

HOW TO PRAY FOR MKs:

'I will never feel completely at home again. Part of my heart will always be somewhere else. That is the price you pay for loving and knowing people in more than one place.'

- ❖ Pray that they recognize they are part of the team being used by God to win hearts for Jesus. Help them see ways that Jesus can use them in sports, in school situations, in play times, in relationships.
- ❖ Pray for their health and safety while on the Field.
- ❖ Pray for their spiritual relationship with God; often when away from other friends and youth groups they get lonely and it can be harder to grow in their faith.
- ❖ Pray for openness in dealing with heart issues.
- ❖ Pray for opportunities to have fun, feel valued, see Jesus in their lives, and know they are an important part of both their family and God's family.
- ❖ Pray for the children in the country where they are serving and for the MKS to make good friends with local kids

"I AM GREEN!"

Colors

by Whitney Thomas (1991), MK

I grew up in a **Yellow** country
But my parents are **Blue**.

I'm **Blue**.

Or at least, that is what they
told me.

But I play with the **Yellows**.

I went to school with the
Yellows.

I spoke the **Yellow** language.
I even dressed and appeared to
be **Yellow**.

Then I moved to the **Blue** land.

Now I go to school with the **Blues**.

I speak the **Blue** language.

I even dress and look **Blue**.

But deep down, inside me,
something's **Yellow**.

I love the **Blue** country.

But my ways are tinted with
Yellow.

When I am in the **Blue** land,

I want to be **Yellow**.

When I am in the **Yellow** land,

I want to be **Blue**.

Why can't I be both?

A place where I can be me.

A place where I can be **green**.

I just want to be **green**.



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Worldwide Evangelization for Christ



The best of things...

- (Ways their lives are enhanced)*
- Tend to be independent and flexible
 - Interact well with people of different ages and backgrounds
 - Offer different opinions openly
 - Experienced in facing new situations
 - True internationals with an expanded world view, language, cultural competence
 - Have seen God work in mysterious ways, been a part of building God's Kingdom
 - Have an extended family with aunts and uncles from different cultures and backgrounds
 - May have met and interacted with influential people
 - Welcoming of outsiders in their community
 - Often have leadership potential

...the worst of things

- (Challenges unique to them)*
- No roots, constant good-byes, a lot of loss
 - Often feel like outsiders
 - Feel like they are not understood as there are very few who share their unique experiences
 - Often form attachments too quickly or struggle to form real friendships
 - Feelings of restlessness as they are used to constant change
 - Can feel disconnected from their biological family - even from their parents if they attended boarding school
 - Can feel they don't belong anywhere; often being wrenched away from familiar places
 - Can have difficulties adjusting to adult life due to the challenges in developing a self-identity and other issues noted above

Caring for our Missionary Kids (MKs) – ideas for supporting them when...

... on the Field

- Each of the church's MKs can be adopted by a family or a Sunday School class. The children can write letters, insert comics, pictures of themselves or postcards of their home town. (When the MKs come back they will know kids at their church.)
- Talk by Skype during Sunday School class (perhaps once a month).
- Send birthday and Christmas cards, books, unexpected little packages, with letters and notes.
- Make a Mission Kids' board. Each week/month have a picture with things about one MK and specific prayer needs.
- Pray for the parents and encourage them with notes, maybe share resources or books that have blessed your family.
- Hold them up in constant prayer with requests specific to the children's needs.

... on furlough/home leave

- Invite their family for a meal and get to know them.
- Give opportunities to be able to informally share stories about their time away and thoughts about being back.
- Ask them what they missed or are missing from their home country and their adopted country (which may feel more like home). Some of the home country things could be acquired for them to take back (books, music, games, photographs).
- Find out (maybe from their parents) what special activities they would like to do while on home leave.
- Understand that they will miss their friends and the familiar culture of their adopted country but will also find it hard to say good-bye again to friends they make while on home leave.
- Discuss goals for long-term educational needs of older kids.
- Encourage them to take part when their parents give presentations and to share on their own in Sunday school classes.

... the family is here to stay

- Give MKs opportunities to talk and process things emotionally and spiritually.
- Help with the grieving process; allow them to be open with their emotions, leaving behind friends, familiar places, pets, belongings and special people. Listen and don't fix them!
- Provide support to connect with new friends and to know how things are done.
- They saw God at work more intensely while on the Field. When they come back here it can be hard to make God-based choices...they've seen them made but now must make their own.
 - Address, if appropriate, practical issues like finances, daily living behaviour, schools, driving, housing, public service, weather and career choices.
 - Give everyone time to re-enter emotionally and spiritually without pressure. Realize this can take several years.

... parents go back to the Field, kids stay behind

- If the sending church is in the same area where the MK is living, the church should remain a constant support. The MKs could have a family who adopts them for holidays, weekends or special events.
 - If the church is not in the same area, someone can act as their adoptive caring grandparent or family who writes, connects by texting, internet or by Skype; to keep in touch, give support and teach them how to fit in. (Another young person in the family can be a natural person of trust.)
- MKs may need help to integrate into a whole new culture: How to drive, how to do taxes, finances, how to fit into social happenings.
- Help with resume writing so that it is strong, personal, and reflects their life experience.

(They may need help to learn to market themselves as a multiculturalist who brings added value to the job or course; it is important to identify their global experiences and knowledge.)

