

# hoan nghênh *(welcome)*



**Your guide to sponsoring a child in Vietnam**



**Pearl S. Buck International**

A black and white photograph of Pearl S. Buck, an elderly woman with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark, short-sleeved top and a patterned skirt. She is seated at a desk with several open books in front of her. The background is slightly blurred, showing a framed picture on the wall. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, typewriter-style font.

Our treasure  
is in our  
children, for  
in them is  
our future.

**Pearl S. Buck**

Author, Humanitarian, Activist

## Welcome

Thank you for beginning your journey as a child sponsor through Pearl S. Buck International.

As a child sponsor, you are becoming part of the legacy of Pearl S. Buck. She founded this organization to, in her exact words, “address the issues of poverty and discrimination”.

Ms. Buck was a staunch advocate for children in need and helping the most vulnerable ones was a cause close to her heart. She would never stand by when any child was treated poorly simply because of the circumstances of his or her birth—and neither will you. While the cost to you is less than a dollar a day, the benefits to your sponsored child, his or her family, and future generations are priceless.

Your gift provides your sponsored child with life-changing healthcare, nutrition, and education. Most of the sponsored children in our program go on to complete their education, become self-sufficient, and break the cycle of poverty that has plagued their families.

Through your support, however, you are providing more than just food, healthcare, and education—you are providing hope. You are providing a future. Your generosity truly bridges cultures and changes lives.

Thank you!

# About Vietnam

**Language** Vietnamese

**Religions** Buddhist, Catholic, unaffiliated (majority)

**Major urban areas** Ho Chi Minh City (largest), Hanoi (capital), Da Nang, and Haiphong

**History** The conquest of Vietnam by France began in 1858 and ended in 1884. Vietnam declared independence after World War II but France continued to rule until 1954 when they were defeated by communist forces. U.S. economic and military aid to South Vietnam grew through the 1960's to bolster the government, but U.S. armed forces were withdrawn from a cease-fire agreement in 1973. The communist leaders maintain tight control on political expression but demonstrate modest steps toward better protection.

**Geography** Extending 1,025 miles north to south, Vietnam is only 31 miles across at its narrowest point. Northern Vietnam is dominated by beautiful, green, misty mountains. While three quarters of Vietnam is mountainous or hilly, the vast majority of people live in the lowland plains.

**Livelihood** Agriculture is a primary means of livelihood with crops of rice, coffee, rubber. Industries include mining, manufacturing, energy production, and construction.

## Children Served in Vietnam

Pearl S. Buck International serves disadvantaged children living in Vietnamese orphanages.

## Where Pearl S. Buck International works in Vietnam

Pearl S. Buck International helps children in six orphanages located in two provinces.

### Ha Noi Province

The government provides only \$58 a month for food, clothing, and school expenses for each child.

- **Birla Children's Village, District: Cau Giay**

Thanks to a charitable gift from an Indian philanthropist, this orphanage became the first to provide shelter for children abandoned by relatives in Hanoi.

- **Center for Social Protection No. 3: Tay Mo, Tu Liem**

This center is approximately eight miles from downtown Hanoi. It provides shelter and care for disadvantaged children and elderly people who do not have relatives to care for them.

- **Center for Treatment, Education, Work and Society No. 2, District: Ba Vi** This center focuses on abandoned children with HIV.

- **Tay Dang Orphanage, District: Ba Vi**

This orphanage provides shelter and care for children who have lost one or both parents or who have no relatives to care for them.

- **Thuy An Orphanage, District: Ba Vi**

This orphanage offers shelter and care for homeless or disabled elderly and disabled children, including many with cerebral palsy.

- **Friendship Orphanage**

This orphanage provides shelter and care for children who have lost one or both parents or who have no relatives to care for them.

### Ha Nam Province

- **Binh Luc Orphanage, District: Binh Luc**

This orphanage was established to provide shelter and care for children who have lost one or both parents, or whose relatives are too poor to care for them. There is limited support from the local government. The government provides only \$44 a month for food, clothing, and school expenses.

## History of Pearl S. Buck International in Vietnam

Since 1971, Pearl S. Buck International has been improving the lives of children through its Child Sponsorship Program in Vietnam.

The program improves the quality of life and expands opportunities for children who are deprived of their basic needs as a result of marginalization due to discrimination or economic circumstances beyond their control.

The assistance children receive through the Child Sponsorship Program not only supports their health and education, it kindles the spirit of hope and possibility.



# Pearl S. Buck International Services in Vietnam

Children served by Pearl S. Buck International in Vietnam receive a variety of services depending on their particular needs.

## **Health support:**

- Nutrition supplements
- Vaccinations
- Health care
- Rehabilitation for children with disabilities

## **Educational support:**

- Libraries in orphanages
- School supplies
- School uniforms
- Bicycles
- Computers in orphanages
- Scholarships
- Life skills training courses
- Reproductive health and HIV prevention classes

## **Livelihood support:**

- Vocational training
- Training on raising livestock and gardening

## **Psycho-social development support:**

- Support to organize special events such as Lunar New Year, Children's Day, Mid-autumn, and summer vacation
- Improving children's strength and abilities through training courses on living values

# Communications from Your Sponsored Child

## First Communication

The Family Greeting Letter (marked FGL) is the first communication from your new sponsored child. You should receive this within one to two months of starting sponsorship, based on how remote the child's residence is.

## From Your Sponsored Child

Each year, your sponsored child will send you at least two communications. A third communication will be included if your child is between the ages of 5 and 12 years. Parents, guardians, or case workers will help younger children write their letters which will be translated into English and marked with the code that corresponds to the type of communication.

1. Family letter #1 (marked FL#1) is a letter sent in the first half of the year.
2. Family letter #2 (marked FL#2) is a letter sent in the second half of the year. Please note that if your sponsorship starts in the second half of the year, the first Family Letter you receive will be marked FL#2 to coordinate with this schedule, not the number you've received.
3. If your sponsor child is between 5 and 12 years of age, they also will send you one non-verbal communication (marked NVC) in the form of a drawing or handmade greeting of their own, once a year.

## Other Communications

Once a year, the Executive Director of the affiliate country office will compile a family journal which will contain updates on your sponsored child, their family, and the programs in which your sponsored child participates. An updated photo will be included.

Please note that due to language and cultural difference, some children may start letters by introducing themselves. They haven't forgotten you. It is simply their style of letter writing.

# How to Write to Your Sponsored Child

Writing to your sponsored child will build a special relationship with him or her. You may send letters whenever you wish. How often you write is up to you.

## **Important information about writing to your sponsored child**

We are very protective of your rights and those of your sponsored child. Please do not include your last name, address, phone number, e-mail address, or social media accounts in your letter. All communications are required to come through the child sponsorship office to ensure all messages are appropriate. **If your sponsored child or their family members attempt to contact you directly through social media, please do not respond and notify Pearl S. Buck International Child Sponsorship Manager.**

To reduce delays in processing, all letters should include:

- Sponsored child's name
- Sponsored child's ID number
- Your sponsor number

## **Tips for writing**

### **Share about yourself and your family.**

Your child will enjoy learning about you as well as your family, pets, traditions, and interests.

### **Offer encouragement and guidance.**

Your letters of support and encouragement as well as interest in your sponsored child's well-being, education, family, and hardships will be greatly appreciated.

### **Ask questions.**

Your child will look forward to responding to specific questions. However, keep in mind that your sponsored child may be shy.

## **Sending a letter**

**Online** Go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/write](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/write).

**Email** For your convenience, you can send a letter by email to [childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org](mailto:childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org). If sending by email, you may include pictures.

**Postal mail** Letters, cards, and packages sent by postal mail will incur a fee. See page 9 for pricing. Letters and small items should be mailed to Pearl S. Buck International, 520 Dublin Rd, Perkasie, PA 18944. 7

# Monetary Gifts for Sponsored Children

Unlike most child sponsorship programs, Pearl S. Buck International matches only one sponsor to each child. Therefore, child sponsors are allowed to provide a cash gift to each of their sponsored children on birthdays, holidays, or other occasions.

## Monetary gift guidelines

The minimum amount for a financial gift is \$6. There is no maximum amount. Average gifts range from \$20 to \$100 per year. Large cash gifts are not encouraged, as Pearl S. Buck International seeks to build community interdependence rather than individual dependency.

## Ways to send a gift

Send your monetary gift by postal mail to Pearl S. Buck International, 520 Dublin Road, Perkasie, PA 18944, Attn: Child Sponsorship Manager. Please include a check with a note stating your sponsored child's full name, sponsored child number, your sponsor number, and the purpose of the gift.

To make your monetary gift online, go to [www.pearlsbuck.org](http://www.pearlsbuck.org), click on "Help a Child in Need", then "Sponsor a Child", and finally "Give your Sponsored Child a Gift". Complete the form and click "process".

## Monthly gifts

To set up a monthly monetary gift for your sponsored child or an annual recurring birthday gift, call the Child Sponsorship Manager at 215-249-0100 X142.

## Timing

Please plan ahead to make your monetary gifts early enough to ensure your sponsored child will receive it by your target date. All monetary gifts are sent overseas on the 15<sup>TH</sup> of the month following the month your gift is received. Please note that some of the locations served are remote so it could take additional time for overseas staff to get the gift to your sponsored child.

## **Sending Personal Gifts to Your Sponsored Child**

Sending cash gifts instead of sending physical items is recommended because of postage costs. Packages will not be sent until the postage or shipping fee is received. Also, the value of the dollar is stronger overseas. However, if you prefer to send personal gifts please follow the guidelines below.

### **Guidelines**

Include your sponsored child's full name, sponsored child number, and your sponsor number on each letter, card, and gift.

A postage fee of \$5 is required to mail a letter or greeting card. There is a minimum of \$25 to ship each package up to 1 pound. Any package over 1 pound will incur additional costs.

### **Ideas for gifts that are permitted**

School supplies such as pencils, pens, markers, crayons, erasers, pencil sharpeners, paperback notebooks, paper, drawing pads, and small scissors, paperback books, bookmarks, paperback activity/coloring books, stickers, sticker books, and small craft kits

Hygiene products such as toothbrushes, floss, combs, hairbrushes, and hair accessories

Inexpensive children's costume jewelry (items are not insured)

### **The following gift items are not permitted**

Food products, candy, clothing, stuffed animals, gold or silver jewelry, DVDs, videos, electronic devices, computers, U.S. dollars or coins



## Holidays Observed by Sponsored Children

**Vietnamese New Year / Tết** *Falls on the new moon between January 21–February 20*

The Vietnamese people celebrate Tet Nguyen Dan, which translates as “the first morning of the first day of the new year” and falls on the same day as Chinese New Year. Tet is a seven-day celebration where offerings are made to the Kitchen God to bring good luck in the new year. Ancestors are honored by burning incense, and a feast is prepared to celebrate the new year. Families then go to their places of worship to pray for the new year to be prosperous.

**International Children's Day** *June 1*

This holiday celebrates children, strengthens bonds between parents and children, and reminds adults to protect their little ones. Held at the start of summer vacation, parents take their children to parks, buy them toys, and have picnics. Orphanages organize activities for the children residing there. People make donations for the care of disadvantaged children.

**Vietnamese Family Day** *June 28*

The celebration of Family Day emphasizes importance of the family and its values in shaping the character of every person. Cities across Vietnam organize different cultural activities which promote strong family bonds.

**Summer Holiday** *June/July/August*

Children living in orphanages have the opportunity to return home to visit their family.

**Independence Day** *September 2*

This holiday commemorates the day Vietnam declared its independence from France at the end of World War II.

**Mid-Autumn Festival** *falls late September to early October*

Considered the second most important holiday in Vietnam (after Vietnamese New Year), this is the happiest day for children. Parents buy their children various types of lanterns, snacks and funny masks. The traditional food for the festival is mooncakes.

## Visiting Your Sponsored Child

Visiting with your sponsored child in their homeland can be a rewarding benefit of sponsorship. It can strengthen the bond between you and your sponsored child and enable you to see the challenges your sponsored child faces and how your support is truly life changing.

Pearl S. Buck International periodically offers group tours to its program countries. In addition to meeting your sponsored child on these trips, you will also learn more about the programs and the culture of the region. For more information about upcoming tours, go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/cultural-trips](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/cultural-trips). If you would like to independently travel to visit your sponsored child, Pearl S. Buck International will facilitate a supervised meeting with your child. Coordination of your visit must be made at least two (preferably three) months prior to the trip. All child sponsor meetings require staff supervision. For more information, email [childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org](mailto:childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org) or call 215-249-0100 X142.

# Sponsorship Payment Process

## Sponsorship Investment

For \$420 per year you can transform a child's life. Payment plans are available with several options:

- Annually with a \$420 payment once per year
- semiannually with two \$210 payments per year
- quarterly with a \$105 payment made in four equal payments across a 12 month period
- monthly payments of \$35

## Methods to contribute

Personal checks, business checks, electronic fund transfer (EFT) from your bank account, and credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover) are all accepted and appreciated.

## Receipt of Contribution

Your sponsorship contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law and no goods or services are provided by Pearl S. Buck International in exchange for these contributions.

The official registration and financial information of the Pearl S. Buck International Inc® may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Pearl S Buck International Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Child sponsors who meet the minimum donation amount will receive an end-of-year acknowledgement of contributions total for the calendar year.

## When Sponsored Children Leave the Program

Occasionally, transitions in the life of your sponsored child occur during the course of your sponsorship. The lifestyles of the children and families served are very different from those of children in the U.S.. Change in their lives is a common occurrence. Sometimes a child may need to leave school, move with their family to another area, or the family may be affected by a natural disaster, such as a flood destroying their dwelling or livelihood.

At other times, the change can be a positive one, such as when the child graduates from school or the child or family become financially able to take care of themselves. When a sponsored child reaches the age of 18 and/or at the time of their high school graduation, they will graduate from the child sponsorship program. However, if your sponsored child has the potential to continue their education beyond high school and you have the capacity to financially support this, Pearl S. Buck International will help facilitate the process.

Please remember that the goal of the program is to help the child and their family to become self-sufficient.

We understand the difficult nature of these transitions after you have developed a relationship with your sponsored child. If your sponsored child must leave the program due to a life change, you will be notified as soon as possible. Any information obtained from the overseas affiliates will be shared with you. You will be given the opportunity to continue your support with a new child.

Contact the Child Sponsorship Department with any concerns or requests at [childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org](mailto:childsponsorship@pearlsbuck.org) or 215-249-0100 x142.

## Child Sponsorship Online Resources

Pearl S. Buck International website provides several convenient ways to serve your needs as a child sponsor with tools and information at your fingertips.

Go to [www.pearlsbuck.org](http://www.pearlsbuck.org) and click “Help a Child in Need” on the navigation bar to review options.

### **Sponsor a Child**

Review profiles of children waiting for your support and then easily process your sponsorship by following a few simple prompts

### **Write to Your Sponsored Child**

Follow the prompts for a convenient way to correspond with your sponsored child.

### **Give your Sponsored Child a Gift**

Follow the prompts to provide a gift that will make your sponsored child smile.

### **Learn More About Other Ways to Help**

- Fund a Project
- Support a Specific Need
- Be a Champion for Children

### **See How You are Changing Lives**

Read *Mission Matters*, which includes *Success Stories* and *Program Updates* at [www.pearlsbuck.org/see-how-you-are-changing-lives](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/see-how-you-are-changing-lives).

Visit the homepage at [www.pearlsbuck.org](http://www.pearlsbuck.org) to read “What’s New” or scroll to the bottom for the “Annual Reports” and “Press Room”.

Follow Pearl S. Buck International on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

## Other Programs at Pearl S. Buck International

**Fund a Project** You can help to fund a project in your sponsored child's country, community, or in other areas of need. To find active projects, go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/fund-a-project](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/fund-a-project).

**Support a Specific Need** You can purchase individual items to help a child in need. Go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/support-a-specific-need](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/support-a-specific-need).

**Tours of the Pearl S. Buck House** You can take a guided tour of the National Historic Landmark home of Pearl S. Buck, where she and her husband lived, worked, raised their large international family, and took action to make this earth a better place. Go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/takeatour](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/takeatour).

**Signature Events** You can attend a reception, gala, or other event inspired by the legacy of Pearl S. Buck that benefits the transformative work of the organization. Visit [www.pearlsbuck.org/signature-events](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/signature-events).

**Membership** You or your business can enjoy multiple benefits with an individual or business membership while supporting the legacy of Pearl S. Buck in bridging cultures and changing lives. For details go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/membership](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/membership).

**Volunteers** As a volunteer, you can play an important part in sharing and continuing the legacy of Pearl S. Buck. Volunteers serve in a variety of roles. To learn more go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/volunteer](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/volunteer).

**Cultural Tours** On a guided Pearl S. Buck International Cultural Tour, you can immerse yourself in the rich culture and natural beauty of China, the Philippines, Thailand, or Vietnam. During the tour you will be able to meet sponsored children whose lives are being transformed by compassionate donors. To learn more go to [www.pearlsbuck.org/cultural-trips](http://www.pearlsbuck.org/cultural-trips).

# Pearl S. Buck International

## **Mission**

Pearl S. Buck International provides opportunities to explore and appreciate other cultures, builds better lives for children around the globe, and promotes the legacy of our founder by preserving and interpreting her National Historic Landmark home.

## **Vision**

The legacy of Pearl S. Buck unites nations, societies, communities and individuals with an appreciation for cultural differences and a commitment to service.

## Stay Connected



Facebook.com/PearlSBuckInternational



Twitter.com/PearlSBuckIntl



Pinterest.com/PearlSBuckIntl/



Instagram.com/PearlSBuckIntl



YouTube.com/user/PearlSBuckIntl





## Give with confidence

Pearl S. Buck International uses your contributions as effectively as possible. The organization has received top marks from these respected evaluators.



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