



NO HUNGRY CHILD

"No Child Should Go to Bed Hungry"

30, Surveyor Street, DVG Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore – 560004

Phone: 080-41493493 | Email: mail@nohungrychild.co.in

Website: nohungrychild.in

GUIDELINES FOR IDENTIFYING, REACHING AND ENROLLING CHILDREN

No Hungry Child – Nutritious Meal & Non-Formal Learning Programme

Purpose: This document gives partner NGOs a practical field method for identifying children who are currently disconnected from stable schooling, family support or safe living conditions, bringing them into a safe meal-and-learning environment, and supporting their gradual return to education and mainstream community life.

1. The Children We Are Trying to Reach

Priority should be given to children and adolescents of school-going age who fall into one or more of these situations:

- Children experiencing homelessness or unstable accommodation.
- Children living or spending substantial time on streets or in other public places without adequate adult protection.
- Children living in vulnerable slum or informal-settlement communities with limited access to food, sanitation, learning and safe recreational spaces.
- Children who have dropped out of school or are persistently absent and are no longer participating in regular education.
- Children who are otherwise clearly disconnected from education and basic support services and whom the local NGO can safely and appropriately support.

Important: Do not label children as “future criminals.” Vulnerability does not determine a child’s future. The programme aims to reduce exposure to exploitation, unsafe work, violence, substance use, neglect and other harmful environments by connecting children with food, safe adults, learning, positive routines and appropriate child-protection and education services.

2. Why Food Is Part of the Programme

The meal is the first bridge. A nutritious breakfast/lunch or lunch/evening snack creates a practical reason for a child to come to the centre. Once the child feels safe and welcomed, the NGO can introduce short, engaging learning sessions.

- Food should never be used to punish a child or to force participation in a lesson.
- Children should be welcomed respectfully whether they are confident, withdrawn, irregular or initially uninterested in learning.
- The centre should create a predictable routine: arrival → hygiene → meal → engaging video/activity → discussion/game → closing and safe departure.
- The objective is not only to feed children. It is to build trust and create a pathway back to education and a safer life.

3. Where NGOs Should Look for Children

Every NGO should prepare a simple local outreach map covering a practical radius around the proposed meal centre. The following locations should be checked systematically:

LOCATION / SOURCE	HOW TO USE IT
Slum and informal settlements	Meet community leaders, resident volunteers, women’s groups, youth groups and families. Identify children who are out of school or regularly absent.

Bus stands, railway areas and transport hubs	Conduct outreach only with appropriate safeguarding arrangements. Coordinate with local child-protection authorities/NGOs where children are in street situations.
Markets and commercial areas	Look for children spending working hours in markets, eateries, loading areas or public spaces instead of attending school.
Construction and labour settlements	Coordinate with site managers, labour families and community workers. Do not recruit children into work; identify children who need education and protection.
Waste collection / dumping areas	Use trained outreach workers and coordinate with child-protection services because children in these locations can face significant exploitation and safety risks.
Government schools and local education networks	Ask school staff, teachers and community workers about children who have dropped out or have prolonged absence, while protecting confidentiality.
Anganwadi / community centres / local health outreach	Build relationships with frontline workers who know vulnerable families and can help connect the NGO to appropriate services.
Shelters, child-care services and local NGOs	Develop referral relationships rather than duplicating existing services.

4. Build a Local Child-Identification Network

Before starting recruitment, the NGO should identify at least five local referral channels:

- One or more government schools / local education officials.
- Local community leaders and resident volunteers.
- Anganwadi workers, ASHA/community health workers and other frontline workers where available.
- Existing child-focused NGOs, shelters and community organisations.
- District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and other appropriate child-protection authorities for referrals and cases requiring statutory support.

Do not work alone in high-risk locations. For street-connected or unaccompanied children, the NGO should use trained outreach personnel and establish a referral pathway with the relevant child-protection system.

5. How to Approach a Child

1. Approach calmly. Introduce yourself and the organisation in simple language.
2. Do not begin with questions about poverty, family problems, abuse or crime.
3. Start with something ordinary: "We run a meal and learning centre nearby. Would you like to know about it?"
4. Explain what happens at the centre: meal, hygiene, videos, games, learning and a safe routine.
5. Allow the child to ask questions. Do not pressure the child to agree immediately.
6. Where parental/guardian involvement is appropriate and safe, engage the family respectfully.
7. If the child appears to be in immediate danger, abandoned, trafficked, severely abused or otherwise in need of urgent protection, follow the appropriate child-protection referral process rather than treating the situation as ordinary programme enrolment.

6. First-Level Screening – What the NGO Should Understand

The outreach worker should establish only the information necessary to decide the next safe step:

- Child's approximate age and name / preferred name.
- Current living situation and whether the child has a safe adult caregiver.
- Current school status: attending, irregular, dropped out or never enrolled.
- Approximate reason for being out of school, if the child/family is comfortable sharing.
- Whether the child is currently working or exposed to unsafe work.
- Whether there is an urgent protection, health or safety concern.
- Preferred language and any accessibility or learning needs.
- Parent/guardian or responsible adult contact details where safe and appropriate.

Avoid unnecessary data collection. Do not publicly display children's names, addresses, phone numbers, photographs or personal stories.

7. The No Hungry Child Centre Experience

The centre should feel different from a conventional classroom. It should be welcoming, colourful, safe and highly engaging.

STAGE	WHAT HAPPENS
1. Welcome	A friendly greeting. No interrogation. No stigma.
2. Hygiene routine	Handwashing and simple personal-hygiene habits before the meal.
3. Nutritious meal	Serve the planned meal in a clean and respectful environment.
4. Video learning	Use age-appropriate cartoons, stories and short educational videos.
5. Discussion	Ask simple questions: What did you see? What was good? What would you do?
6. Activity	Games, drawing, role play, storytelling, group tasks and simple demonstrations.
7. Life skills	Reinforce hygiene, good behaviour, kindness, sharing, caring, responsibility and respect.
8. Education pathway	Assess the child's education status and work with the family/appropriate services towards school re-entry or another suitable education pathway.

8. Learning Themes for Non-Formal Education

- Personal hygiene: handwashing, bathing, clean clothes, oral hygiene and safe toilet practices.
- Food and health: clean eating habits, safe drinking water, nutrition and basic food hygiene.
- Good behaviour: listening, patience, speaking respectfully and following safe routines.
- Sharing and caring: helping others, empathy, teamwork and inclusion.
- Personal safety: recognising unsafe situations, trusted adults, safe boundaries and seeking help.
- Responsibility: keeping the centre clean, caring for belongings and completing simple tasks.
- Communication: expressing feelings, asking for help and resolving disagreements peacefully.
- Education habits: curiosity, reading, numbers, concentration and enjoyment of learning.
- Citizenship: respect for people, public places, community property and the environment.

9. Using Videos and Cartoons Effectively

- Keep individual videos short and age-appropriate. Use local-language content wherever practical.
- Do not simply play videos continuously. Every video should be followed by a question, demonstration or activity.
- Choose stories with positive role models and clear lessons on hygiene, kindness, responsibility, safety and education.
- Avoid frightening, violent, humiliating or age-inappropriate material.
- Use repetition. Children should see the same core messages in different stories and activities.
- Record simple observations: Did the child participate? Did the child understand the message? Did the child practise the behaviour?

10. Moving Children Back Towards Mainstream Education

The No Hungry Child centre should function as a bridge, not a permanent replacement for formal education. The NGO should gradually work towards appropriate school enrolment, re-enrolment, attendance and learning support.

- Identify the child's current learning level without embarrassing or testing the child publicly.
- Discuss barriers with the child and family: cost, distance, documentation, family work demands, learning gaps, disability, safety or other issues.
- Coordinate with the appropriate school or education authority for re-entry where feasible.
- Use the centre's non-formal learning activities to rebuild confidence and routine.
- Track progress until the child is attending a suitable education pathway consistently.

11. Safeguarding – Mandatory Rules

- No physical punishment, threats, humiliation or discriminatory treatment.
- No staff member should be alone with a child in a private or hidden location.
- Maintain appropriate adult supervision at all times.

- Use separate, safe arrangements for boys and girls where required by the setting and local safeguarding assessment.
- Do not photograph or publish identifiable images of children without the required consent/authorisation and safeguarding controls.
- Do not share children's personal details in WhatsApp groups, public documents or social media.
- Do not promise employment, money, gifts or permanent accommodation.
- Do not investigate abuse allegations yourself. Escalate through the appropriate child-protection pathway.
- Maintain a clear incident-reporting procedure and train all staff and volunteers before they begin outreach.

Child Helpline 1098: The Government of India's Mission Vatsalya Child Helpline operates through State/District child-protection functionaries and is intended to connect children in crisis with emergency and longer-term care and rehabilitation services.

12. Simple Outreach Workflow for Each NGO

1. Map the local area within practical reach of the proposed centre.
2. List vulnerable locations and referral contacts.
3. Conduct scheduled outreach with trained staff.
4. Identify potential beneficiaries without stigma or public labelling.
5. Complete a basic child/family screening record.
6. Refer urgent protection cases through the appropriate child-protection system.
7. Invite eligible children to the centre and explain the routine.
8. Begin meal + hygiene + video learning + activity sessions.
9. Assess education status and create an individual education pathway.
10. Review attendance, participation, learning and school-reintegration progress every month.

13. Suggested Child Identification & Follow-Up Register

The NGO should maintain a confidential register with controlled access. Suggested fields:

FIELD	FIELD	FIELD	FIELD
Unique Child ID	Name / preferred name	Approximate age	Gender
Locality	Living situation	School status	Parent/guardian contact (where appropriate)
Date first contacted	Date first attended	Meal attendance	Learning participation
Education pathway / referral	Protection referral, if any	Follow-up date	Remarks

14. What Success Looks Like

- Children attend the centre regularly and receive nutritious meals.
- Children demonstrate improved hygiene and positive daily routines.
- Children participate in constructive learning and group activities.
- Children develop confidence, empathy, cooperation and respectful behaviour.
- Children at risk of exploitation or harm are connected to appropriate protection services.
- Out-of-school children move towards suitable formal or recognised education pathways.
- The NGO can demonstrate attendance, learning activities, referrals and education outcomes through confidential records.

15. A Message to Partner NGOs

Do not think of this programme as simply finding 100 children to feed. The real task is to find children who are being left behind, earn their trust, give them a safe place to return to, feed them well, make learning enjoyable, teach practical life skills and help them reconnect with education and the wider community. The meal opens the door. The relationship, learning and follow-through create the change.



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CHILD PROFILE – VISUAL REFERENCE GUIDE

The following photographs are representative age references only. They do not represent the exact children to be enrolled. The programme focuses on children who are homeless, street-connected, living in slums or vulnerable communities, out of school, or otherwise disconnected from regular education and support systems.

AGE-WISE REFERENCE (BOY & GIRL) – 4 TO 12 YEARS

AGE: 4 YEARS



Boy – 4 Years



Girl – 4 Years

AGE: 9 YEARS



Boy – 9 Years



Girl – 9 Years

AGE: 5 YEARS



Boy – 5 Years



Girl – 5 Years

AGE: 10 YEARS



Boy – 10 Years



Girl – 10 Years

AGE: 6 YEARS



Boy – 6 Years



Girl – 6 Years

AGE: 11 YEARS



Boy – 11 Years



Girl – 11 Years

AGE: 7 YEARS



Boy – 7 Years



Girl – 7 Years

AGE: 12 YEARS



Boy – 12 Years



Girl – 12 Years

AGE: 8 YEARS



Boy – 8 Years



Girl – 8 Years

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- Children who are homeless or street-connected
- Children living in slums or vulnerable settlements
- Children who are not going to school / school dropouts
- Children from families facing extreme poverty, neglect, or hardship

Our goal is to provide food, love, care, non-formal education, life skills, and help them move towards mainstream education and a better future.

For NO HUNGRY CHILD
Authorised Signatory