



Forever Angels Baby Home **Policy on: When a Child Dies**

There will unfortunately and inevitably come a time when a baby or child at Forever Angels Baby home dies and this policy is written to ensure that all staff and volunteers understand the necessary procedures.

This policy outlines the procedure for what will happen when a child at Forever Angels Baby Home dies.

All very sick children will be taken to hospital and any medication which is prescribed for them will be given. If a child is too sick to survive, we will endeavor to take them back to Forever Angels Baby Home to die in a loving home. This is not always possible and it will have to be discussed with the Hospital Staff to ensure any decisions we make are in the best interests of the child.

The Department of Social Welfare will be informed of the child's deteriorating health and we will request that any existing family is also told, so that they are able to visit if they choose to, preferably before the child dies.

A very sick child will never be left alone at the Baby Home and will receive love and attention until they die. The On-Site Directors will be ultimately responsible for all very sick children and will be available at any time to comfort and care for them.

When a child dies:

- The Department of Social Welfare and any family members will be notified immediately. It is Social Welfare Policy that they are informed within 21 days, but we will endeavor to inform them immediately.
- The child will be treated with the dignity he/she deserves and will be washed, dressed / wrapped in a blanket. If appropriate, photographs will be taken for the family to keep.
- Older children and all staff at the Baby Home will be informed.
- A coffin will be bought and burial arrangements made. A child's family could carry this out if they request. If no family is available – the Forever Angels On Site Managers will organize a funeral and burial for the child at the local burial ground.

- We will hold a Memorial Service for the child on the grounds of Forever Angels Baby Home which all staff and volunteers will be invited to. We will plant a tree and place a cross in the ground for the child, and Managers and Staff will sing and speak about the child. Family members will be invited to attend.
- Due to the age of the children we care for – no children will attend the funeral or be involved in the final moments of another dying child. It will be a small ceremony for any staff, friends and family members who wish to attend.
- The Forever Angels Website will be updated to inform all friend and sponsors of the child's death.
- Older children at the Baby Home who have questions – must be spoken to and reassured that the child was very sick and although Doctors tried – they could not save them and so they have gone to be with Jesus in heaven.
- The child's wall photo will be changed into an 'Angel' and they will remain on our wall as they will always be a part of our Forever Angels family and will always be remembered.

Forever Angels Baby Home NGO September 2011 – To be reviewed in 2015