



A NEW START.

Unaccompanied Minor Support

In 2015, the world was plunged into the greatest refugee crisis since World War II. Over 65 million people had been displaced. Since then, some of the most vulnerable refugees have remained the unaccompanied children, child refugees forced to flee from danger, alone.

Between April 2015 and April 2016, 3,253 unaccompanied children found their way to the UK, forced to make the dangerous journey alone for various reasons. Many had witnessed the murder or abduction of parents. Some had lost parents during the journey. Some had been sent away by parents, because their family recognised the danger a child was in, and made the risky decision that the dangerous journey alone would be better than facing torture or violence at home. However, last year Europe's criminal intelligence agency, Europol, reported that the journey was so dangerous that at least ten thousand unaccompanied children had disappeared in Europe as traffickers took advantage to abduct them for forced labour or prostitution. (Refugee Council, Children's Services Update 2016)

PROJECT PARTNER.

Refugee Council – The Children's Section

The Refugee Council is one of the leading charities in the UK working directly with refugees, and supporting them emotionally and practically to rebuild their lives and play a full part in society. The Refugee Council's work with unaccompanied children is unique. They provide the UK service to which all unaccompanied refugee children are referred. The Refugee Council aims to provide a one stop shop for these children to ensure their complex needs are met. In 2015/16 they helped protect 3,658 unaccompanied children, a staggering increase of 66% from 2014/15. The highest proportions of children were from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Albania, Iran, Iraq, Vietnam and Syria.

The Refugee Council Children's Section is the only national service of its kind offering advice and support to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and work with around 200 separated children every month. It is made up of a panel of multi-lingual advisors who offer asylum

and welfare support to separated children, young people seeking asylum who are under the age of 18 as well as trafficked children and children who are age disputed and held in detention.

Advisors also help with other issues such as foster placements, getting young people into education, trying to help them locate their family, health issues or simply being someone with whom they can talk when there is no one else they can turn to. In 2015, The Children's Section set up My View, a therapeutic service which offers much needed therapy and psycho-educational groups to unaccompanied children.

THE PROJECT.

£25/€30

Could cover the cost of nourishing hot meals for children who may not have eaten well for days.

£75/€90

Could help towards therapy session for a traumatised child.

£150/€180

Could provide essentials such as clothing, shoes and health and hygiene items for newly arrived refugee children.

£750/€900

Could support one child who is completely alone for a whole year with a range of different services, whether it is help with their asylum claim, to therapeutic support, to ensuring these vulnerable children aren't unlawfully detained and sent back to danger.

PRAY.

Together we are praying for those youngsters who have endured traumatic and exhausting journeys without their parents or family. We celebrate the courage, resilience and capacity of unaccompanied minors and pray that communities will welcome and embrace those arriving. We pray for support and the confidence to navigate the settlement process and a new city, for basic needs to be met, relationships to be forged, and opportunities to be realised. We pray for compassionate government policy that upholds every person's human rights. We pray for increased humanitarian refugee intake, including those from the Middle East region. We pray for effectiveness in both the processing of refugee claims and in settlement and service provision. We pray that the contribution of refugees will be recognised and that diversity will be celebrated. We pray for a sense of home for those arriving in our nation.

LOCAL CHURCH AWARENESS.

If you are part of a local church we encourage you to be mindful of your local church vision and be sure to graciously submit and share your heart with those in leadership in your life. We believe we should see this as an 'above and beyond' endeavour that has the capacity to reach out and build bridges into our unchurched communities and ultimately be a blessing.

OUR DETAILS.

Visit our website for fundraising ideas and financial guidelines.

Give online at
www.coloursisterhood.com/donate

Please note that if target funding is reached for a project we reserve the right to transfer any excess funds to another Sisterhood project.

Tell us your story! Send us an email at coloursisterhood@hillsong.com to share how you fundraised for a Colour Sisterhood project.

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 The Colour Sisterhood

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My name is Rauf and I am from Syria. I am fifteen years old. I left my country because of conflict. I had never before witnessed such violence. My father had been taken by an extremist group and, as the eldest male; my family was under threat if I remained with them. I do not know what happened to my father. I left my family to look for a place where I would be safe.

I came from a wealthy and well-educated background. My parents hoped I would live a happy and successful life, but unfortunate circumstances made this increasingly unlikely. On my way to the UK I was subject to horrific abuse at the hands of those who I thought were helping me make the journey. Due to this physical and emotional trauma I became violently ill. I was alone, afraid and depressed.

I had hoped to be helped once I reached the UK, but on arrival, I was detained by the police and taken to a detention centre. They told me I was lying about my age. A social worker came to see me and asked me several questions; she also did not believe my age. I was in shock. I had never given much thought to my age but it had become the problem of most significance in my life.

After eight days I was moved to another detention centre, I finally saw a doctor there. I was then referred to the Refugee Council Children's Section. One man phoned me to say he would come to visit me. He was kind to me and gave me a number I could call him directly on. He spoke to me in my own language. He sent a doctor to see me and check my health. Within a week of meeting him, he helped me get released and was there when I needed him.

He was the only person who listened to me. Once I was released, he ensured I had the proper age assessment. My age was accepted, an age more than three years younger than the one they had given me. The man from the Refugee Council helped me get hold of many school certificates and other documents, some of which were sent from Syria, in order to convince the assessors I was telling the truth.

I was detained for a total of 14 days in an extremely vulnerable state. I was detained in a room with several adults and I was scared to go to sleep. There are no words to describe the horrors of detention: it was a prison. I struggled, and I still receive emotional support from the Refugee Council and others. I do not know how long it will be before I fully recover. I still have nightmares.

Thanks to the Age Dispute Project I continue to receive support from Helen Bamber Foundation and the Refugee Council Children's Section. I consider myself so lucky in this circumstance. I don't know how someone can decide your age in 10 minutes. Detention is devastating.