



Newsletter

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Editorial

Confrontation vs. Cooperation

Obviously, the upcoming Olympic Games are putting China in the limelight. International human rights groups are tuning up media campaigns to condemn China. In many countries activist groups are lobbying their governments not to send any Olympic delegation. Petitions are circulating on the Internet calling for international criticism of all kinds against China. The purpose of it all is to change aspects of Chinese society. The most common themes are human rights, public freedoms (media, religion, etc.), and executions. Confrontation is the strategy.

Morning Tears does not seek confrontation. Instead, we sign friendly and legal cooperation agreements with Chinese foundations and governments. We choose cooperation. Experience has taught us to believe in dialogue. Our cooperation agreements are definitely not window dressing. The relation between Morning Tears and the authorities is one in which mutual respect is key. We walk together hand in hand searching for alternatives for some aspects of society on which there is a common understanding that change is needed. Our daily

work of providing assistance to children of convicts is at the same time a platform for exchange of values and opinions with our Chinese counterparts. In our work, we inject the Chinese society with human dignity for children whose parents are in prison or have been executed.

Morning Tears is honored that the Chinese authorities have invited us to carry out a number of very relevant activities. These include: implementation of a model project for children of convicts, authoring minimum standards for child care programs, and developing training materials for staff in child protection centers. We are happy that we can be part of generating positive change in China.

In order to carry out these tasks we will need you. We would like to invite you to join us or support us. Together, cooperating with our Chinese partners, we can make a difference.

We wish you a happy start of the Year of the Rat.

Koen Sevenants,
on behalf of the children and Morning Tears
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What's New

- Morning Tears Belgium, the newest non-profit organization in the morning tears family, has arrived. Morning Tears Belgium will focus on providing assistance to children of convicts in Belgium. (Please note that "Morning Tears Belgium" is not the same as "morning tears." "morning tears" provides assistance to children in developing countries.)
- New children continue to arrive at morning tears, while others head to joyful reunions. Last month, the 11-year-old boy Lei Ke was happily reunited with his mother. Also, the 17-year-old girl Xiao Hua moved out to live again with her mother.
- We survived the winter cold and the snowstorms. But it was not easy: In one of our programs the heating broke, there were food shortages, and most of our programs were not reachable for almost a week.
- Morning Tears is also working with a group of volunteers in Shanghai. Feel like joining? Contact Gemma at gemma.guo@morningtears.org.cn.

The Year of the Rat

The rat is the first of the 12 animals in the traditional Chinese calendar, symbolizing fortune and good luck to Chinese people. You are a rat if you are born in 2008, 1996, 1984, 1972, 1960, 1948, 1936, 1924 or 1912.

People born in the year of the rat work hard, cooperate easily and are very economical. If you receive a gift from someone born in the year of the rat, that means they really think you are very important person. They are bright and good with finances so they have a good life, especially when they are old. People born in the year of the rat like making friends, and they are good at organizing parties and activities. They can always make others happy, and they usually have good character.

People born in the year of the rat are brave, honest, unclouded and optimistic. No matter how hard the situation is, a person born in the year of the rat will be the one who can still talk and laugh.

Rats are small but they have a very strong life. Sometimes they like to take risks, but they can always survive dangerous situations and protect themselves well. The Chinese believe that a person born in the year of the rat will always have good luck follow him or her.

Children born in the year of the rat are usually lively and sensitive. They have a very strong sense of competition. They like to be noticed by other people, and are very capable and attractive. They always enjoy playing with other kids, and make friends easily. They are meticulous, patient, and can always focus on something. Children born in the year of the rat are usually good at studying, can read and write at a very young age, and have good ability to express themselves.

To Chinese people, the year of the rat is really a year of good luck. Many people would like to have their baby born this year.

Kou Wei

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Brothers and Sisters



You might think that in a country with a one-child policy there are no brothers and sisters. Visiting one of our programs will convince you otherwise. We proudly show you some pictures of brothers and sisters living together in one of our programs.



Morning Tears' Strategy

Morning Tears intends to deliver a high level of quality in our work. Therefore, we have developed a set of minimum standards. These standards are the minimum of what we should achieve in order to give ourselves a positive evaluation. We try to influence governments and other organizations by showing them exemplary programs. Next to that, we provide training to interested organizations on how to reach these minimum standards. In the future, we intend to develop an inspection tool based on these standards. This inspection tool can be used by governments to evaluate child-care initiatives and consequently raise the overall level of quality of child care programs in their jurisdiction.

We now evaluate seven different areas for quality. Each of these quality areas has its own action points. In this issue of the newsletter we provide an overview of the "Morning Tears Minimum Standards." In future issues we will take a closer look at one quality area.

The full text of the minimum standards can be requested by writing to Gemma (gemma.guo@morningtears.org.cn)

1. Quality Area 1: Planning for Care

- 1.1. Childcare programs have written aims and objectives
- 1.2. All children in the program have placement plans
- 1.3. All children's placement plans are reviewed regularly
- 1.4. Systems exist for rehabilitation, through-care and aftercare

2. Quality Area 2: Protective care

- 2.1. Childcare programs have a child protection policy
- 2.2. Staff and caregivers demonstrate good child protection practice
- 2.3. Staff supervise the children at all times
- 2.4. Childcare programs have appropriate policies in case of emergency

3. Quality Area 3: Personal Care

- 3.1. Children are treated with dignity and respect
- 3.2. Children are supported to make informed choices
- 3.3. Children are supported to voice their opinions and views
- 3.4. Children's positive relationships and attachments are encouraged
- 3.5. Children's right to privacy is respected
- 3.6. Children's sense of identity is maintained
- 3.7. Play and recreational activities are encouraged and promoted
- 3.8. Children have access to education and are supported in their learning
- 3.9. Methods of care, control and use of sanctions are defined
- 3.10. Specific needs of babies and young children are catered to

4. Quality Area 4: Health

- 4.1. Children's diets are sufficient for their nutritional needs
- 4.2. Children have access to preventive and remedial healthcare

5. Quality Area 5: Environment and Safety

- 5.1. Children live in homes that provide physical safety and security



6. Quality Area 6: Caregivers

- 6.1. Recruitment and selection procedures ensure quality childcare and protection
- 6.2. Staff and caregivers have regular supervision and support
- 6.3. Caregivers and staff deployment ensure quality childcare and protection
- 6.4. Professional development and training are available for staff and caregivers

7. Quality Area 7: Management and Administration

- 7.1. Appropriate program records are maintained
- 7.2. Children's confidential details and records are respected and maintained
- 7.3. Owners and managers of childcare programs are accountable

A Letter from Gemma Guo (Morning Tears Beijing Office)

Greetings from China

I'm Gemma, the child communication facilitator for the Morning Tears office in Beijing. I'm happy to be a member of this team and work in close contact with the children. I would also like to avail of this opportunity to extend my New Year's wishes to all of you!

Being the Year of the Rat, 2008 is going to be a special year. The kids in our Children's Villages just had an unforgettable Chinese New Year. Due to the heaviest snowfall in over 50 years in China (which hit mostly the southern part of China), kids in the Children's Village in Shaanxi province had to face problems with the power supply and transportation. But they still were lucky to get some gifts from sponsors and they were happy to play with some visitors. They especially enjoyed the music party on New Year's Eve hosted by their uncle/brother Koen. They made dumplings together. In spite of extremely cold conditions, the Children's Village was full of song and laughter.

As you know, the 2008 Olympics will be held in Beijing beginning on August 8, 2008. "One World, One Dream" is the slogan. For these kids in the Children's Village, they have a dream that they wish to go to Beijing and watch basketball, table tennis, or another sport. Of course it's just one of their many dreams.

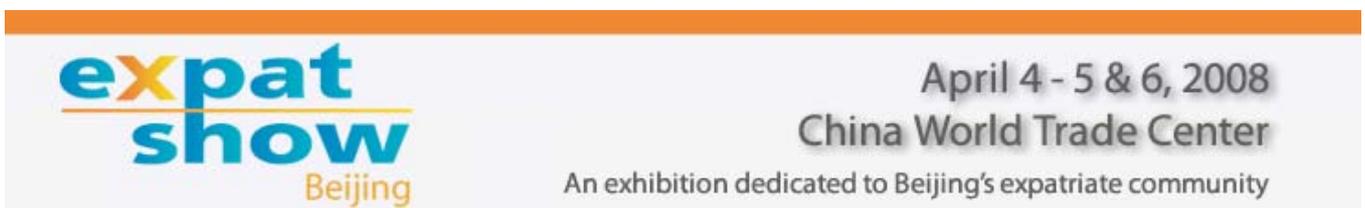
To help the dreams of these kids come true one by one, Morning Tears organized a pasta charity event. (Thank you, Patrick!) There was a football match between the team from the Belgian Embassy and the Morning Tears team. Special thanks to O'le Club - we are expecting further cooperation with them for the Children's Football World Cup. In April, we will take part in the Expat Show (www.expatshowbeijing.com), which is organized by the World Events Agency. All of the events are not only for fundraising, but also for enhancing awareness among members of the public about these children whose parents are in prisons and making an effort to help rebuild worlds for children who lost their own.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support we got from you in the past. I would like to share with you that with your help, we opened our Beijing office this past November, which is located in Apartment 5-602, Building 16, Min'an Community, Dongzhimen, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100007, P.R. China (close to the Russian Embassy). All of you are welcome to visit our office anytime!

Join us! Give children a hand, and they will return a smile to this world!

Gemma

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Feedback

This is the first issue of the third volume of our quarterly newsletter. Your feedback will help us to improve. Also, we will be happy to include your contributions or announcements. We look forward to hearing from you. Please mail to: info@morningtears.org.

If you want to get our previous newsletters, visit our website at www.morningtears.org. You can download them from the site.

The Story of Xiao Xue

Xiao Xue is really a beautiful and happy resident of Children's Village. She is very lively and naughty, and you can hear her laugh everywhere. You cannot imagine that only two years ago, this little happy creature would steal and rob from people on the street – at a time when she was only 7 years old.

Xiao Xue's parents are both in prison for theft. The police arrived to take her parents away from their home without notifying any department of the local government that there were two children left in the home, with no one to take care of them. Xiao Xue was only 6 years old at the time and her elder brother was 9 years old. The two of them stayed home alone for several days. There was no food or clean water available, and they were quite hungry, so the brother decided to take Xiao Xue to the city to look for their parents.

They came to the city, but it was a very large place and they didn't know where the prison was. The two kids were totally lost. Tired and hungry, Xiao Xue started to cry and scream; her small heart filled with fear. Xiao Xue's brother could do nothing but hold her younger sister tightly. Xiao Xue cried hard, but her cries became softer and softer, and she finally fell asleep. It was more than any 6-year-old child could bear. We do not know what appeared in Xiao Xue's dream that day, but we know from that day forward, Xiao Xue and her brother started a totally different life – they became children of the streets.

Xiao Xue and her brother started to beg on the street, but they never got enough food to eat. Xiao Xue's eyes became very deep and bright due to hunger. She became thinner and thinner, and her small dirty face was always filled with tears. Xiao Xue and her brother wandered in the city and met another group of kids. They were also living on the street, but they seemed to eat well, because they gave food to Xiao Xue, and they also had a place to sleep. Xiao Xue and her brother decided to live with these kids together...

The time passed quickly – Xiao Xue and her brother had already lived in the city for almost one year. They still wandered the streets every day, but they had food now, and sometimes they even had money to buy new clothes and something they liked. And finally they found the prison where their mother lived.

When Xiao Xue's mother saw her two children in the prison's reception room, she could not believe her eyes. The two kids looked good, they wore new clothes. They brought food and gifts for her. The mother held them tightly. She kissed them hundreds of times, and they hugged each other, crying and laughing. The two kids were almost too happy, holding their mum's arm tightly, afraid that she would disappear again suddenly like last time. They had so many words to tell, but the visit time was always so short. When the police came to notify them that their time was up, Xiao Xue's mother suddenly noticed that her children had come to visit her all by themselves. She asked Xiao Xue's brother who they lived with, and the boy told their mom they lived alone, and they could raise themselves well because they had ways of getting money.

When Xiao Xue put the food and gifts in her mom's arms, the two kids looked very proud of themselves. Xiao Xue's mother suddenly realized the way her two kids were raising themselves and how they found money. She screamed and fainted. Xiao Xue's mother never thought her kids would just do the same thing she and her husband did. She could not sleep and eat, she cried and screamed day and night, begging the police to catch her two kids and send them to the remand home. She could not accept that her two children would copy the ways of their parents. The police were able to find Xiao Xue and her brother and sent them to the Children's Village.

When the two kids first arrived at Children's Village they tried to run away, as they had already gotten used to life without any rules or limits – they did not need to go to school or follow any rules when they lived on the street, and they could buy anything they wanted with the money they stole. So they played truant, they cheated; they beat the other kids violently. They really made lots of trouble for the teachers, and every day we were worried they would try to run away again. What a terrible first year for these new residents of Children's Village. But no one ever thought of giving up on them. Whenever they would misbehave, the teachers would forgive and accept them. When Xiao Xue and her brother came back by themselves after running away from Children's Village again, we knew they finally accepted this place as their home.

Xiao Xue still gets punished by the teachers for misbehaving, but she knows she has a place that will always be there for her. She doesn't have fear in her heart and eyes anymore. We know how badly the world treated this poor little girl before, and we know how hard it will be to help her build confidence about this world again. We and Xiao Xue both need time to make things change, but we know there's nothing that could be better for this little girl than giving her a home where she is loved.

Kou Wei

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Good to Know: ATTACHMENT (part 2)

In the last newsletter we spoke about the process of attachment, using the attachment pyramid as a guide.

Today we examine the different types of attachment and consider the important role of bodily contact to set up a bonding relationship.

We can describe four primary types of attachment: 1) safe attachment, 2) avoided attachment, 3) resisted or ambivalent attachment and 4) disoriented or disorganized attachment.

The two most important influences on the quality of attachment are the death of or separation from the main caregiver, and the emotional attitude of the main caregiver towards the child.

(The main caregiver is generally the mother, but can also be someone else – father, grandmother, etc.)

These two influences have an important effect on the attachment process.

The emotional attitude of the caregiver towards the child includes four elements.

First is the pleasure that the caregiver and the child take in each other.

Second is the ability of the caregiver to react quickly and effectively to the signals from the child. Parents who react in a more or less adequate and sensitive way to their child's behavior will be safely attached to their children. Parents who are illogical or inconsistent, especially when they change roles, create ambivalent children.

If parents refuse the demands for attachment, their children will respond with avoidance or shy attachment.

When a child feels both anxiety and safety towards the parents, he or she will be caught between a need for closeness and approach and a need for avoidance or distance. In situations of this sort it is normal that the children will feel disoriented and disorganized.

Some typical examples of this kind of reaction are: mood swings, seeming to be in a trance, getting onto a lap without touching the parent, etc.

A third element involves the child's need for exploration. When the child starts to explore its surroundings it is important for caregivers to provide an environment in which there are things to explore. Providing such an environment allows children to be able to experience the consequences of their own actions.

Finally, the most essential and indispensable aspect in the process of attachment is the physical contact between caregiver and child – the tender hugs and caresses, and especially the ability to comfort and soothe the child when he or she doesn't feel well.

We may assume that the quality of attachment between caregiver and child is strongly influenced by their physical contact.

It is very important for the healthy development of children that they can attach themselves literally and physically to a motherly, caring parent. Only if that physical attachment is assured will children gain a grip on their figurative surrounding world.

In short, we can say that every child develops some form of attachment. Only the quality of that attachment differs.

Annelies Van Overbeke
psychologist and psychotherapist
advisor for morning tears

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News Briefs (cont'd)

Traditionally, Chinese parents believed that disciplining so-called naughty children by beating was a parental right. Nowadays, more Chinese parents prefer conversation or other means to educate their children.

"A child protection organization could gather information from neighbors or relatives if domestic violence is suspected and take action to stop beatings," Zhang said.

"In serious cases, the organization could contact the police and the child could be taken into care," she suggested, and expressed her hope that "more and more Chinese parents behave more responsibly in educating their children."

Source: Xinhua News Agency July 19, 2007

News Briefs

China launches an action plan for child development

A 2001-2010 National Program of Action for the Development of Children (NPA) has been approved by the State Council and will take effect soon, according to a recent press conference held by China's State Council Information Office.

The new NPA, with the theme of promoting child development, focuses on building children's overall qualities to provide talented personnel for China's modernization drive in the 21st century, according to Xu Shaoshi, deputy secretary-general of the State Council.

There are four main subjects in the new NPA – children and health, children and education, children and the environment, and children and legal protection. The NPA has put forward 18 major goals, 55 supportive indicators for the next ten years for the survival, protection, development and participation of children, and 66 strategies and measures for realizing the goals.

In 1991, the Chinese government signed two internationally acknowledged documents, namely the "World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children" and the "Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s", and subsequently formulated the "National Program of Action for Child Development in China in the 1990s" in 1992.

China has achieved great progress in protecting children's rights and improving the conditions for child development, said Xu. The new NPA will serve as the guidelines for national action for child development in the early part of the new century, to further promote healthy and sustainable child development, Xu said.

Source: *People's Daily*

Two and a half million in pre-trial detention worldwide, new report shows

Two and a half million people are held in pre-trial detention and other forms of remand imprisonment throughout the world according to the first edition of the World Pre-trial/Remand Imprisonment List, published by International Centre for Prison Studies on January 21.

The new list, compiled by Roy Walmsley, provides information on the number of pre-trial/remand prisoners in 194 countries and also shows the percentage of pre-trial/remand prisoners within each national prison population and the pre-trial/remand population rate (the number of pre-trial/remand prisoners per 100,000 of the national population).

The director of ICPS, Rob Allen, commented:

"Pre-trial detention should be used sparingly yet remand prisoners are often held for excessively long periods in conditions that are worse than for sentenced prisoners. This new list should prompt policy makers in every country to consider what they can do to limit the size of their pre-trial prison population. Excessive use such imprisonment does nothing to improve public safety"

Source: <http://www.prisonstudies.org/> (the complete report is available for download at this site.)

Lawyer in China calls for establishment of child protection agent

A Chinese lawyer is calling for the government to establish an organization to protect children from domestic violence after the recent exposure of several child abuse cases.

"An organization should be established to identify family violence against minors and advocate for minors," said Zhang Haixia, a vice director of child protection with the Shenzhen Lawyers Association.

On July 3, a two-year-old girl in Shenzhen was kicked to death by her mother after she vomited milk on the bed sheet. In May, a three-year-old girl in Zhengzhou was beaten to death by her parents for her poor speech. The parents of both girls admitted they had always beaten the girls when they thought they were "naughty".

China's newly-amended Law on Protection of Minors had taken effect on June 1. The law clearly stipulates family violence against children is prohibited.

Though parents are legally forbidden to beat children, there were few legal provisions to identify family violence.

"Family violence usually develops from trivial incidents and we should stop the violence at the very beginning," said Ye Zhenghang, an expert from the Women's Federation in Shenzhen.

"It's time for a change to avoid tragedies like the Shenzhen and Zhengzhou girls," said Ye.

In China, only extreme family violence cases in which children are killed or seriously injured are reported.

The amended law makes parents responsible for the protection of their children. "People seldom think parents will harm or even kill their own kids," Zhang said.



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morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have lost their own world.

morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have suffered or are suffering heavy emotional pain.

We focus particularly on:

- children whose parents are in prison;
- children whose parents have been sentenced to death;
- children who have been abused or neglected;
- orphans;
- children who haven't been registered at birth, and thus have no rights;
- street children.

morning tears has been operating since 1999 on an informal basis without legal structure. However, in March 2005 **morning tears** became a formal non-profit organization registered under Belgian Law. Currently, **morning tears** has offices in Belgium, Spain and China.

morning tears is run entirely by volunteers. These volunteers are mostly professionals from the social sector or development aid workers, although we also have journalists and engineers in our group.

The running costs of **morning tears** are kept very low, so that donations can go almost entirely to the children in need.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

WWW.MORNINGTEARS.ORG

Financial Barometer

The Costs of Living Are Rising

Prices are going up in China. Food prices are going up all over the world, but in China circumstances have caused these price increases to be dramatic. Disease in the country's pig population is one of them. Pork prices have jumped by as much as 70 percent in the last year in some parts of the country. Moreover, increased incomes in urban areas have allowed for higher calorie diets with more meat. The laws of supply and demand respond accordingly. Two years ago, cooking oil cost 50-60 yuan a bottle; now it's gone up to 100 yuan. Food is more expensive, but rural incomes have not increased sufficiently.

All of this is having severe consequences on our budget. We had to reduce the number of products that were included in the child sponsorship package of € 25 a month. Today, € 25 is hardly enough to cover the basic needs of a child. The real price would now be around € 30.

We are however aware that the actual € 25 that child sponsors donate are for many already a decent bite in their family budget. Therefore, we cannot merely increase the amount that we request from our child sponsors. Solutions that we are thinking of include: assigning two donors for one child, requesting voluntary extra donations, or matching the donations of child sponsors with other types of income (e.g. from events) so that one child sponsor still covers the largest part of the basic needs of one child. We would like to invite you to think with us. Please send your suggestions or reactions to Koen (koen.sevenants@morningtears.org).