



Pura Vida Ministries

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Child Protection Policy

Goal: *To protect children and their families from the possibility of physical or emotional abuse resulting from inappropriate contact by a sponsor or any other person.*

We want sponsors to develop a meaningful relationship with their sponsored students in a way that is safe, secure and fulfilling on both sides. At the same time, as the initiator of this relationship, we are responsible for possible negative impacts of student/sponsor communications.

Pura Vida has taken the following steps to respect the privacy of our students:

- We release only limited information about the children until they are sponsored. Our website shows the first name of the students, and only a general idea of where they live.
- The sponsorship process is contingent upon the agreement that the sponsor will NOT attempt to contact a sponsored child, his or her family or community members outside of Pura Vida channels.

We ask our sponsors to abide by the following standards while participating in Pura Vida's Sponsorship program:

- In order to protect children's security and privacy, please do not post your sponsored student's last name or student ID on the internet or social media sites.
- Pura Vida discourages direct communication with your sponsored student. This includes contact through the internet or other methods (e.g. Facebook, telephone, email, etc.). Because your privacy and security are equally important to us, sponsored students and families are discouraged from contacting you directly.
 - This is to protect you from being solicited, perhaps with threats to the child's well-being, if someone with ill intent knows they have access to direct communication with you.
 - This also helps prevent overreach by sponsored students who may make inappropriate requests.
 - Finally, this protects the child from possible inappropriate material on social networking sites. Although such material abounds on the internet, Pura Vida does not need to be the mechanism through which it is introduced.

- Any un-facilitated contact initiated by your sponsored student or their family that makes you feel uncomfortable should immediately be reported to Pura Vida for both their security and yours.

When visiting your sponsored student

Sponsors who meet their sponsored students on a trip or visit are in the unique position of directly communicating with them. In this situation it's normal to want to share personal contact information, or to request such information from the child or the child's family. However, any direct communication not facilitated by us could potentially expose the children or sponsors to unnecessary risk. As a result, personal contact information cannot be exchanged.

Visit guidelines:

- A local Pura Vida representative must accompany you at all times during any visit.
- Please respect the parents' relationship with their children, and do not interfere with parenting matters that do not impact the health, safety or welfare of a sponsored child.
- Do not give cash directly to any children or families.
- Note that Pura Vida does not allow unplanned visits to the child's residence or community, under any circumstance, without our prior knowledge.