

## About Joint Council

### Mission Statement

To advocate for and protect the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving family.



### Our Beliefs

- \* Living, growing and dying in a family is a basic human right.
- \* We believe that millions of children living without permanent family care represent a crisis of intolerable size and scope.
- \* Society has a responsibility to ensure that every child can live, grow, and flourish through family life, and therefore society must respond to this crisis.
- \* Creating permanent, safe, and loving families for children must be prioritized through the strengthening of the birth family, adoption within the local community, followed by adoption within the international community.
- \* The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child serve to provides the framework in which at risk children can be served.
- \* Through ethical collaboration, individuals, communities, organizations, and governments can fashion a global, child-centric response which strengthens or creates a permanent, safe, and loving family for every child.

**Defending children and families  
is the heart of everything we do.**

Tom DiFilipo, President & CEO



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**Joint Council  
on International  
Children's  
Services**



**Informational  
Brochure**

## Be the Answer

*Be The Answer* is a community-based grassroots mobilization effort which assists individuals in using their own unique talents to make positive change for the 132 million orphans. Those who are interested can become *The Answer* by committing to the Campaign on Joint Council's website at \$40 a year. From there, members receive updates and information about other ways to become *The Answer*.



## Mobilization

Perhaps one of Joint Council's biggest strengths is its ability to mobilize important individuals and constituents to affect change. Such large scale campaigns have included the *Guatemala 5000 Campaign* and the *P.A.P. 10,000*.

The *Guatemala 5000 Campaign* resulted in a positive change in Guatemalan law and 216 U.S. Congressional signatures on letters to the Guatemalan government and UNICEF. The letters were the largest Congressional letter to UNICEF and one of the largest Congressional letters to a foreign government.

The *P.A.P 10,000*, a mobilization of adoptive families, began when the Hague entered force in April 2008. Joint Council advocated on behalf of those prospective families who had already begun the adoption process under the old system. This effort resulted in the decision to honor the previous I600A process, allowing hundreds of children to join their forever families without undue delay.



**“We have all been through difficult situations and pain that no child should endure. We all know what it is like to be abandoned and afraid. The storms of life have rained heavy on us.”**

**- Anonymous Orphan**



## Global Awareness Campaign



The *Global Awareness Campaign* is Joint Council's key outreach effort to raise awareness of the global orphan crisis. The *Global Awareness Campaign* thus far includes numerous media sources, such as *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Washington Post*, *Fox News* and *RIA Novosti* – Russia's largest news bureau.

Recently, the *Global Awareness Campaign* expanded to address key stakeholders outside of the immediate child welfare community. *Mbali's Message*, a monthly newsletter named in memoriam of a South African orphan, educates adoptive families on emerging child welfare issues.



## International Relations Initiative

The *International Relations Initiative* serves to develop relationships, resolve issues, create collaborations, and expand opportunities with foreign government to positively affect children in need of permanent parental care. The *International Relations Initiative* takes a proactive approach to the myriad of issues facing vulnerable children and families. The *Initiative* includes:

- Advocacy trips to countries in need of assistance on their permanency programs and services
- Hosting delegations on such topics as the Hague Convention, intercountry adoption, and permanency planning for children and families

Programs thus far have included over 13 countries, ranging from Ethiopia and Rwanda to Haiti and Vietnam.