

**Background**

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**Running 2,500 Miles of Hope Through America**

**- Status of Orphans -**

**International Information**

* There are more than **143,000 million** orphans around the world. (Source: UNICEF)
* More than **15 million** children worldwide have been orphaned as a result of AIDS. (Source: www.avert.com)
* Since the epidemic began in the 1980s, more than **14 million children** in African have lost one or both parents to AIDS. (Source: www.avert.com)
* In the U.S. alone there will be **64,000** new orphans from AIDS and in India this year there will be almost **four million** new orphans. (Source: Sister Mary Beth Lloyd of the Order of the Religious Teachers Filippini)

**Domestic Information** (Sources: The Orphan Foundation of America OFA and Pew Charitable Trust):

* At any given moment, more than **500,000** young people are in foster care in the U.S. Every year, **25,000** “age out” of the system and face a daunting world on their own without the financial or emotional support of family. In most states this is at age 18.
* More than a third of foster youth, ages 17 to 20, do not finish high school or earn a GED.
* About one in five becomes homeless at some point after aging out.
* Nearly half of the young women in foster care become pregnant before age 19
* About one in four former foster youth is incarcerated within two years of aging out.
* When foster youth receive encouragement and support though, their outcomes improve significantly:
  + More than 70 percent of the Orphan Foundation of America’s students graduate from college within five years – a rate almost three times the average for other students. This number is even more striking when compared to a three percent college graduation rate for former foster youth in general.

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