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# Good News Department

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## Faith-Based Project Promotes Character And Health

(NAPSA)—A growing number of children in the United States are healthier and happier thanks to a project that promotes character, spiritual growth and good health.

Sponsored by Operation Blessing, the project called Bless-A-Child reaches out to help local churches establish youth-serving programs to aid at-risk children.

The programs range from providing school clothes and supplies to summer employment programs that also emphasize money management to after-school programs that mix literacy and math.

In order to receive financial assistance and guidance from Bless-A-Child, church-based programs must incorporate at least three of the project's five objectives:

- Promote spiritual knowledge and growth,
- Promote health and physical nurturing,
- Promote literacy and educational development,
- Promote character building and principles, such as forgiveness, respect and compassion,
- Promote life skills learning—such as personal hygiene, financial management and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Since the project started in 1984, it has reached several significant milestones. At last count over 605,000 children in the U.S. have received clothing and school supplies, while approximately 1.6 million children worldwide have had access to health, food and development programs.



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Churches and organizations interested in participating must submit a program plan and budget in early spring to the nearest Operation Blessing Outreach Center. The plan should detail which objectives are to be met—from spiritual knowledge to life skills—and how they will be addressed by the program's activities.

In addition to working in the United States, Operation Blessing's Bless-A-Child program also has an international component that addresses the needs of the millions of children around the globe who live on the streets, or in orphanages or face malnutrition as a fact of life.

The international initiative also works to support local projects through funding and technical assistance.

To learn more about the program and ways to promote the physical and spiritual welfare of children in need, visit the web site at [www.ob.org](http://www.ob.org).