

MK Adoption



Ideas and Instructions
For Adoptive Local Church Ministries



MK Adoption Responsibilities and Guidelines

One of the continuing ministries of Alliance Women Ministries in the (Name of District) District is the “adoption” of our Missionary Kids (MKs). The word adopt can be defined, “to take voluntarily as one’s own child”. That is what we endeavor to do through MK Adoption. We take a missionary’s child into our church family. It is our privilege to partner with our missionaries by expressing love and care for their children. In this packet we hope to give you some ideas and suggestions to help you in this very significant ministry.

- **Pray** for your MK regularly.
- **Send Gifts**, *at least* on Birthday and at Christmas. It is nice to send small gifts on a few other occasions as well. Our district guideline is to spend a total of (insert district financial guidelines). Check with your MK’s parents about postal regulations, duty charges, and the best way to send money and/or gifts. Plan ahead and mail early, mark your calendar 3-4 months in advance for promoting, collecting and mailing.
- **Communicate** with your MK and your MK’s family. Frequent letters and cards will let your MK know s/he is important. You might send pictures of your local church ministry and ask for a picture of him/her. If they have a phone, easy access to fax or email address, try one of these methods *once in a while* to communicate. Ask to receive their family newsletter. Make note of change of address if your MK goes away to school.
- **Endeavor to see your MK when the family is on Home Assignment.** If possible have your MK and his/her family come for a whole church occasion or mom and MK for a women’s event. U.S. contact information is available from your District Director.
- **Keep records.** Keep a file of all MK information, activities, gifts and expenses. Be sure this information is kept up-to-date and is included in your AWM Annual Report. This file should be passed along to the new MK coordinator when appointed. Consider keeping a scrapbook of all notes, pictures, and information. Moms love to see this later!
- **Continue the adoption as long as possible.** An MK is considered “adoptable” until s/he is 23 years old, graduates from college, gets married or until the parents are no longer serving as missionaries or have been on leave of absence from overseas assignment for two years.

If at some point circumstances change and your local church AW Ministries can no longer fulfill your MK adoption responsibilities, PLEASE relinquish by contacting your District MK Chairman right away so that your MK can be reassigned and not be neglected. We have churches on a waiting list for MK adoption.

- **BE FAITHFUL!**

() District Alliance Women Ministries
MK Adoption

Date:

Church:

Thank you for your interest in adopting a **Missionary Kid!** I am happy to inform you that your MK is

, whose parents, are missionaries to .

Birthday:

Field Address:

School Address:

Email address:

How to get started:

1. **Read** the enclosed information. *If you have any questions, contact me!* Begin a file which will include all of this information and a record of your contact with your MK.
2. Begin immediately to **pray** for your adopted MK and to talk about them at your AWM meetings and events. **Inform** your church of your new relationship with this child and family.
3. **Write** a letter to your MK and your MK's parents introducing yourselves and enclosing the "MK Mailing and Gift Information Questionnaire". Do not mail any packages or money until you receive their response.
4. Once you hear from your MK's family and receive their mailing suggestions, **start planning** for the packages you will send. Follow the missionaries' mailing instructions as closely as possible. Enclose a copy of the "Quick Response Form" in each package. Remember to send the "Annual MK Update" to your MK each year.
5. **Keeping praying and writing even if** your MK is not the best at responding!

(Insert contact information for District MK Chairman)

MK Mailing and Gift Information Questionnaire

Dear Missionary Parents,

The Alliance Women Ministries of _____ Church, has adopted your child _____. We would like to get to know your child, how to we can best pray for your child, and how to send mail and packages to her/him. We are looking forward to building a friendship with your child! Thank you for answering these questions for us. May the Lord bless your family in your ministry for Him.

Child's home address:

School address: (during what dates)

E-mail address:

Clothing sizes, styles, colors, preferences:

Hobbies, interests, sports, music preferences:

Are there items you would advise us NOT to send? (such as toys with negative connotations, types of music, clothing the child dislikes or cannot wear, items that will not withstand the mailing, climate, etc.)

What is the best way for your child to receive packages? (Weight limits, duty charges, packaging, postal regulations, etc.)

What is the best way for us to send a money gift?

Current specific prayer requests:

WE WILL NOT TRY TO SEND ANY PACKAGES OR MONEY GIFTS UNTIL WE HAVE RECEIVED YOUR RESPONSE.

Return to: Church _____

Name: _____ Position _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Annual MK Update

Date: _____

Adopting Church: _____

MK Name: _____

Child's home address:

School address: (during what dates)

E-mail address:

Clothing sizes, styles, colors, preferences:

Hobbies, interests, sports, music preferences:

Are there items you would advise us NOT to send? (such as toys with negative connotations, types of music, clothing the child dislikes or cannot wear, items that will not withstand the mailing, climate, etc.)

What is the best way for your child to receive packages? (Weight limits, duty charges, packaging, postal regulations, etc.)

What is the best way for us to send a money gift?

Current specific prayer requests:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this for us!

Return to: Church _____

Name: _____ Position _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

MK Quick Response Form

MK Name: _____

Items sent:

Date mailed from USA: _____

Missionary Mom or MK: Please complete and send back as soon as possible or email your response to address below!

Date received: _____

Condition when received:

How much duty paid?

Suggestions for future mailings:

How was the gift enjoyed by our MK?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this for us!

Return to: Church _____

Name: _____ Position _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Praying for Your MK

Pray for your MK as you would for your own children. They are just normal kids, with the same needs, hurts, dreams and joys as children here in the United States. Do not think they are “special” super beings with no prayer needs. They need friends, encouragement, maturity, and most of all, to experience salvation and a meaningful growing relationship with Jesus Christ. This does not come naturally or easily just because their parents are missionaries. Here are some specific ways you can pray for them.

1. That they will come to know Jesus as Savior at an early age
2. That they will have a personal, growing, meaningful relationship with the Lord
3. That they will have a humble, teachable spirit and learn proper respect for authority
4. For a few close Christian friends that they can open up to and share personal things with
5. For good friendships with nationals as well as schoolmates
6. For a good adjustment to school
7. For a strong, loving, healthy relationship with parents
8. For special comfort from the Lord during times of loneliness, especially those first few nights back at school at the beginning of each semester
9. For a good relationship with dorm parents if they go to boarding school
10. For help with academics
11. For safety, protection and health
12. That they will learn to make wise choices
13. That they will become more and more dependent upon God, while at the same time maturing in a healthy independence and confidence
14. That they will learn how to communicate, to forgive and be forgiven, and to resolve conflicts with others
15. For God's leading for college and the future
16. For the right future mate
17. That they will develop a regular habit of time alone with God
18. That they will always seek first God and His kingdom

WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T NEGLECT TO PRAY!
This is the most important thing you can do for your MK.

PASS the **TEST**...and pray for your **Missionary Kids**.

We are asking people to PASS the TEST and pray for MKs in the following areas:

- P**rotection from Satan's attacks - if Satan is able to mess up an MK, he can ruin the successful ministry of the parents.
 - A** Vision for their Parents' Ministry - MKs adjust better when they see the value of their parents call to mission work.
 - S**alvation & Spiritual Growth - we want all of our kids to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, MKs and non-MKs.
 - S**eparation from family, both immediate and extended - even if they live at home instead of boarding school, MKs still miss Grandparents and other relatives
- the
- T**he Constant Stress of Goodbyes - saying goodbye to family, to friends in the country where they live, to friends at school.
 - E**very Time They Travel - lots of things can happen traveling.
 - S**pouse Adjustment to the culture and a love for their adopted country.
 - T**he College Years - really tough on the parents to send their children to college in the U. S. while they stay overseas.

Will you earn an A+???

Compiled by Gary & Amy Roedding, Alliance Academy

Gift Giving

Sending a gift to your adopted MK is a privilege that brings happiness to both your MK and your local Alliance Women Ministries. Be sure anything that you send is age appropriate as well as appropriate for the climate where s/he lives. Send gifts throughout the year – space them to be a surprise.

What do you send to your MK? Think of your own children or grandchildren or others that you know are the same age as your MK. What items do they spend their money on or constantly ask of you? Price shouldn't necessarily be a determining factor. Items that you might think are cheap or silly may be appreciated more than something that is expensive. MKs like to receive things related to the latest fads here in the U.S. Do send "useful" gifts, too.

Advise parents or houseparents when a gift is sent to your MK so that they can be alert for it and encourage acknowledgement of its receipt.

When to send gifts:

- Birthdays** If the child is at boarding school, consider that there will be other children around. Provide the makings for a special birthday party. Send napkins, birthday tablecloth, balloons, gum, Kool-Aid, candy...Be sure to add a birthday gift for your MK! S/he is the special person!
- Christmas** Your MK will be home with his/her family. It is a very special time for the family. You may want to send small gifts for the whole family. Send items for Christmas, such as small candles, Christmas napkins, tablecloth, decorations, etc. along with a gift for your MK.
- Valentine's** This is the time that you can just say "We love you!". Send a card or package with heart-shaped candies. We may even send your MK a box Valentines to share with classmates or send to his/her parents.
- Easter** Perhaps just a nice card celebrating the true meaning of Easter with a bookmark would be appropriate.
- Graduation** This is a very special time to tell your MK that you care about him/her. Send words of praise and encouragement through cards. Send a gift that s/he can use after school is out. If you know your MK is going to college, send something that they can use at college.
- Fourth of July** This time is especially significant to remember. MKs like to be reminded that they are Americans. Send any items that are patriotic.
- ANY DAY** Pick any day at random to send a card or some goodies to share with a friend!

Mailing and Packaging Tips

Monetary gifts:

Any monetary gift for your MK should be sent to:

The Christian and Missionary Alliance
Attention: Donor Accounting
P.O. Box 35000
Colorado Springs, CO 80935-3500

Make checks payable to The Christian and Missionary Alliance and on the memo line indicate that it is a "Personal gift for (your MK's name)". Monetary gifts need to be sent to the C&MA two (2) months in advance of the date you wish for it to be received.

Packages:

1. Contact your MK's parents and find out as much as you can from them about how to send things to them.
2. Check with your local Post Office for rates and other specifics or obtain information from the U.S. Postal Service website: www.usps.com.
3. Be sure to send your package well in advance so your MK receives it in time for the holiday or birthday. "Air Mail" is more expensive but your gift or package is more likely to arrive on time. "Surface Mail" can take several months to reach its destination.
4. Some helpful packaging instruction:
 - Be sure to note the weight and dimension limits that apply
 - Use padded envelopes or sturdy boxes
 - Print NAME and ADDRESS clearly on the top front
 - Name of the COUNTRY must be written in full
 - Put a "Quick Response" Form or Card inside the package with your name and address written on the front, postpaid or include your e-mail address. Ask just a short question or two, such as:

Did the package arrive OK? _____

Condition of Contents: _____

Comments: _____

5. NEVER LIST ANY VALUE ON THE CUSTOMS STICKER! Write "Gift, no commercial value."
6. If you take any item out of the original packaging, be sure to include any instructions or directions for use printed on the packaging. There are times when it is better to remove an item from the original packaging. This is to help the missionary avoid having to pay duty.
7. Send a letter or email, if possible, to your MK's parents when you mail the package telling the date mailed and list contents. Ask them to advise you if they do not receive it within a proper amount of time.

Setting Up A File

Setting up a file of information for your local church MK adoption ministry will prove to be very beneficial over the years that s/he is your adopted MK. Not only will this provide orderly storage for all of your information, but it will be a great help to any new MK chairperson that serves in the future.

Your file may include these headings:

- **PERSONAL**
This file should include your MK's birth date, address, grade in school, address at school, family members' names and ages and the Annual MK update (likes, dislikes, favorite things, interests, hobbies, etc).
- **CORRESPONDENCE**
File the letters, notes and emails you receive from your MK or his/her parents by year. This assists in referring back to information and prayer requests. Mark each letter with the date (month, day, year) received.
- **PICTURES**
Collect pictures of your MK, his/her parents and family, the school s/he attends, the country in which his/her parents serve, any pictures or articles found in aLife, and his/her visits to your local AWM. At some point, the letters and pictures could be assembled into a scrapbook and given to your MK as a very special gift.
- **GIFTS**
Keep a record of gifts sent to your MK, cost or value of the gifts, and postage and mailing costs. This helps to avoid duplication and in completing your AWM annual report.
- **MK ADOPTION FORMS & HELPS**
File this packet of information (MK Adoption: Ideas and Instructions for Adoptive Local Church Ministries) in the front of this file. Also include your MK Adoption Certificate, the Mailing and Gift Information Questionnaire and Quick Response forms or cards.