

## Family-Based Care Key Concepts

8 out of 10 children in **residential care facilities, such as orphanages and children’s homes**, have at least one living parent, many of whom could care for their child if given support to do so.

Children who don’t have parents who can care for them often have **relatives, extended family, or members of their community who can**.

A safe, loving family is the most essential source of belonging, emotional support, and physical and mental development for children. **Any type of residential care should be a temporary last resort.**

Decades of research have proven that **residential care negatively affects kids’ developing brains**, while **family care** positively affects kids’ development.

**Poverty—not the loss of parents**—is the leading reason why children are placed in orphanages.

The best way to meet the needs of vulnerable children is to **strengthen the capacity of their families and communities to care for their well-being**.

**U.S. Christians are currently major supporters of residential care facilities** for vulnerable children around the world, and they can alternatively become major supporters of family-based care.

## Statistics

- More than [5 million children](#) live in orphanages.
- [8 out of 10 children](#) living in orphanages have at least one living parent.
- The cost of supporting a child in an orphanage is [5-10x higher](#) than in a family.
- U.S. Christians give approximately [\\$2.5 billion](#) to orphanages annually.
- [21% of Christians](#) who have gone on a mission trip have visited an orphanage.

## Resources

- [Children, Orphanages, and Families: A Summary of Research to Help Guide Faith-Based Action](#)
- [Short Term Missions Guidance to Support Orphans and Vulnerable Children](#)
- [Beautiful Gate Case Study: Transitioning from Residential Care to Family Care in South Africa](#)
- [Barna Study: Residential Care: U.S. Christian Giving and Missions](#)
- [A Continuum of Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children](#)
- [Rethinking Orphan Care: An Introduction to Family Care](#)