



Journey of Hope

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I want to participate, but I'm unsure as to what program is best for me. What should I do?

At ICA we understand and are committed to aiding you in your decision, as well as making your process as smooth and time efficient as possible. That's why we recommend, to our undecided families, signing-up for our Info and Orientation Sessions.

2. Is there a Preliminary Application Fee?

No.

3. How can I meet with ICA in person?

We can meet on a one on one basis or as a group and provide the same information that we would give over the phone or via email. If you would be interested in this you can contact us to set up a time.

4. Is ICA accredited Hague compliant?

ICA has been a statewide licensed CARF, BIA and IAAME organization since 1990. ICA also received Hague accreditation in 2008 and adheres to the highest standards of international and domestic adoptions and services.

5. Does ICA work with people outside of their local area?

We work with people all over the country; although for purposes of our Journey of Hope programs we require a distance ratio from our office. Regardless of your location or residence, we always encourage you to contact us.

6. What kind of scenarios do children from the programs come from?

Children who are available for programs come from many different situations, environments, and countries (i.e. Congo, Central & South America, Burma, Eritrea, etc.). Some children may have been abandoned or escaped civil wars or trafficking, while other children experienced the loss of one or both parents.

7. Do I need to learn a foreign language?

No. We highly encourage the use of translators and/or other foreign language tools. We will help with those resources.

8. Do I need to be an American citizen to participate through ICA?

Not necessarily, let's talk.

9. Is there an age criteria for families?

Generally, you must be mature, understanding the needs of older children and have the ability to offer behavioral interventions to children high risk.

10. Are there any restrictions for people who are divorced?

Divorced applicants are eligible to apply.

11. How much will it cost?

There are no costs to you.

12. What financial assistance is available?

You will receive the normal monthly state foster care reimbursement to care for the needs of the child.

13. How do I know if I earn enough money to participate?

A DIVISION OF
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN ADOPTIONS

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Surprisingly, most of the families at ICA have an average family income with big hearts. We look at your ability to provide for a child and not whether you are a millionaire!

14. Are children healthy?

There are no guarantees however, ICA makes every effort to get the child medical attention asap.

15. What are the age ranges of the children?

Children are at a variety of different ages from 12 to 17 years old. A limited number are younger. Some come with siblings.

16. Is it possible to specify the age and gender of the child I wish to adopt?

Very often parents desire a specific age and gender when they consider the children they have in their homes. However, we ask you to be open to the age ranges and it is possible that this program may not be right for you. Let's talk about it.

17. Can I participate if I already have children?

Absolutely! Let's talk about whether this is right for you.

18. Can I participate with more than one child at a time?

Absolutely! Let's talk about whether this is right for you.

19. Are there requirements for the health of the parents?

ICA has some requirements regarding health. There is a physician's form in our guidelines which lists everything we require your doctor to evaluate.

20. Can I participate if I've had/have cancer or other similar medical issue?

Health issues may not automatically preclude you from participating but each situation must be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

21. Can I participate if I take anti-depressants?

If you are currently taking any prescription medications or if you have any medical conditions, please call or email our staff to discuss your specific case so we can help you determine your eligibility. If you are taking a prescription medication for any psychological diagnosis, including depression, we need to know prior to beginning the process. These medical issues are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

22. Can I participate if I have a criminal record, been arrested etc., even if I believe it has been expunged?

If you have an arrest record or prior criminal charges, please discuss this with the staff. While it does not automatically preclude you, each situation must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

23. What if we get pregnant during our home study process?

ICA asks that couples experiencing the joy of pregnancy talk with our staff about whether this is the right time to participate.

24. What are my first steps in the refugee foster care process?

1. Attend an info meeting.
2. Submit preliminary application.
3. Submit an RFA packet.
4. Attend a one on one or group orientation.
5. Submit a formal packet.
6. Initiate your training.
7. Complete home assessment.
8. Upon RFA certification, child referral for RFA family.

****You will not be alone.** From your first phone call, through every step of the way, our staff will provide you with detailed guidance, resources and support. We'll take you by the hand to lead you through the process, assisting you with every aspect.

25. What is a home study assessment?

A home study is an assessment of your family and home to determine your mental, emotional and physical abilities to provide a loving, stable environment. ICA will help you understand and prepare for the home study assessment.

26. Will ICA conduct the home study?

ICA is fully licensed in California to conduct your home study. Individuals living in California should contact the ICA office for information regarding a home study.

27. The home study sounds intimidating, can we still participate if we live in humble surroundings?

A home study by a licensed social worker is a requirement. The home study is to determine whether there is a safe place for a child to live. The size or furnishings of your house or apartment is not the issue. The home study seeks to document for the authorities that you are able to provide a loving stable environment. It is also a process to assure that you, as a family, are fully prepared for the task of parenting a child.

28. How long does it take to complete the process?

The average time for most families to finish the home study assessment is within three months. This can vary depending primarily on the program chosen, events and changes, or available children with the families' pre-selected criteria. The home study process, wait for a referral, or matching referral, are normally the most time consuming aspects and may take a while after your home study process is complete. We do not know how long.

29. What is the "referral wait time" of a child?

The referral wait pertains to the time between the completion of your home study and receiving specific information about a child. The more flexible your requirements are the shorter the wait. If you are open to either a boy or a girl of varied age, and/or sibling sets, a child/ren may be referred to you sooner.

30. Is it OK to decline the referral of a child?

The most important thing is that the child you accept into your family is wanted and loved. If you decline a referral that appears to meet the criteria you have provided, we will discuss this with you and your family.

31. Who will be my contact person at ICA?

You will work with a social worker and/or case manager throughout the process. Our social workers and case managers are professional, well trained and very knowledgeable. A social worker will help you with document collection in completing your home study and reports. A case manager will help provide you with information about your child and oversee the child's process and needs.

32. Is there medical care available?

Yes, ICA takes care of that.

33. Are there legal services available?

Legal services are available to all children. ICA takes care of that.

34. Is there counseling available?

All children receive counseling regularly at our office.

35. Where do the children go to school?

The children go to your local school. We will help with registration.

36. Are there tutors available?

Yes, call us.

37. I cannot help now. Is there another way I can help the children?

Yes, there are many ways you can make an impact in a child's life outside of refugee care. ICA sponsors a variety of humanitarian aid programs for the children in need around the world. These programs range from hosting to gift packs and from volunteer work to donations. Please contact the ICA Intake staff and find the best way for you and your family to get involved.