

# Healing the Children of War

Seminar presenter: Lorella Rouster, International Co-Director of Every Child Ministries, a Christian mission specializing in “the forgotten children of Africa.”

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## Children of war—Who are they?

(Child may belong to more than one group.)

- Children caught up in generations-long wars that the world little notices
- Orphans
- Refugees, IDP’s, Uprooted children (like “Invisible Children of northern Uganda”)
- Abducted children
- Child soldiers
- Child mothers
- Maimed & wounded children
- Traumatized children  
(what they saw, experienced, & lost, how others react to them afterwards)
- Homeless & street children
- Child prostitutes
- Children devastated by poverty (induced or exacerbated by war)

## Children of war-- What are some of their common characteristics?

- Devastated, hurting emotionally & spiritually
- Loss of hope & vision for the future
- Loss of moral standards & societal guidelines
- Aloof, distant, living behind emotional barriers
- Feelings of not fitting in anywhere
- Untrusting
- Feelings of guilt & shame
- Angry, aggressive & destructive behavior
- Nightmares, flashbacks, bad memories that won’t go away
- Fearful
- Numb, unfeeling, unresponsive
- Loss of parents, family life, understanding of family values
- Rejection by society
- Poor nutrition & health
- Lower mental capacity

## **Children of war –How can we minister to them?**

- Provision for orphans—homes, education
- Vocational training & ways to make a living
- Spiritual & personal ministry in camps
- Educational programs & assistance
- Rehabilitation programs
- Counseling & therapy programs
- Liberation, rescue & repatriation programs
- Medical programs
- Street ministry programs
- Sponsorship programs

## **Children of war –How can you prepare for ministry to them?**

- Find out qualifications required by agencies or specialized ministries in which you are interested
- General guidelines—Spiritual preparation—At least one year of Bible (good basic working understanding of the Bible)
- Courses in counseling from a Biblical perspective
- Courses in practical & holistic subjects
- Seminar training by Crisis Care Training International
- Career ministry? Majors in Counseling, Social Work, Christian Education

## **Children of war –How can you help if you can't go to them?**

- Choose a ministry to support in any way you can—prayer, financial support, volunteering, acting as their rep at events, etc.
- Sponsor a child from a war-affected area.
- Collect & send relief supplies. (See handout for ideas.)
- Be an advocate.

## **Handout**

Websites, references, ministries, ministry opportunities with ECM, volunteer ideas with ECM, Sponsorship chart, Ideas for collection of relief supplies.

Contact ECM if you want us to send you e-mail updates on our ministries & new ministry opportunities to children of war in Uganda, Sudan, and DR Congo.

## Questions for Agencies Serving Children Affected by War

Your answers to these questions may be used in a seminar “Healing the Children of War” to be presented at Urbana 2006 and led by Lorella Rouster of Every Child Ministries. Your thoughtful response will be deeply appreciated and may result in candidates for your organization. Thank you!

1. What majors do you look for in candidates? What majors would you recommend to those headed for ministry to children affected by war?
2. What other kinds of training & experience do you suggest?
3. What kinds of spiritual preparation do you suggest?
3. What opportunities do you presently have for ministry to children affected by war? What are the necessary qualifications for these positions?
4. What opportunities do you have for young adults to help children of war other than serving as missionaries?
5. Is there anything else you would like to say about Christian efforts to heal the children of war?
6. May we quote you if needed?

Thank you again for your time and effort!

This seminar was prepared by Lorella Rouster of Every Child Ministries and presented to two overflow crowds in seminars at Urbana 2006 Student Missions Conference.

For further information or to request Lorella to speak on this or similar topics, contact [Lorella@ecmafrica.org](mailto:Lorella@ecmafrica.org)



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