

**Republic of the Philippines**  
**Department of Social Welfare and Development**  
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills  
Quezon City  
Telephone No. 931-8101 to 07

Administrative Order No. 08  
Series of 2004

SUBJECT : **Guidelines in the Implementation of Aruga at  
Kalinga sa Bata sa Barangay  
(Foster Care for Children in the Barangay)**

**I. RATIONALE**

It is the right of every child to grow up and be nurtured by his/her own family. If this is not possible, he/she will be provided with a substitute parental care arrangement. In this connection, the state is mandated to place the child in a foster home while the family is strengthened and aided to resume parental responsibility. Foster family care is considered the most nurturing out-of-home placement for children in need of temporary substitute family care.

Foster Family Care is the provision of planned substitute parental care to a child by a licensed foster family. There are seven (7) licensed/accredited child placement agencies which provide the Foster Care in the National Capital Region, namely: Concordia Children's Services, CRIBS Philippines, Inc., Home of Joy, Kaisahang Buhay Foundation, NORFIL Foundation, Inc., Parenting Foundation and the DSWD-NCR Child Placement Center.

Studies have shown that institutional life has had and adverse effects for most children especially infants and those below school age over dependency and anti-social behavior personality disorganization and emotion disorders are often associated with adults who grew up in orphanages and institutions.

In view of the above, it is important to strengthen our efforts to develop and increase the pool of foster parents who will provide substitute parental care to these children.

Further, it is timely for the Local Government Unit to get involved and support the initial implementation of the program in their locality and later on take over on the implementation of the project.

Hence, this project to create impact on the concerted efforts of partner agencies to promote the provision of foster family care.

The framework of this project is anchored on the existing policies/regulations covering the implementation of the foster care program.





## LEGAL BASIS

Foster Family Care is in consonance with the following existing Philippine Laws:

1. The 1986 Philippine Constitution Article II, Sec. 4 states that "the state shall strengthen the family as a basic social institution, the natural rights and duties of parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character shall receive the aid and support of the government".

During the period when the parents are unable to care for the child temporarily, the child may be placed in a foster home while the family is strengthened and aided to resume parental responsibility".

2. The P.D. 603 otherwise known as the Child and Youth Welfare Code which was signed on December 10, 1974 and became effective on June 10, 1975 stipulates the following:

### 2.1 Article I - Declaration of Policy

"The child is one of the most important assets of the nation. Every effort should be exerted to promote his welfare and enhance his opportunities for a useful and happy life."

### 2.2 Article 3 - Section 2 - Rights of the Child

"Every child has the right to a wholesome family life that will provide him/her with love, care and understanding, guidance and counseling and moral and material security. The dependent and abandoned child shall be provided with the nearest substitute for a home."

### 2.3 Article 67 - Foster Homes

"Foster Homes shall be chosen and supervised by the Department of Social Welfare and Development or any duly licensed child placement agency when and as the need therefore arises. These shall be run by married couples to be licensed only after thorough investigation of their character, background, motivation and competence to act as foster parents."

### 2.4 Article 68 - Institutional Care

"Assignment of the child to a foster home shall be preferred to institutional care. Unless absolutely necessary, no child below nine years of age shall be placed in an institution. An older child may be taken into an institution for child care if a thorough social case study indicate that he will derive more benefit therefrom."

3. Article 20 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989 and ratified by the Philippine Government on July 26, 1990 and took effect on September 2, 1990 states that:

3.1 "A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment or in whose own best interest cannot be allowed to remain in the environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the state."

3.2 "State Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child."

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is designed for child placing agencies implementing foster care program in the non-government and government organizations to concentrate their implementation of the foster care program/service in identified barangays which is child friendly and accessible to public service facilities e.g. clinic and hospitals.

The initial phase of the project will be assumed by the social workers of child placing agencies until such time that the foster families are developed to become capable to provide foster family care in the community. After which, the operation shall be taken over by the LGU social worker.

The operation of the project is a collaboration with child caring NGOs and LGUs. NGOs shall provide the salary of the social worker assigned to the project as their counterpart.

### IV. PROJECT GOALS

#### **General Goal:**

To establish a model barangay showcasing a pool of foster parents providing a planned foster family care to abandoned, neglected children and those in especially difficult situation.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To develop, increased and maintain a pool of licensed foster parents who will provide substitute parental care to abandoned, neglected children and those with special needs.
2. To promote foster family care as the best substitute parental arrangement for children in need of temporary care.
3. To encourage the active involvement of the LGUs to implement foster family care for children in their barangay.





4. To decongest residential institutions for children and to uphold the right of a child to a wholesome family life atmosphere.

V.

#### TARGET AREA/BENEFICIARIES

The identified site/area in the implementation of the project are Barangays within the area of operation of licensed/accredited child caring agencies implementing Foster Care Service. Selected residents in the identified barangay who are willing and qualified to become foster parents shall be considered to be part of the pool of foster parents for this project. Each child caring agency is to develop three (3) foster families within the barangay.

VI.

#### PROJECT COMPONENT

1. Organization of a Project Management Team

- A Project Management Team will be organized to oversee the implementation of the project. The team will be headed by DSWD-Field Office and its members shall compose of one (1) Social Worker from a child placing agency implementing foster care and one (1) Social Worker of the LGU.

2. Advocacy and Community Mobilization

Conduct of dialogue with local Chief Executive and other possible partners in the community to solicit support and mobilize them to raise public awareness on foster care.

- 2.1 Mobilization of other governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, volunteers and support groups as partners in mobilizing people and the community to introduce and advocate amendments to existing laws, policies and procedures related to foster care.

- 2.2 Education, information and dissemination activities which are aimed at raising public awareness on foster care through the following:

- 2.2.1 Development and production of information, education and communication (IEC) materials such as brochures, poster, etc.

- 2.2.2 Conduct fora on foster care

- 2.2.3 Use of tri-media (radio/television/magazines, etc.)

- 2.3 To further strengthen partnership with GOs, NGOs and POs. Consultation/dialogues/meetings shall be conducted with agencies and groups involved in foster care as well as child welfare agencies and people's organizations and government agencies who can be mobilized for support to the program.

The DSWD Social Marketing Service (SMS) will assist in developing and implementing advocacy/communication plan to solicit support and mobilize community awareness on Foster Care.

### 3. Recruitment, Development and Maintenance of Foster Families

- 3.1 Recruitment, development, assessment and maintenance of qualified foster families through continuing advocacy, promotion and capability building activities shall be conducted by the Social Workers of partner agencies/LGU. Concurrently, upon the recommendation of the Social Worker a license shall be issued by the DSWD-Field Office to approved fast utilization and supervision of Foster Homes.

### 4. Capability Building

Capability building activities for approved foster families shall be provided to prepare them to assume the role of a substitute parent giving care to unrelated children. Likewise, they shall be accorded continuous supervision to enhance their knowledge, attitudes and skills in understanding, caring and handling children in foster care.

The Social Workers of the LGU shall also be assisted to enhance their skills and further improve service delivery. This shall include matching/selecting a particular child with the most appropriate foster family, preparation of foster family for the foster placement, provision of monthly subsidy and supplies, provision of routine medical check-up and continuing development of foster families through regular activities seminar and meetings.

### 5. Support Services

Support Services in the form of a monthly subsidy in addition to the basic commodities afforded to foster children are among the material benefits to be given to foster families.

### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring shall be undertaken at all levels throughout the implementation of the project by the DSWD to partner agencies, who will in turn supervise and monitor the foster placement.

A mid-year and annual evaluation shall be conducted to assess the implementation of the project. The evaluation result will be the basis for the enrichment, expansion and replication of the project in other areas.

## 7. Reporting / Documentation

Partner agencies are required to submit a monthly report to DSWD - Field Office on the progress of the project implementation. DSWD-Field Office shall prepare a consolidated report to be submitted to DSWD - Social Technology Bureau as basis for technical assistance.

Documentation of the project shall be prepared by the Social Technology Bureau for submission to the funding agency and to the Undersecretary for PPG.

## VII. GENERAL POLICIES

### A. Policies

1. The placement of a child in a foster family shall only be considered when his/her continuing stay with biological family is inimical to his/her welfare.
2. The social worker shall exhaust all efforts to keep the child with his/her biological family.
3. A thorough study of families shall be undertaken before issuance of license to determine their motivation, capabilities and potentials for development as foster homes for particular types of children.
4. No child shall be placed in a foster family who has not yet been licensed, except on an emergency, but in which case, evaluation of the family should be done not later than one week after receiving the child. A license shall be issued immediately if the family has been found eligible and capable by the social worker.
5. Placement of a child in a particular licensed foster family shall be based on the judicious matching of the needs of the child and resources of the foster family.
6. Monitoring shall be undertaken at all level throughout the implementation of the project by DSWD to partner agencies. A midyear evaluation shall be conducted to assess the implementation of the project.
7. Partner agencies are required to submit a monthly report to DSWD-Field Office on the progress of program implementation. DSWD-Field Office shall prepare a consolidated report to be submitted to Central Office.
8. No child of the foster family shall be at a disadvantaged by the placement of a foster child. Only one (1) child with special needs shall be placed with a foster family at a time.
9. Periodic evaluation of the child's placement shall be undertaken. Foster care shall not be more than one year except when the situation so requires as



assessed by the social workers especially in cases of children with special needs which may require long-term foster care.

10. Any transfer of a foster child shall be subjected to a case conference where the assessment of the transfer will redound to the child's best welfare and interest.
11. No child of a foster care shall be alienated from his/her biological family hence the social worker shall facilitate visits of the biological parent/s to the child.
12. In case of death or any untoward incident that has happened to a foster child, such should be reported immediately to the DSWD Field Office-CIU within 24 hours after which an incidental report together with the medical and/or death certificate shall be forwarded within two (2) days after the child's death, accident or ailment. The DSWD-CIU Regional Office shall immediately forward a report to Social Technology Bureau.
13. In the case of report of negligence or abuse on the part of Foster Family, immediate assessment and evaluation should be done by the social worker.

If abuse is validated immediate removal of the child in Foster home should be made and appropriate action be done in accordance to RA 7610.

## B. Eligibility Requirements

### 1. Children for Foster Placement

1.1 Children 0-below 18 years of age who are either abandoned or orphaned.

1.2 Children whose parents are in crisis and temporarily unable to provide adequate care

1.3 Children who need special care and protection due to

- sexual or physical abuse or in danger of further abuse or neglect by his/her parents or guardian
- emotional difficulties as a result of neglect abuse or exploitation e.g. street child, victim of child labor
- developmental or physical disability
- parents suffering from HIV/AIDS and who is found negative from HIV
- committing a minor offense but has been released on recognizance or on custody supervision but whose family or relatives are not capable of providing him/her care.

## 2. Foster Parents

### 2.1 Prospective Foster Parents

- 2.1.1 Applicants should not be over 60 years of age but not under 25 years old and should have a genuine interest in parenting a non-related child with special needs.
- 2.1.2 Applicants may either be legally married or single and should be able to provide a family life for the foster child. In cases where the applicant is either a widow or single, a male adult should be available in the home to provide a father figure in the family.
- 2.1.3 Family members should be mentally and physically fit and free from contagious and infectious diseases to cope with the added stress of caring for a child with special needs.
- 2.1.4 Applicants should have a healthy and harmonious relationship with each family member.
- 2.1.5 Applicants must have good moral character and emotional maturity.
- 2.1.6 Applicants are willing to be trained to hone their knowledge, attitude and skills in caring for children with special needs.

### 2.2 Licensed Foster Parents

- 2.2.1 Licensed foster parents, who in consultation with their children, signify their willingness to care for children with special needs which require different degrees of time, attention, care, emotional strengths/stability and patience.
- 2.2.2 Licensed foster parents who are willing to be trained to further hone their knowledge, attitude and skills in caring for children with special needs.

## C. Support Services

Support services are provided to foster families caring for children with special needs to sufficiently meet the needs of the child. These may be in the form of any of the following:

### 1. Foster Care Subsidy





Any foster family caring for a child shall be given a monthly subsidy of one thousand five hundred (P1,500) during the stay of a child in their home considering the high cost of living.

The subsidy is meant as an incentive and not as a means to augment their income but rather to further encourage them to continue caring for children. However, exempted are those willing to volunteer without the subsidy incentive.

## 2. Supplies for Foster Children

2.1 In addition to the subsidy, licensed foster families shall be given supplies and other assistance for the child under their care in the form of milk, food, clothing, medical/dental needs, educational assistance and hospitalization, if indicated based on the child's needs and assessment by the social worker of not more than P3,000 per child/month.

2.2 An Emergency Fund shall be made available for medical/hospitalization needs of a child in the amount of one thousand pesos (P1,000.00) a month.

## 3. Respite Care

3.1 This is a one week break for the foster parents from their task of fostering children with special needs to provide them with temporary relief to prevent burnout. With the provision of respite care, foster parents would be able to provide better quality care to children.

3.2 The social worker shall identify the foster family qualified and in need of respite care. Qualified Foster Parents should render the required two years in fostering children before they can avail the respite care.

3.3 Foster parents on respite care shall receive the full amount of their P1,500 monthly subsidy and if identified, shall receive an allowance of one thousand pesos (P1,000) on top of their monthly subsidy which shall be used when they go on leave for their break.

3.4 The social worker shall plan the necessary arrangements with the foster family to ensure that the foster child shall be cared for by responsible adults within the family with the assistance of another licensed foster family within the area.

3.5 The social worker shall conduct a daily visit to the foster family during the time the foster parents are away.

#### 4. Support Groups

4.1 The Foster Care Association of the Philippines (FCAP) is an organization composed of foster families, social workers and other professionals from various child welfare agencies and institutions which provides a support system to foster families including potential foster families.

4.2 Foster parents shall be grouped according to their geographical area. Members of these formed groups shall provide support to each other in terms of sharing experiences in caring for children with special needs, providing assistance or help in times of crisis, provide/substitute care when the foster parents go on a temporary break (respite care), etc.

#### 5. Other Assistance

Other assistance may be provided to the foster family in the form of medical assistance, legal advice/services should they be qualified to adopt their foster child after a case conference, livelihood programs, etc., through referrals to the Department of Health, government and private hospitals and other GOs and NGOs.

### VIII. IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

The project shall be piloted in the DSWD Regional Offices.

#### 1. Criteria / Indicators in choosing the Barangay as Pilot Sites.

1.1 The LGU of the pilot site must be supportive in the promotion of Foster Care Program and can draw participation and support from its civic minded residents.

1.2 The identified barangay is child friendly. It offers a safe and healthy environment for children and able to provide basic amenities for foster child and families such as clean water, health, education and recreational facilities.

#### 2. Family Recruitment and Development

Recruitment and development of foster families may be done through the following:

2.1 Interpretation of the service to the community through use of tri-media e.g. television, radio, posters, magazines, etc., as well as personal contacts to recruit/develop foster families.

## 2.2 Conduct of regular fora/group orientation on foster care.

The Field Office in coordination with the child placing NGOs shall conduct a series of foster care fora to interested groups. Such fora shall be a tool for self-screening, assessment of applicants and development of foster families.

## 3. Family Assessment

A thorough study and reassessment on all foster parent applicants and their families is necessary to determine their motivations and whether they fully meet the requirements and to evaluate their capability to provide a safe, secure, and loving home for a foster child with special needs.

### 3.1 Conduct of Homestudy for Foster Care

The Field Office/NGO through their social worker shall conduct planned interviews, home visits and collateral interviews with the applicants, their children, if any other persons who will have direct involvement with the child. This will provide the social worker the opportunity to know the applicants and their family, to determine their motivation to foster a child and to do a thorough assessment of their parenting capability to foster child with special needs.

3.2 The homestudy shall be prepared by the social worker as basis for the recommendation for licensing the foster family.

3.3 A license shall be issued to an approved foster family.

## 4. Capability Building

The part of foster families, after having been licensed, shall undergo a training together with other licensed foster families on the understanding and management of children with special needs to enhance and develop their parenting capability. Licensed foster families who have had several years of experience caring for children with special needs shall act as resource persons in sharing their best practices. Since SWIDB is the training arm of the Department, SWIDB be involved in the conduct of training.

## 5. Matching or Family Selection

Matching refers to the judicious pairing of a child with a family based on the child's needs and his/her capability to benefit from the placement as well as the capability and interest of the foster parents to meet the child's needs.

As much as possible a roster of approved foster families will be available to which the social worker will be able to identify the best family to meet the child's needs.



## 6. Pre-Placement Services

### 6.1 Preparation of Foster Parents

After matching, the foster families shall be informed within one week about the child matched with them. Information on the child shall be shared to help them understand and develop plans for the child. This shall include the following:

- Family background
- Child's developmental history
- Personality
- Medical history focusing on child's special needs
- Report of psychological examination, if appropriate
- Recent photograph of the child

In addition to the above information, the foster parents shall be informed that they shall not alienate the child from his/her biological parents.

### 6.2 Preparation of the Child

Preparation for placement shall be consistent with the child's age, understanding and emotional maturity. An older child, if applicable, shall be helped to understand what foster care means and why he/she will be going to his/her foster family.

A lifebook/memory book of the child prepared by the social worker and child, if appropriate, which contains pictures/short stories from the time the child was admitted in the institution shall be given to foster parents to provide additional information about the child's past. They shall continue the lifebook/memory book with the assistance of the social worker.

The foster child shall be helped to understand, if indicated, temporary nature of care and placement and that visits/contacts shall be made possible with the child's family.

## 7. Placement

7.1 Placement refers to the physical transfer of a child either from a child caring agency or biological family to the foster family who shall be responsible for his/her care and custody.

7.2 A Foster Placement Authority (FPA) shall be prepared and signed by the foster families and social worker which shall be approved by the Field Director. The social worker shall discuss the terms of the Authority and ensure that these are understood including the special

needs of the child and the handling of child's behavior and other special concerns such as continuing medical/psychological evaluation, etc.

The Authority should be issued before the child's actual placement.

## 8. Supervision of Placements

After child has been placed to his/her foster family, the social worker shall help the family and the child in the adjustment process. This is done through home visitations. This period shall be for at least six months after placement.

The primary goal of supervision of foster homes is to ensure the proper adjustment of the child to his/her foster family and vice-versa. Furthermore, the social worker shall follow-up the foster family's participation in the case management of the child towards the treatment and achievement of the goals on the child who is with special needs.

During the supervision, the social worker also updates the foster family on the status of their foster child, if appropriate, e.g. child is now available for adoption, the child is to be returned to his/her biological family/parent/s, the child will have to stay longer with them due to the difficulty of a permanent placement for the child, etc.

Group sessions for foster parents shall be conducted quarterly or as need arises to provide a venue for foster parents to share their experiences in caring for children with special needs where others may also learn from.

## 9. Termination of Placement

### 9.1 Disruption of Placement

There is disruption when foster care placement is not completed or is discontinued due to problems arising either or both on the part of the child and/or foster family. Once the decision to remove a child have been reached, it should be carried as quickly as possible and in such a way as to minimize the guilt and anxiety of both the child and the foster parents.

### 9.2 Termination of Placement

Termination of placement shall be done by the agency under the following circumstances:

- 1) Return of the child to his biological family, extended family, relatives.
- 2) Placement for adoption.

- 3) Transfer to another foster family, in group care or residential care or training center where the child shall benefit more.
- 4) Death of the child.

#### 10. Post Placement / After Care Services

After the return of the child to his/her biological parents, the social worker shall be available to ensure the child's reintegration adjustment to his/her family/relatives:

- a) Parents/relatives shall be helped to understand and cope with the child's adjustment problem to his/her immediate environment.
- b) The child shall be helped to understand his/her return to his/her own home. He/she shall be helped to work out his/her feelings about his/her return to his/her own home, relatives and separation from his/her foster family.
- c) Older children who have been referred to training centers for job placements shall also be provided with after care services to ensure his/her smooth adjustment and integration into his/her family and community.

### IX. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The project will be a joint effort of the DSWD - Social Technology Bureau as the focal Bureau and DSWD-NCR, Child Caring Placing Agency and the Local Government Unit. The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholders are defined as follows:

#### 1. DSWD - Social Technology Bureau (STB)

- Prepare project design in consultation with members of the Task Force on Family Alternative Parental Care (TF, FAPC) and partner agencies.
- Oversee the over-all implementation of the project.
- Capability building for social workers and foster parents who will be involved in this 13 project with the assistance of SWIDB.
- Provide status of project implementation as well as fund utilization.
- Prepare MOA with partner agencies to ensure support and commitment.
- Coordinate with funding agency for financial assistance.
- Sub-allot funds to DSWD - Field Offices.
- Conduct the mid-year/annual evaluation of the project.
- Document the best practices in the implementation of the project.





## 2. DSWD - Field Offices

- Coordinate with the Local Government Unit for the selection and identification of the pilot site.
- Provide technical assistance and monitor the implementation of the project.
- Licensed of approved foster families.
- Issue Foster Placement Authority to licensed foster families.
- Conduct matching of children with foster families.
- Manage the disbursement of funds to partner agencies.
- Prepare liquidation of fund utilization.
- Prepare and submit monthly report on the status of the project to DSWD-STB
- Serve as secretariat and repository of monitoring reports coming from LGU and NGO partners.

## 3. Partner Agencies (NGO - Child Placing Agencies)

- Assign one (1) social worker to the project.
- Recruit / project assess/recommends foster families.
- Facilitate licensing of approved foster families
- Supervise/monitor foster placement on a monthly basis for 6 months and quarterly thereafter.
- Prepare appropriate reports for submission to DSWD - NCR.

## 4. Local Government Units

- Identify pilot site for the project.
- Assign one (1) social worker to handle recruitment of families, advocacy and public dissemination on foster care.
- Conduct consultative meeting in the barangay to generate public support.
- Ensure positive and healthy environment for foster children and family.
- Provide access to basic services such as clean water, health and sanitation amenities in the Barangay.
- Submit reports to DSWD - Field Office.
- Participate in the evaluation of project implementation.

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**X. OUTPUT AND IMPACT INDICATORS**

DSWD will monitor the implementation of the project and will submit periodic report to the funding agency on the status of the project.

Periodic evaluation will be done to review the progress of the project and to improve service delivery. Impact evaluation will be done five-year after the project has been implemented.

**A. Output Indicators (Pilot Phase)**

- Increased Public Awareness and support to the Foster Care Service in the Barangay.
- Increased number of foster families recruited and licensed by the Child Caring / Placing Agencies.
- Increased number of children placed in foster homes.

**B. Impact Indicators (5 years after Implementation)**


- The number of foster families trained to understand and care for children with special needs.
- Acceptability and readiness of the LGU to implement Foster Care Service in the Barangay.
- Increased number of children provided with substitute parental care.
- Reduced number of anti-social behavior, personality disorganization among children and youth.

**XI. EFFECTIVITY**

This order shall take effect immediately and revokes/rescinds all previous orders inconsistent herewith.

Issued in Quèzon City, this 2nd day of February 2004.

  
**CORAZON JULIANO - SOLIMAN**  
Secretary  
Department of Social Welfare and Development

  
Assistant Secretary  
Department of Social Welfare and Development