

## **Transitioning Blind Children from their Rural Homes to Blind Schools in Cambodia.**

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**Three major areas of development to ensure great outcomes.**

- 1) Ensure the **right people** are on the bus in the **right seat** (job/place), creating and developing a team spirit.
  - Have staff with the right
    - Attitude, (Check family background, siblings' activities, Parents involvement in community, willingness to work, etc.)
    - Passion & (Does their passion match the job description?)
    - Motivation (What motivates him/her to succeed?)
- 2) Experience not required, life skills helps, but training essential.
  - Learn how to build **trusting relationships** by asking open questions (of clients) as well as sharing about their own experiences and dreams.
    - Family Story (a tool used to open doors for conversation and building trusting relationships)
  - **Fence.** Speaks about the community the Blind Family live in – Ask questions about what involvement the family have in their local community – Ask about

(History) why they live where they do. Have they been in this community all their lives or have they actually shifted into it for some reason.

- **Home.** This is to determine who actually lives in their house. (How Many) Is it extended family or a nuclear family? What are the relationships between all people living in the home? Who are the support people if any?
- **Hand.** What activities do all members of the family do on a daily basis? Who earns the money? Who goes to school? Who stays at home?
- **Bus.** What does the family do for holidays? Do they travel to other provinces, go to the beach? What do they spend extra money on that they have earned?
- **Light Bulb.** This gives the opportunity to ask questions about their dreams and aspirations, - Where do they see themselves in the future for themselves and as a family? What are their hopes and dreams? What do they want to do with their lives?

- Field Assessment (Developing the Facts)
- O & M Training
- Daily Living Skills training
- Vocational training
- All ABC field staff know, that they have the ownership of their clients rehabilitation program and that success is in their hands providing the client wants to participate in the CBR program.
- Client Profiles (enabling measuring and matching Dreams with abilities)
- Develop measurements to manage field staff working independently. (KPI's)

### 3) Marketing Tools.

- Affiliated Membership Certificate Presentation. (the importance of belonging) This has field workers name and contact numbers on.
- By word of Mouth. Our blind clients share and encourage other blind to participate in ABC's programs. (Best type of referral system)
- Working within Government Protocols and
- Establishing links with Community Leaders (village elders and Chiefs) as well as
- Other NGO's who work with Community leaders.

**The Twelve Steps to Transition Children from their rural homes to Blind schools in Cambodia.**

- 1) Following up all referrals whether it be from, other Blind in the local Community, Village elders, networking with other NGO's and Government officials.
- 2) Complete family story and assessment reports, building a relationship with the Blind Child.
- 3) Orientation & Mobility Checklist. Schedule as many O & M training sessions as necessary. Locate a volunteer from the home or community to work and practice with each blind child. Each session of training not to be longer than 1 – 2 hrs. Ensuring the child's ability to transition to alternative living arrangements.
- 4) Arrange with the parents for their blind child to live with other relatives for a few days as a trial.
- 5) Follow up visits creating expectations with the child & his / her parents if the child is able to have an Education. Discuss openly the negatives as well as the many positives. Allow time for this to register, (for them, the family, to think about and ask questions.

6)

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
a. Child may feel lonely living away from Mum & Dad.	a. Education Opportunities
b. Mum & dad worried about their blind child away from home & not in their care.	b. Improved prospects for good jobs
	c. Valuable person in local community.
	d. Live and share experiences with other blind children
	e. Child to visit home every fortnight
	f. ABC pays for transport to/from school every fortnight

(Make sure there are more positives than negatives)

- 7) Seek agreement for parents to visit the school with child before a decision is reached.
- 8) Field worker to arrange an appointment with Director of Krousar Thmey blind school, and visit school to discuss the Numbers and Names of children and their addresses. Make sure the children meet Krousar Thmey criteria. Talk about each child, giving as much background information as possible that you want to refer for the next school year. Also ask permission to bring parents and children to the

school before the end of the current school year enabling the parent's peace of mind to view the school and their child's living arrangements.

- 9) Visit the living accommodation where the child will live. Meet the care giver and talk about the children who you want to refer to them next school year.
- 10) Back to Parents. Discussion re Acceptance from Krousar Thmey because their child meets all the criteria. Talk about what you saw at the school. Create some positive expectations. Talk about the opportunities, the good equipment for the child to use. The meeting of other blind children similar ages and the friendships that will be made. Tell the parents that you saw the living arrangements and met the foster parents who would look after their child. Create positive thinking for the parents, then offer to take them to meet the teachers and see the living accommodation to put their mind at ease.
- 11) Arrange and take parents and child to see the school before the end of the current school year. View the living arrangements for themselves and meet the foster parents. Spend time with the Blind Child in familiarization of School, equipment and living accommodation. This should develop into an informal O & M lesson because you have the relationship with the child. Introduce the teachers to the child building positive reinforcement all the time.
- 12) Arrange travel arrangements for the child to travel to & from school. Ensure that the parents are happy with motodop. This most likely will be a motodop that the parents and the child know from their village. Ask the parents for their input in this decision as they need to be sure of the safety and be comfortable with their blind child traveling some distance with him.
- 13) Follow up all arrangements with the school about the child settling in. Talk to the parents about their child settling into the school. Visit the parents after the child returns after the first home visit at the end of the first fortnight. Ask the parents if they have any questions. Check again with Krousar Thmey. You need to discuss if any issues raised by the parents and check if there are any challenges with the child at school as well as with the living arrangements. (Be the positive link between the Family in their rural village and Krousar Thmey Blind School)