

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ'S)

What is the ASHE Foundation?

The ASHÉ Foundation is a 501 [C] [3] organization located in Southern California that is committed to changing the lives of the millions of children orphaned by the devastating effects caused by HIV/AIDS in African nations.

We collect and distribute shoes, clothing, basic living necessities, and services to aid the disadvantaged and underprivileged children of African nations.

Why are shoes so important to the children of Africa?

Walking is the primary mode of transportation whether it's to get water or to go to school. Unprotected feet are subject to trauma and the parasitic diseases that enter the bare foot. Shoes are the most basic solution to these health risks.

Without shoes, African children are vulnerable to the following conditions:

- **Hookworm** is an intestinal parasite caused by direct contact with soil contaminated with larvae. The larvae typically penetrate the skin of the legs or feet and travel in the venous system to the intestines, heart, and lungs. Symptoms of hookworm include malnutrition, bloody stools, immune deficiency, and can lead to heart failure.
- **Podoconiosis ("mossy foot")** is a fungus that gets into the pores on the bottom of the feet and eventually destroys the lymphatic system. It is a soil-transmitted disease caused by walking in silica-rich soil.
- **Schistosomiasis (bilharziasis)** infection occurs when skin comes in contact with contaminated water. The growth of the parasite impairs blood flow in the liver and induces fluid in the abdomen creating the signature potbelly. Results of infection include hypertension, tearing and bleeding of the gastrointestinal tract, and in rare cases irreversible damage to the nervous system. The World Health Organization attributes 280,000 deaths per year to schistosomiasis. Its highest prevalence and severity is in school-aged children.

- **Tungiasis (*tunga penetrans*)** Caused by a parasitic flea that burrows into the skin bare feet or toes. The host experiences itching, pain, inflammation, ulceration, and possibly gangrene with loss of extremities. About 42% of Nigerian children are infected with tungiasis.

Does the ASHÉ Foundation only collect and forward shoes to Africa?

We happily accept gifts of new and clean, gently worn clothing. There is primarily a need of items for children from birth to 18 years of age. Monetary donations are also welcomed and are used to ship shoes, purchase and install clean water wells within the delivery community, build recourse centers, and support other health sustaining programs.

How do I package the collected items?

Please make sure that the address for the ASHÉ Foundation is included both inside and outside the boxes in case the label is somehow detached.

The boxes should be numbered to indicate what box they are in the group and how many boxes are in the entire shipment: (e.g. 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3)

Inside box number 1 should be the special representative shoes, any pictures of your shoe drive, the original photo release forms, and a packing summary that details how many shoes are in the box and how many boxes are in your shipment. (e.g. Box 1 – 30 pairs, Box 2 – 28 pairs, Box 3 – 30 pairs, total pairs 88)

A copy of the packing summary should be included in each box.

How do I ship the shoes to you?

The boxes should be shipped to The ASHÉ Foundation, 3940 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Suite 111, Studio City, CA 91604.

Does the ASHE Foundation pay to ship my donated shoes?

If you are forwarding 1 box of shoes weighing 40lbs or less we ask that the host group incur the cost of shipment. Some groups request their donors provide \$1-\$5 per donation to defray the cost of shipping. Some groups have parallel events, such as bake sales or walk-a-thons, to raise the funds for shipping with excess monies being forwarded to the ASHÉ Foundation for the purchase and installation of clean water wells in the recipient's community and to subsidize delivery of other shipments.

If you are forwarding 2 or more boxes of shoes please contact our office so we can discuss possible options.

Will the ASHE Foundation pick up my donated shoes?

If you live in the Metropolitan Los Angeles area we may be able to arrange a pick-up by one of our volunteers. Please contact our office to determine availability.

Will I know who specifically benefits from my shoe drive?

A host group has the option of selecting a specific pair of shoes to be presented to a special boy or girl when our shipment is delivered to Africa.

1. We ask that the host organization provide a picture of themselves holding a pair of gift shoes representing their entire collection.
2. The special representative shoes must be packed in a separate bag with the picture of the hosts and the original signed photo release forms. The bag can be placed with the rest of the collected clothes and footwear.
3. A recipient in Africa will be photographed receiving the gift shoes from your host group and that picture will be returned to your organization.

In this way the volunteers who worked and gave to make your shoe drive a success will see a specific recipient whose life was positively affected by their generosity.

All pictures submitted become the property of the ASHÉ Foundation and may appear on our website and/or be used to publicize future events.

Can I go with you to deliver the shoes to Africa?

Periodically there will be scheduled trips of an appropriate length and itinerary that allow us to include some of our supporters. We will be announcing those trips on the ASHÉ Foundation website. The specific costs and government requirements for travel will be announced as the itinerary is confirmed.