Sleep Out Information Pack

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‘Spend a night the way millions spend a lifetime’
Introduction

Dwelling Places
Dwelling Places is a Christian, non-governmental organisation dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of street children, abandoned babies and high-risk slum families in Uganda, East Africa.

Started by Rita and William Nkemba in August 2002, Dwelling Places seeks to work ‘until every child has a chest to rest his head on and a place to call him.’

The mission is two-fold:

1. to rescue, rehabilitate and reconcile street children with their families
2. to speak out for children at risk - informing, motivating and equipping local families and communities to promote positive change in Ugandan society

The charity follows a holistic 4-Rs programme to rescue, rehabilitate, reconcile and resettle street children, abandoned babies and high-risk slum families. Family Empowerment has always been a key feature of the work, including the provision of Income Generating Grants to help families make a sustainable living. In 2010, the Youth Empowerment Project was also created, to help prepare those aged 15 years and above for work or further education, and adult life.

The name Dwelling Places is derived from Isaiah 58:12:

"Your sons shall build what has long been in ruins, you shall rise up the foundation of many generations and you shall be called the repairers of broken walls, the restorers of streets with dwellings."

Rita chose this scripture as an apt description and vision for Dwelling Places, based on her prior experiences with street children and their need of a strong foundation for Ugandan families.

Dwelling Places UK
Dwelling Places UK is a Scottish registered charity based in Glasgow. Started by a Board of Trustees in 2007, Dwelling Places UK seeks to support the work in Uganda. The charity’s aims are:

1. to raise awareness of the work of Dwelling Places
2. to be a financial resource to that work
3. to encourage volunteers to serve, both internationally and here in the UK

Dwelling Places UK is run on a day to day basis by a part time (job share) Administrator & Development Officer, supported by a small number of volunteers. The charity operates out of The ARK Card & Gift Shop, Glasgow. The shop, which is run by a local church, sells beautiful cards and gifts, with all the profits going to the work in Uganda.
The International Day for Street Children

In 2005, UNICEF estimated that there were 100 million children on the streets worldwide, in Africa alone there were an estimated 30 million children on the streets, with approximately 10,000 in Uganda!

The Consortium for Street Children, based in London, is the leading international network dedicated to realising the rights of street children worldwide. On 12th April 2011, the CSC launched the first ever International Day for Street Children. The day provides a platform for the millions of street children around the world - and their champions - to speak out so that their rights cannot be ignored. Dwelling Places and Dwelling Places UK use the 12th April each year to raise awareness of the plight of street children and the work in Uganda. Sleep outs which take place on or around the 12th April offer a great opportunity to make links with the International Day.

A little about street children

Who?
UNICEF has defined 3 types of street children:

➢ **Street living** children: children who spend their days and nights on the street
➢ **Children from** street families: children who live on the streets with their families
➢ **Street working** children: children who spend most of their time on the streets, fending for themselves, but return to some kind of shelter on a regular basis

Why?
Children end up on the streets for a number of reasons. Typically these are; family breakdown, armed conflict, poverty, natural and man-made disasters, famine, abuse, and exploitation.

Where?
Some street children congregate and sleep on the streets in certain areas of the city or town they live in. Others sleep in sewers, or live in derelict buildings, while others find refuge in shop doorways. Some children have some form of basic shelter at night, usually in slum areas.

Dangers?
Street children face a number of dangers, such as hunger, violence, physical abuse, mental abuse, drug abuse and trafficking.

Survival?
Street children are often very resourceful and resilient. Often they build strong friendship groups, make ‘homes’ and earn some sort of living, for example by collecting and selling on plastic water bottles or doing menial tasks. Many beg and raid rubbish bins while others find themselves in prostitution, abusing drugs or sniffing fuel.
The Sleep Out

The sleep out aims to allow volunteers to experience, in a small way, what the life of a street child is like, whilst also raising awareness of the plight of street children across the world. It may also be used to raise funds for Dwelling Places or for volunteers going to serve at Dwelling Places.

Volunteers are invited to organise their own sleep out with a group of friends in their local area. Participants will spend a night on the streets (or suitable equivalent), roughly 8pm-8am. They will have only basic items for bedding (ie. cardboard boxes, bin bags, old sheets). but may also build a shelter using basic items (ie. plastic sheets, tarpaulin, wood off cuts or pallets).

1. Choosing a time of year
The sleep out has become a popular idea with charities and some have even chosen to hold one in winter time! The time of year chosen is entirely up to the group involved. Remember if you think it is important to build a shelter in daylight you will need to know when the sun sets.

2. Choosing a space
Choose an outdoor space that has room for the volunteers to be able to build a shelter as well as to lie down. There should also be access to a toilet.

It may be worth having a back up indoor venue in case the weather is horrendous, although, although rain, a little snow or wind does not necessarily mean you need to move indoors. Remember the idea is for participants to experience life on the streets and children live out in all conditions (it is not always warm and dry in Uganda, there are also extremely heavy rainy seasons). Wherever possible, as long as it does not become unsafe, participants are encouraged to stay outdoors. Organising extra back up materials that can be used to improve any shelters that have been built if the weather turns poor is always encouraging to participants!

Seek permission for using the space for a sleep out from the relevant party. Remember, if it is a public space or pavement you may need to seek permission from the local council which can take some time, and they may issue requirements. You may also need to notify the Police. Public Liability Insurance may be required.

3. Raising awareness
One of the aims of the sleep out is to raise as much awareness as possible, both of the event, and of the situation that millions of children find themselves in every day. Below are some ideas of how to raise awareness but you may think of your own...be creative!

- if you’re part of a bigger organisation make sure everyone knows what is happening, why and when
- host pre and post-sleep out interviews
- up-date your group’s website if you have one, both before and after the event
- contact your local paper in advance
- use social media - set up a Facebook group, get tweeting and make use of Instagram
- create a video diary with interviews before, during and after the event, then showcase this
• choose a highly public space for your sleep out, set up during the day and make the event last a little longer so people will see you in the morning. Incorporate activities and challenges such as litter picking, shoe shining and paper bag making (see below).

4. **Raising funds**
For Dwelling Places UK the sleep out is primarily about inviting people to experience sleeping rough and share about it. If participants wish to use the event to raise funds then that is also great. Funds can be donated to Dwelling Places UK, to be sent to the work in Uganda, or can be used to help fund a trip to serve at Dwelling Places. An optional sponsorship form is included in this pack.

5. **What to bring**
Remember you are trying to gain an understanding as to what it is like for a child to sleep out on the streets. Not only in Uganda, but all over the world thousands of children find themselves having to live on the streets so this list is quite short!

- warm clothes - jumpers, hats, gloves, warm socks, and waterproof shoes...wrap up warm!
- cardboard box or two and a bin bag – for lying on/covering yourself with and/or using to build a shelter
- plastic waterproof sheeting if possible
- rope or strong string
- consent form (if under 18 years old)

In order to help make the experience more authentic participants should be encouraged not to bring food and to leave mobile phones at home.

Organisers are advised to

- provide refreshments at the beginning and most definitely at the end of the event
- have access to a mobile phone in case of emergencies
- have a camera or phone for taking photos and video footage
- collect, in advance, additional materials for building shelters in case required (wood, bin bags, tarpaulin, wooden pallets, large cardboard boxes, old sheets, waterproof plastic sheeting, robe, strong string etc)

6. **On the night**
There is no set format for how the event should be run but here are some pointers

- always take a register as people arrive for the event, ensuring signed consent forms are handed in and kept with a designated organiser
- run an opening activity that participants can join in on as they arrive
- welcome participants to the event once everyone has arrived. The welcome should include a reminder about the purpose of the sleep out, an overview of the programme for the night/morning and any rules. You should clarify the exact area to be used for the event and make everyone is aware of any no go areas.
You should also remind all participants that they should inform an adult if they need to leave their sleeping area for whatever reason, and should never go anywhere alone

- regular check on the participants throughout the night in case of any problems
- host a breakfast in the morning (African themed or not!)

7. Reflecting and moving forward
The experience will affect participants in different ways, some will be deeply challenged and will appreciate time to reflect on the event, how it made them feel and what they wish to do about the reality of it all. Others will have enjoyed doing something different but not think too deeply about it. Either way, it is important to allow a time of reflection or debriefing, either immediately after the event or within the next week. You can run this session in whichever way you feel works best for your group. Here are some suggestions:

1. Hold an open discussion in small groups
   - How did you feel about the idea of children living on the streets before the event?
   - Have your feelings and thoughts changed since? If so, in what way?
   - What did you find challenging? Memorable? Surprising?
   - How close to reality do you think your experience was?
   - How would you describe the experience to someone who didn’t take part?
   - Are you going to make any changes to your own attitudes or lifestyles because of the experience?
   - Would you like to share anything else about the experience?

2. Edit and show the footage filmed before, during and after the event. You could even make a night of it and invite friends and family (and the local paper!)

3. Organise a time of prayer and reflection, setting up prayer stations that allow participants to write or draw about their experience, and lift up prayer requests for the street children around the world

4. Ask the group if, and how, they wish to make a practical difference to the lives of street children. Do they wish to organise a fundraiser, raise more awareness, perhaps in school or church, sponsor a child, go and serve as a group at Dwelling Places in Uganda?

More than a sleep out

In its basic form the sleep out is a 12 hour (or so) period of sleeping rough. If you wish to, you can build other activities into the sleep out in order to experience more of ‘living’ on the streets. Some of these activities also provide an opportunity to raise awareness if done publically.

- Earn a living: run a carwash, shine shoes (or pretend to!), find odd jobs that you will be paid for, make paper bags or other items out of newspaper and work out how much you could earn for them, do some litter picking and ‘earn money’ per plastic bottle or other reusable item
- Experience the basics: fetch water in a jerry can and see how far you can carry it (make a race out of it), cook rice and dried beans on an outdoor camping stove (note
that some beans need soaked in advance), talk with other participants using Dwelling Places’ ‘In Our Shoes’ discussion activities

- Be a child: find ways of having fun, make a football out of newspaper and have a football match, make a toy out of items you find lying around
- Everyone is spiritual: spend time in group or personal prayer and reflection, hold a Bible study (Dwelling Places have one available which explores Isaiah 58:1-14, the chapter the charity is founded on)

**General Health & Safety**

The sleep out is intended to allow participants to experience, in a small way, what the life of a street child is like. Sleeping on the streets is not comfortable, it is not relaxing and it is not easy to stay clean. The experience therefore will likely not be comfortable, relaxing or particularly clean. Sleeping on the streets can be incredibly dangerous, however sleep out events need to be safe. Below is some advice for how to create a realistic, yet safe experience.

- Undertake a risk assessment prior to the event
- Always take a register as people arrive for the event, ensuring signed consent forms are handed in
- Clarify the exact area to be used for the event and ensure all participants are aware of any no go areas. This should be part of the welcome at the start of the event
- Remind all participants that they should inform an adult if they need to leave their sleeping area for whatever reason, and should never go anywhere alone. This should be part of the welcome at the start of the event
- Make sure any shelters that are built are relatively safe (that they won’t hurt someone if they fall down)
- Make sure any trip hazards, or objects that are dangerous, are not left lying around (ie. unused robe, nails impaled in wood)
- Ensure participants always wear shoes
- Ensure there is a First Aider and a well stocked first aid kit available
- If you consider that anyone is acting unsafely or creating a danger or disturbance to others arrange to have them collected early from the event
Code of Conduct

Those participating in the sleep out are expected to behave responsibly, therefore a number of suggested ground rules have been put together which participants can be asked to sign. Adapt this as necessary for your group.

I ________________________ understand that while participating in the sleep out it is important, both for my safety and enjoyment, and for the safety and enjoyment of others, that I abide by the following Code of Conduct.

I will...

★ respect the supervisors and do what they ask
★ respect other participants
★ not go anywhere alone and inform a supervisor if I need to leave my sleeping area for whatever reason
★ not make too much noise (it is the middle of the night!)

Signed ________________________________

Date ______________
Sleep Out Consent Form (for those 17 years and below)

Sleep Out Date: ____________________________  Sleep Out Venue: ____________________________

Organiser’s Name: ____________________________

Young Person’s name: ____________________________

Address: ______________________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

Date of Birth: ________________________________

Any Known Allergies: __________________________

Medical conditions: _____________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

Medication: ___________________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

Emergency Contact: ____________________________

Contact’s Home No: ____________________________

Contact’s Mobile No: ____________________________

Which number should be used, if needed, during the event?  Home / Mobile

You should keep this phone on all night

I give permission for my child to attend the above event. In case of emergency please contact me on the above emergency number. If I cannot be contacted I am willing for my child to receive hospital treatment if required, including anaesthetic. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me immediately.

Sign: ________________________________________

Print: ________________________________________

The organisers intend to video/photograph the event. These images may be used by Dwelling Places UK to help raise awareness of the plight of street children*

I give / do not give permission (delete as appropriate) for the above named child to be recorded/photographed at the above event, and for these images to be used by Dwelling Places UK.

Sign: ________________________________________

*Regarding images depicting children, young people or vulnerable adults: If any image includes children, young people or vulnerable adults, you must make sure that you have obtained the consent for third party use from a responsible adult and, if the person is over 16, from the person themselves.
Sponsorship Form

There are an estimated 100 million street children worldwide! Dwelling Places is a Christian, non-governmental organisation dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of street children, abandoned babies and high-risk slum families in Uganda, East Africa.

I ______________________ have volunteered to sleep on the street for one night on _____________________ (date), at ______________________ (venue), in order to experience, in a small way, what life is like for street children and to raise awareness of the plight of street children across the world. Please help me raise money for the work of Dwelling Places.

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<th>Name of Sponsor</th>
<th>Address (please clearly write your address if you wish your donation to qualify for Gift Aid)</th>
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*Gift Aid* I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Thank you for your support!

www.dwellingplaces.org
Scottish Registered Charity No: SC039761
### Sponsorship Form Continued

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**TOTAL RAISED**

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Thank you for your support!

[www.dwellingplaces.org](http://www.dwellingplaces.org)

Scottish Registered Charity No: SC039761

Please forward donations to Dwelling Places UK, c/o The ARK Shop, 1484 Paisley Road West, Glasgow, G52 1SP, within 4 weeks of the event date. Cheques should be made payable to ‘Dwelling Places UK’.
We hope you find this pack useful for helping you work through some of the tasks you need to complete in order to run your own Sleep Out.

As you organise, plan and participate in the event you may come across other issues or opportunities, and think of other ideas, which we have not noted here. We would be grateful if you could share these with us so we can include them in future packs.

Dwelling Places UK cannot take responsibility for the organisation of your event, or any incidents that occur before, during or after it.

We wish you all the best and look forward to hearing all about your fundraiser!

With thanks,

Dwelling Places UK