

Education, counseling and social work for pregnant orphan teenagers and new mothers

Problem

Most orphans leave their institutions and try to find their place in the world without possessing the most basic skills for living independently. Many of them do not possess essential skills such as cooking, shopping or managing money. They have no experience accessing the services in the community required to take on the responsibility of caring for themselves let alone an infant.

MiraMed Response

The current independent living program that focuses on life skills development has been expanded to include a curriculum module specifically for pregnant teenagers and new mothers. This new Young Mothers Program curriculum starts with pregnancy and goes through year four of a child's life. The curriculum allows 17-21 year-old orphan mothers to enter the program at any time. A class is also available for fathers.

A team of social pedagogues and psychologists using both the social adaptation and independent living curriculum and the young mothers curriculum teaches all Young Mothers.

Counseling

In addition to the educational classes, each participant is assigned a primary social pedagogue, a psychologist and a social worker that will work individually with them. Individual case plans are developed by this team of specialists along with the mother to address the specific counseling needs or training the mother may have. The program also includes group therapy for these mothers as well as alternative therapies such as art and music therapy.

Social Work

Each young mother is assigned to a social worker. The social worker makes home visits to assess the safety and needs of each home and to work with the mother to make any improvements that are necessary. The social worker also assists in obtaining humanitarian aid and medical support, when needed. By observing mother and child in their home environment, the social worker use these assessments to make recommendation to the psychologist/social pedagogues team for additional training and/or counseling.