

CHILD PROTECTION AND WHY WE'VE STOPPED VISITING ORPHANAGES



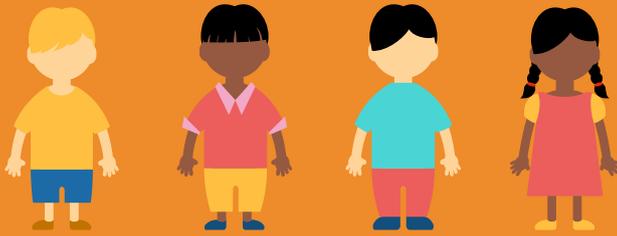
Orphanage tourism is what happens when good intentions and reality don't quite synch up. Travellers who visit and volunteer in orphanages may genuinely want to help, but their efforts can often perpetuate a system where children are separated from their families and, in some cases, abused. That's why as of now, Intrepid is officially removing orphanage visits from its trips.

What are some issues with orphanage tourism?

- **Not what you think:** Of the millions of kids living in institutions around the world, up to 80% are not orphans. Many come from poor rural families and are sold into orphanages because their parents feel this will give them the best chance at life.
- **Kids do better at home:** UNICEF is working closely with local governments to actually reduce the number of orphanages in Asia and Africa, reuniting kids with their families or developing community and family based alternatives.
- **Fly in, fly out:** Orphanage visitors and volunteers usually don't speak the local language, have no formal training, and stay for a short time, all of which is disruptive for children. Kids deserve professional care and attention from permanent local staff.
- **Potentially dangerous:** Tourism in orphanages is not well regulated, and visitors and volunteers go through very few checks beforehand, exposing already vulnerable kids to potential abuse.
- **Tourism fuels supply:** By visiting and volunteering at orphanages, travellers may actually be helping to commercialise orphanages and are perpetuating a model of care that separates kids from their families.
- **Acceptable at home?** Would you visit an orphanage in your own country? If the answer is no, ask yourself why an orphanage overseas is any different. Children shouldn't be used as tourist attractions.

Tips for being a child-friendly traveller

1. Avoid simple 'tours' of orphanages or slums. Kids aren't tourist attractions.



2. **DON'T** give money to begging children. It may feel good, but it locks them into a cycle of poverty.

3. If you see a child in need, call a local child protection hotline. (See your leader for these numbers or see thinkchildsafe.org)



4. Report child labour if you think a business is employing underage workers.

5. Choose organisations with child-friendly policies.

You can find more info at:

thinkchildsafe.org



6. **Do your research.** Donate to worthy projects instead of volunteering. The Intrepid Foundation (theintrepidfoundation.org) supports various projects that focus on protecting abused and neglected children as well as re-establishing family links. Here are a couple of examples:



Kaliyan Mith (Cambodia): This program provides quality skills training, business and employment support to caregivers of marginalized children. By supporting carers, there's less pressure on children to contribute to income through begging, scavenging and, in desperate cases, sex work.

Amani Childrens Home (Tanzania): Amani Children's Home is committed to reducing the number of children living on the streets in Tanzania. In addition to providing long-term care, Amani aims to reunite children with their relatives and to equip their families with the tools they need to be self-sustainable.

For more information on Intrepid's child-friendly policies, or our decision to stop visiting orphanages, head to theintrepidfoundation.org or email responsible.business@intrepidgroup.travel