

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }  
*First Regular Session*

'04 JUN 30 P9:49

SENATE  
S. No. 670

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INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE


Consistent with our commitment to uphold the rights of children, it is the policy of the State to protect, to give opportunities and facilities by law and by other means, and to enable children to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity.

Unfortunately, there are children who are homeless, deprived of care and are roaming our streets. These children are susceptible to the dangers that plague the street.

In 1998, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has recorded a total of 6, 487 street children in Metro Manila alone. There is also a continuing increase in the number of street children in other urban centers in the country.

Thus, this proposed measure aims to institutionalize the assistance and programs that the DSWD provides for street children by establishing a Crisis Centers for Street Children. Through the crisis centers, the Department in cooperation with the respective local government officials shall provide a comprehensive program that will address the immediate needs of street children.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING A CRISIS CENTER FOR STREET CHILDREN**  
**IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL**  
**REGION AND IN EVERY HIGHLY URBANIZED CITY IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND**  
**FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Title.*- This Act shall be known as the "Street Children Crisis Center Act of 2004".

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*- It is hereby declared as policy of the State to defend the rights of children to assistance, including the proper care and nutrition, and to provide them with special protection against all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development.

Toward this end, there is hereby established a Crisis Center for Street Children in every city or municipality in the National Capital Region and in every highly urbanized city in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Such crisis centers shall serve as temporary shelters and rehabilitation centers for street children.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*- "Street children" shall be defined as those persons below 18 years of age and roaming in the streets without supervision of adults, whether parents, relatives or friends.

SECTION 4. *Program Framework.* - There shall be a comprehensive program for street children which the crisis center shall provide. Such program shall include but shall not be limited to the following:

- (a) Emergency medical and feeding services;
- (b) Temporary shelter for street children who have been separated from their respective homes and who have been straying on the streets;
- (c) Basic educational, legal and counseling services;
- (d) Immediate rehabilitation program for street children identified as prohibited substance abusers;

- (e) Programs geared toward the acquisition of livelihood, technical, social and other related skills that could help the street children become productive members of society;
- (f) Support system provided by LGUs;
- (g) Referral network of assistance consisting of other government agencies;
- (h) Information, education and communication campaign to promote the objectives of this Act; and
- (i) Such other functions as maybe necessary.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Agency.* - The program shall be implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in close coordination with the LGUs concerned.

The city or municipal officials may call upon private volunteers who are responsible members of the community and utilize them to assist in the care of street children by providing consultative services for medical, educational, and other needs of the street children.

SECTION 6. *Functions of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.* - The Department shall:

- (a) formulate the criteria for the selection and qualification of street children who shall be covered by this Act;
- (b) provide training for crisis center workers, counselors and other volunteers;
- (c) coordinate activities of non-government organization with the crisis center workers and other social workers of the Department in order that their services may be fully utilized for the attainment of the program goals; and,
- (d) protect and assist abused, neglected or exploited children and secure proper government assistance for said street children.

SECTION 7. *Funds for the Crisis Center, Program and Crisis Center Workers.*

- (a) The funds for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the street-children crisis centers shall be appropriated from the National Budget and shall be included in the General Appropriations Act as part of the budget of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.
- (b) A portion of the health programs available to the Philippines under official aid or official debt arrangements from foreign countries, the amount to be determined by the Office of the President, shall be extended in support of the crisis centers.

SECTION 8. *Authority to Accept Donations.* - The DSWD may accept donations and grants, both domestic and foreign, for purposes relevant to the functions of the crisis centers. These donations and grants shall be allocated among the various crisis centers within the city or municipality as may be deemed appropriate.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any portion or provision in this Act be declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, rules and regulations, and executive orders contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,