4	Foster families and transit homes
	109	SOS family strengthening programmes
	11	Education programmes
	4	SOS social centres
	5	Emergency response programmes

## Europe

	116	SOS Children's Villages
	205	SOS youth programmes
	31	Foster families and transit homes
	162	SOS family strengthening programmes
	58	Education programmes
	79	SOS social centres
	8	Emergency response programmes

## Asia and Oceania

	173	SOS Children's Villages*
	214	SOS youth programmes*
	2	Foster families and transit homes
	115	SOS family strengthening programmes
	159	Education programmes*
	38	SOS social centres
	7	SOS medical centres
	11	Emergency response programmes

## Africa

	147	SOS Children's Villages
	152	SOS youth programmes
	188	SOS family strengthening programmes
	251	Education programmes
	38	SOS social centres
	64	SOS medical centres
	10	Emergency response programmes



When families struggle, children suffer. SOS partners with parents and caregivers whose children are at risk.

Developing a robust, personalized plan to improve conditions for the entire household, SOS streamlines access to a safety net of critical support services that stabilize vulnerable families and position their children to thrive.

Last year alone we helped **98,000 families** or over **500,000 people** through our family strengthening programs.



Photo: SOS Guatemala





Photo: SOS Thailand



When children have no family, or cannot stay with their family, we give them a safe home – together with their biological siblings.

SOS Parents raise children with personalized care, and ensure they receive the love, education, medical attention and emotional support they need to flourish.

Last year, we provided alternative care to almost **77,000 children and young people** around the world.



## EMPOWERMENT

Unfortunately, youth who spend prolonged periods of time in vulnerable situations, or in traditional foster care, are shown to lack the security and support needed to thrive and become contributing members of society. Through the SOS model, however, we are able to address their individualized needs through **a 360-degree approach.**

Rigorous academic support transforms those who are withdrawn and failing out of school to proud graduates with ambitious life goals. To prepare youth for independence, we supplement formal academics with life skills, hard skills and soft skills, positioning them for lifelong personal and professional success.







SOS staunchly represents the interests of vulnerable children and youth with governments and international actors, ensuring this population is visibly included in policy and funding frameworks.

As part of our 2030 strategy, we are building on this success and scaling our evidence-based work at the local, national and international levels.



Providing children with protection and care before, during and after emergencies is a cornerstone of SOS. As a recognized and trusted part of local communities, we understand their unique needs and challenges.

In 2017, SOS Children's Villages managed **34 emergency programs** in 26 countries and territories, including Ethiopia, Haiti, and Syria.

In times of crisis, we:

- Deliver food, water and aid
- Rescue and reunite children with their families
- Offer protection and care for traumatized children at our SOS Child-Friendly Spaces

Because we are on the ground for the long term, children can count on our support **for as long as they need it.**

We are a trusted partner of:





*Syrian girl at a refugee site in Gevgelija, Macedonia.*



*SOS staff member welcomes baby and mom upon arrival at transit station in Macedonia.*

An unprecedented **68.5 million** people globally have been **forced from home**. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over **half of whom are children**.

SOS is actively supporting displaced and refugee children and their families impacted by conflicts and crises in Syria, Ukraine, West Africa's Lake Chad region and Venezuela.

## Our main areas of focus include:

- **Protection:** child-friendly spaces for children; temporary care and housing for unaccompanied minors
- **Health:** medical and psychological support for children and their family members; hygiene kits; and health kits for babies
- **Food and non-food items:** baby formula, food packages, blankets and tents
- **Communications:** Internet connectivity and mobile charging stations to assist in family reunification efforts





Est. 1990

SOS Illinois has provided the highest quality of care for the most vulnerable children and families in the greater Chicago area. Currently, we operate four sites: an 18-home Village in Lockport, a 19-home Village in Auburn Gresham/Englewood, a 14-home Village in Roosevelt Square, and Casa Tepeyac, which serves the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago with family strengthening services.

Lockport Village



Chicago Village



Roosevelt Square Village



Casa Tepeyac







Est. 1993

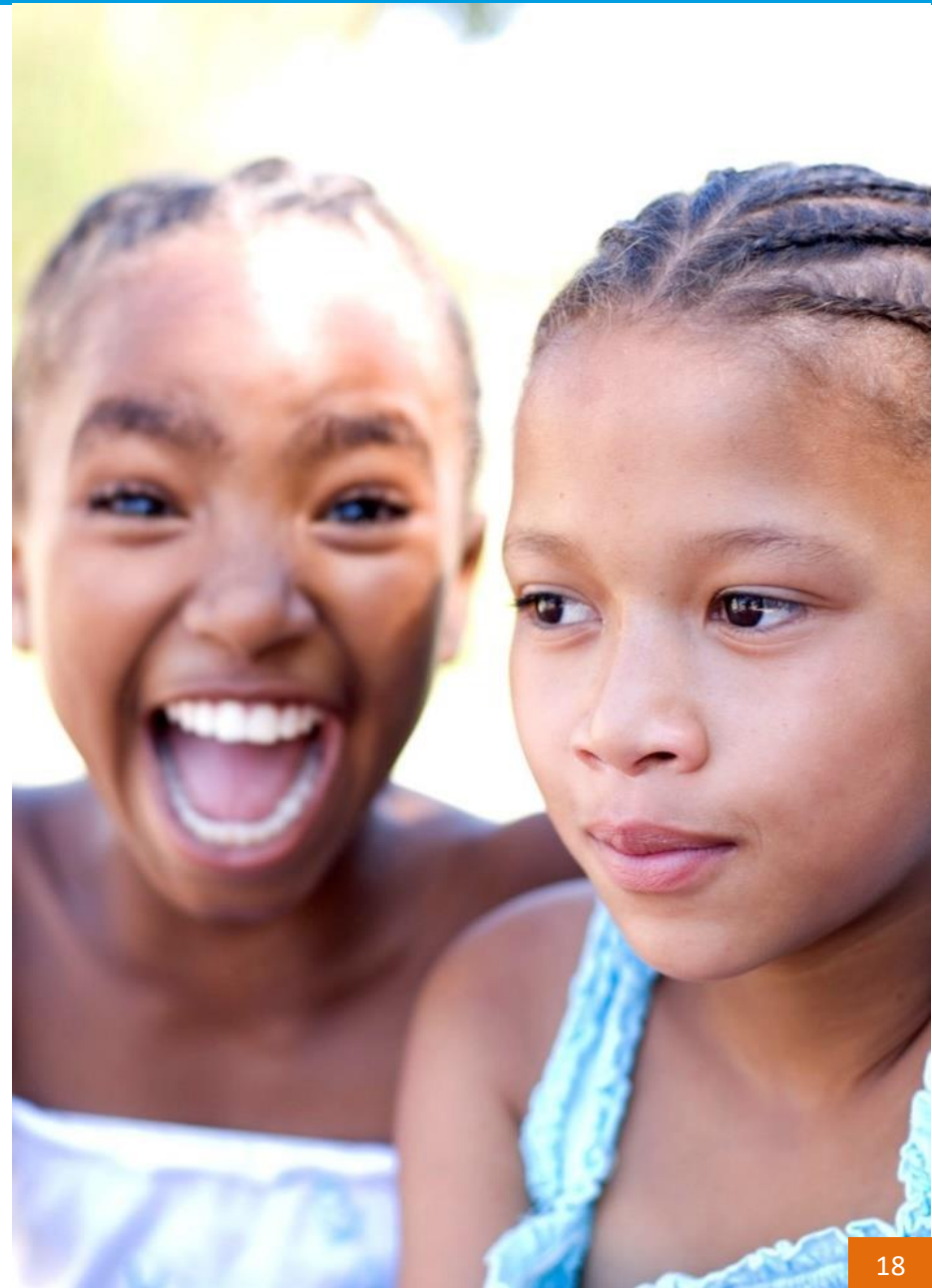
SOS Florida has provided the highest quality of care for the most vulnerable children and families in Broward County. The tree-lined street of our foster care neighborhood has twelve houses, which are home to up to seventy-five boys and girls.

Like all SOS Villages, Coconut Creek allows for brothers and sisters, who are typically separated while in foster care, to live together and maintain their family bond. A nurturing and vibrant environment, combined with an array of services, helps children overcome their past traumas and build a successful future.

Coconut Creek Village



Community Center



**Poor educational and professional outcomes are too often a reality for foster youth. SOS changes that.**

## **What happens when a child turns 18?**

We understand that it's not just what we do for children while in our care that counts, but what we do to equip them for life beyond the Village and foster care. This is why we have developed a number of programs that cater to those transitioning to independence to set them on a path to success.

## **What are these programs?**

In Florida, SOS runs the **Next Steps** program to help young adults transition out of foster care after they turn 18. Because of these services, our alumni continue to have a family to turn to and a home to visit no matter how old they are. Today, although 46% of foster youth will experience homelessness, **100% of Next Steps clients are maintaining safe housing** and **95% of Next Steps clients are enrolled in college** and/or employed full time.

In Illinois, SOS runs the **College Bound & Beyond** program, which provides the guidance foster youth need to pursue their passions – beyond secondary school and into adulthood. Services include support with securing affordable housing, employment, financial literacy, and assistance with college applications and visits. Year after year, **100% of CB&B participants graduate** high school—more than twice the national average of 54% for foster youth.

## **Corporate Internships & Career Readiness**

SOS regularly partners with the private sector, across a variety of industries, to give foster youth access and insight into the job market. Through shadowing, mentoring and vocational training initiatives with the seasoned professionals of today, we help build the leaders of tomorrow.

## Reunification

At SOS, family is at the core of everything we do. If children are able to reunite with their biological families we facilitate that process, and continue to provide support to caregivers and children to ensure they are able to move forward successfully. Maintaining a support network outside of the Village is critical to ensuring the success of those who have spent time in the child welfare system – in early life and beyond.

### Example follow-up services include:

- counseling on an individual, group, and family basis
- referrals to service providers
- support services for cultural and community activities
- parenting education and coaching
- employment and immigration support

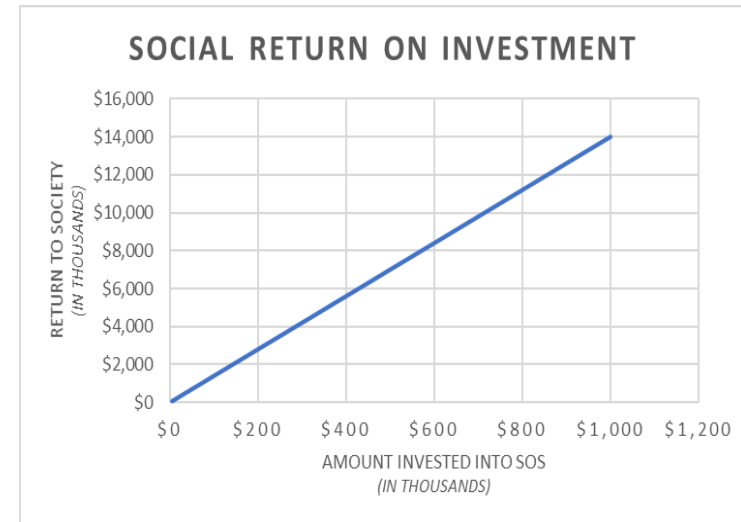
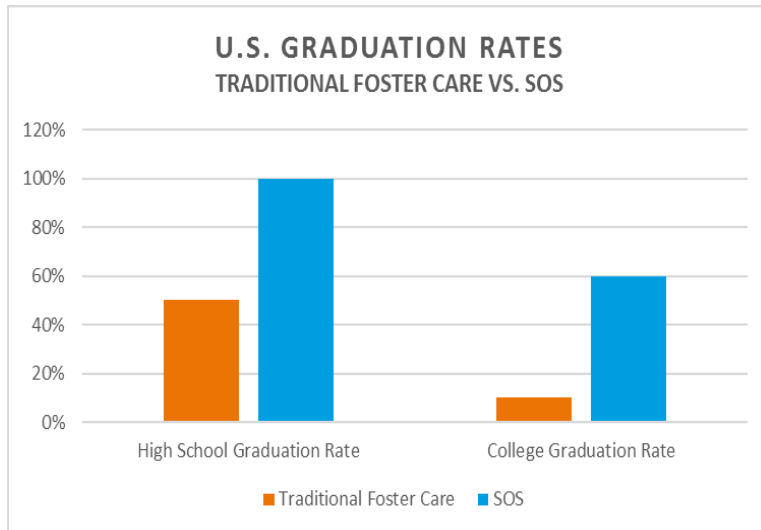
The percentage of children we were able to **successfully reunite** with their biological families has grown from 20% when SOS Florida opened 25 years ago to 80% in 2018.



## Because the SOS model works.

Our comprehensive approach – strengthening families and communities, providing long-term care for children, educating and empowering youth, and advocating for children's rights – transforms the lives of millions of children and families each year.

**In fact, 100% of SOS foster youth in the US graduate from high school and are 6 times more likely to graduate from college than youth in traditional foster care.**



**According to Boston Consulting Group, every \$1 invested in SOS programs yields a social return of \$14.**



## Mission

We build families for children in need, we help them shape their own futures and we share in the development of their communities.

## Approach

Our comprehensive approach – preventing child abandonment, offering long-term care for children in need and empowering young people with the resources to reach their full potential – transforms the lives of millions of children and families worldwide each year.

## 2017 Impact

Long-term care

**595,100**  
children & families helped



Education & training programs

**284,300**  
children & youth helped



Emergency response services

**2.08M**  
SOS services provided



## Meet Barbara

Amidst political turmoil, Barbara was forced to leave Haiti and her mother behind at just 13 years old. Along with her three siblings they sought political asylum in the United States living with their father in Florida.

After being removed by Child Protective Services, they were split up and placed in foster care.

Not until she was 17 and arrived at SOS Florida did she finally feel at home and like a kid again—feelings that she attributes to the structure and love provided by her SOS Mother, Ms. Brenda.

Barbara felt supported and ultimately **thrived at SOS Florida**.

She graduated from Florida Atlantic University in 2013 with a B.A. in Social Work. After graduating, she joined Child Protective Services in Greentree, Massachusetts.

*“I joined Child Protective Services at the very same agency that handled my case in foster care. I wanted to make a difference in the lives of girls and boys like me. I wanted to help the children that aren’t lucky enough to end up in the care of SOS.”*

– Barbara Alcena







*"I was always assured that my dreams were attainable, and that my talent was special. This encouragement and support gave me the confidence and hunger to chase my dreams."*

- Mavis Chirandu

## Meet Mavis

Mavis was abandoned and found on the side of the road when she was a baby. She grew up at the SOS Village in Bindura, Zimbabwe.

Mavis discovered her passion for soccer in the village playing with her SOS brothers and sisters. Throughout childhood, her passion for soccer was supported.

In 2016, she joined the Zimbabwean women's national soccer team and went to the Summer Olympics.

Mavis credits her upbringing at SOS for allowing her to realize and pursue her ambitions without fear or hesitation.



## Meet the Shehu Family

**Barda**, Mom, **Ardi**, Dad and **Arba**, Daughter

Barda was raised in an orphanage and lost her right arm and leg as a child, while Ardi has been disabled since childhood. When their daughter Arba was born, they found that she suffered from respiratory problems and severe allergies.

The family sought help from SOS Children's Villages and received assistance to address their immediate needs: food, the correct medication, counselling and financial assistance. SOS also provided Barda a new prosthesis and Ardi an electric wheelchair.

**The comprehensive SOS approach helped Ardi improve his business and set the Shehu family on a path toward sustainability and self-reliance.**

*"If it hadn't been for SOS Children's Villages, we'd be starving...SOS Children's Villages gave us hope for a better tomorrow."*

– Ardi Shehu



Photo: Shehu Family from Tirania, Albania - Ardi, Arba and Barda

# Some of Our Supporters and Champions



“SOS Children’s Villages provides the foundation for life to children who need a place to call home.”

– Nelson Mandela



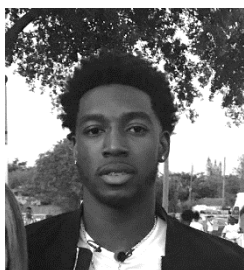
"SOS Children's Villages practices global responsibility in a world of crisis and as such is seen as a torch of hope - hope above all that, with the right frame of mind and a committed effort, peace and happiness will triumph.”

– His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama



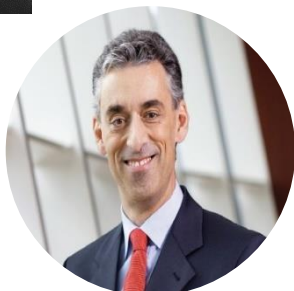
“The SOS model of providing care for children without parental care is one of the best. We hope more people learn about their programs and give them support”.

– Angelina Jolie



“SOS changed my life and helped me get here.”

– Calvin Ridley, NFL Player (and SOS Florida Alumnus)



“With SOS Children’s Villages we have developed an approach on how to support marginalized young people during the critical transition from education to employment. It is fantastic to see the young people benefitting from the experience of our employees and the opportunities offered enhancing their confidence and self-esteem.”

– Frank Appel, Global CEO, DHL Group / Deutsche Post





Johnson & Johnson

Deutsche Post DHL  
Group



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LIPPINCOTT

**HUGGIES** BRAND



Over the last **seven decades**, SOS Children's Villages has received a multitude of international awards and honors, including:

- Fourteen-time Nobel Peace Prize Nominee
- Save the World Award
- Mother Teresa Gold Medal
- The Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize



## How Can You Help?

### **DONATE TODAY**

Your donation will provide orphaned and abandoned children with loving homes, quality educations, access to medical services, and hope for the future. By contributing to SOS, you are affording a child in need the chance of a lifetime – a loving home and the opportunity to grow up safe and happy.

### **START A PERSONAL FUNDRAISER**

You can join #TeamSOS and set up a fundraiser for SOS Children's Villages. Whether you donate your birthday, throw a party, host a bake sale, run, dance or bike for #TeamSOS, you will be joining a passionate community committed to making sure every child has a loving home.

### **BECOME A SPONSOR**

As a sponsor, you provide the critical essentials for a child—food, clothing, shelter and medical care. However, your gift does so much more—ensuring that a child grows up in a family surrounded by a loving parent and siblings. Our sponsorship gift also strengthens the greater community.

### **CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS**

SOS helps companies achieve employee engagement goals through proven strategies and customized solutions. By becoming a strategic partner, you can promote SOS through cause marketing, employee engagement, workplace giving and other models of collaboration as a corporation or an employee.

### **JOIN SOS GLOBAL ADVOCATES COUNCIL**

Global Advocates work hand in hand with SOS Children's Villages to achieve our joint mission – for all children to have a loving family and an opportunity to reach their full potential. Global Advocates play an active role in developing SOS's strategic vision, advocating for children's rights and raising the profile of SOS Children's Villages.





SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES

**Learn More**



**Neil Ghosh**

Chief Executive Officer

[ceo@sos-usa.org](mailto:ceo@sos-usa.org)  
202.347.7920 Main

[www.sos-usa.org](http://www.sos-usa.org)



*Photo: SOS field day in Huehuetoca, Mexico*