

# Summary Statement on Fly Away Children

## Report Suspected Abuse

Suspected incidents of unethical practices or other abuses can be reported to:

- [State Licensing Bureaus](#)
- [The U.S. Department of State](#)
- [The U.S. Department of Justice](#)
- [Council on Accreditation](#)
- [Ethica](#)
- [Joint Council on International Children's Services](#)

## The Joint Council Grievance Procedure

Joint Council maintains a process by which suspected breaches of the Joint Council Standards of Practice can be reported.

- To report a suspected breach, click here: [Grievance Procedures](#).
- To access the general or Ethiopia specific Standards of Practice, click here: [Standards of Practice](#).

Please note that given Joint Council's limited funding and staffing resources along with the stated timeline in the Grievance Procedure, final determinations are not immediately issued.

## Standards of Practice

In addition to laws, regulations and oversight, standards of practice also add to the protections of children and families.

On September 1, 2009, Joint Council published the *Second Edition of Standards of Practice for Non-governmental Organizations with Respect to Permanency Services in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*, with a goal of elevating practices and serving children with strong ethics and high standards.

The full text of the Standards is available on the [Joint Council website](#)

## Position Statement

The abusive practices portrayed in the ABC News (Australia) [story](#) are simply indefensible. Violations of the rights of children and families outrage all who hold an ethical conscience. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then images of children being recruited from existing families is worth a million words of rage against corrupt practices, misguided efforts, unethical programs and illegal activities.



Joint Council has reported to the appropriate authorities and has, among other actions, initiated an aggressive review of possible violations of the Joint Council Standards of Practice by member organizations. Additionally, Joint Council will travel to Ethiopia on October 2, 2009. As appropriate, our findings will be reported publicly and to the authorities. ([read more on Joint Council's activities related to Ethiopia.](#))

Those who are directly responsible for any illegal abuses must be investigated, arrested and prosecuted. Failing to take aggressive action against the individuals involved only further compromises children's rights. And when the reaction to abuse is the elimination of a particular service (most often intercountry adoption) instead of prosecuting the perpetrators, children are further victimized and their rights stripped away.

A critique of the ABC News story could easily point out inaccuracies and misrepresentations beginning with a gross misstatement that over \$100 million USD is provided to the Ethiopian government via intercountry adoption. But it is neither the time for such a critique nor the purpose of Joint Council's current actions. At this moment, we must all be focused on supporting and sustaining the rights of children and families.

A subjective and narrow assessment of children's services in Ethiopia discounts one of the primary needs and appropriate responses to an orphan crisis – the preservation of existing families. Without addressing this essential need, the orphan crisis will always be the shame of the world community.

Therefore, Joint Council calls on the world community to prosecute perpetrators, conduct a balanced assessment of children's services and to further develop family preservation as a means of protecting families and their children.

Learn More About Joint Council at [www.jcics.org](http://www.jcics.org)

Mission Summary Reports Be The Answer Families For Orphans Act