

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS

Protection of Unaccompanied Immigrant and returnee Minors Model

(Mexican returnee minors and foreign minors in Mexico)

Given the particular vulnerability of unaccompanied immigrants children and adolescents, properly handle this phenomenon is critical because of the urgent need to protect their human rights and ensure their welfare. In this respect, the National Migration Institute (INM) proposed the implementation of the Protection of Unaccompanied Immigrant and returnee Children and Adolescents Model.

In the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force for unaccompanied children and adolescents and immigrant Women, held by the Interior Ministry through the Technical Secretariat, which is a result of the interagency cooperation, created the Protection of Unaccompanied Immigrant and returnee children and adolescents Model, with these goals:

- ✓ Special attention to the needs of this vulnerable group.

- ✓ In the case of the foreigner's children and adolescents, the consular notification is immediately doing after the child is under protection of this Institute and at the same time that the Child Protection Officer decides that the child doesn't need any kind of international aid. (Asylum, refugee or trafficking in persons).

- ✓ Channel them into the Network of Transit Shelters Program for the Border Child Care.

- ✓ Keep the child informed about their rights and migration process.

- The protection model contemplated the creation of the Child Protection Officer (In Spanish, Oficial de Protección a la Infancia, OPI). Therefore, the INM has selected and trained 368 federal immigration agents, which had the profile developed by the National System for Integral Family Development (SNDIF), to serve as OPI's.

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- The Child Protection Officers are receiving continuous and specialized training. In March and December 2008 were carried out integral training workshops for 170 OPI's. The training

program was agreed with the National System for Integral Family Development (SNDIF) and had the participation of: the National System for Integral Family Development (SNDIF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), COMAR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Mexico (UNHCR), the Juvenile Integration Centers (CIJ) and the Non-governmental organizations Proteja.

- The content of the training are in human rights, emotional literacy, tips for effectively communication with children and adolescents, crisis care, children's rights, international protection (asylum or refugee status), violence, maltreatment and abuse, trafficking, gender equality.
- In 2009 were scheduled two specialized training workshops to strengthen and update the knowledge acquired by the OPI's. Also, the agenda of both was developed with the results of the evaluation applied by UNICEF Mexico to the OPI's the last September. The first reinforcing workshops were held in June and were strengthened in the areas of refugee, human trafficking and child's rights. The second workshop was held during the third week of November and reinforced the theme of gender equity and non-discrimination.
- On February 12, 2010, was published in the Official Journal of the Federation the Circular no. 001/2010, which contains the procedure for the care of unaccompanied children and adolescents, also where formalizes the creation of the Child Protection Officer, with the principal entrusted to safeguard the children's rights, especially those unaccompanied. Also establishes the specific functions of the Child Protection Officer.
- Between March and April of 2010, the third generation of Child Protection Officers was trained, which completely satisfy the attention to the needs of immigrant's children and adolescents that are attended by the delegations of the INM in the States.
- In May of this 2011, the fourth generation of Child Protection Officers was trained.
- The OPI's have been recognized as a globally unique group, there is no similar group in another country.

- In addition to this, as part of the agreements of the Regional Conference of Immigration (CRM) and as part of Mexico's commitment to extend the protection of immigrants children and adolescents in the region, were signed last July the "Regional Guidelines for the Care of Unaccompanied Children and Adolescents in Cases of Repatriation". These guidelines were driven by Mexico. And as first action resulting from this signature, in November 2009 the INM trained 12 people from Guatemala and 10 from El Salvador, as Child Protection Officers.
- The objective to train Child Protection Officers in Central America is the regionalization of the Protection of Unaccompanied Immigrant and returnee Children and Adolescents Model. The Governments of Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua have requested the INM to train OPI's in their countries. These trainings are scheduled to take place before the end of 2011.
- Between the 5^o to 9^o of July of 2010, 62 people were trained as Child Protection Officers from the next institutions from Honduras: General Direction of Migration and Foreign, Honduran Institute for Children and Families (IHNFA); General Direction of Consular Affairs; Office of the First Lady of Honduras, Special Prosecutor for Children, National Police and civil society organizations. And in November of 2010, 60 people from 7 government agencies were trained as OPI's in Dominican Republic.
- Between the 28th of February to the 4th of March of 2011, 75 people from 13 institutions from Guatemala were trained as Child Protection Officers. The training for Costa Rica is scheduled for the next month of August. For Nicaragua is scheduled for July and a backup training for Honduras is scheduled for September.
- Finally, in 2010, Mexico, in the shape of the INM, had the presidency Pro Tempore of CRM and the main topic was Family and Migration, where we put a special emphasis on immigrant children and adolescents.