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NEWS RELEASE

A NEW ERA OF NURTURING CARE FOR CHINA'S ORPHANS

Beijing, September 15, 2005--Half the Sky Foundation is joining the **China Center for Adoption Affairs (CCAA)** to help implement the Chinese government's ambitious new initiative to expand the care for orphaned children to include nurture and individual attention as well food, shelter and medical care: "We are giving our full support help bring about this new era in child care in Chinese social welfare institutions," says Half the Sky's executive director Jenny Bowen.

At the recent National Social Welfare Institute Child Care Training Conference in Chongqing, Lu Ying, Director-General of the CCAA announced that China's Ministry of Civil Affairs has entrusted the CCAA with development and implementation of national standards for care for children living in China's state-run welfare institutions.

In addition to the CCAA, 11 provincial welfare bureaus, 19 children's welfare institutions, 5 international adoption agencies, and Half the Sky Foundation signed a Joint Proposal for the Healthy Development of Children in Chinese Welfare Institutions. The proposal states that nurture and individual attention are as important and basic to the welfare of orphaned children as food, shelter, and medical care. The conference was the first step toward writing and implementing a new child care policy: Says Bowen: "To my knowledge, China will be the only country in the world to have a comprehensive, written policy on orphan care that encompasses individualized nurture as well as physical needs. China is leading the way."

In Chongqing, the conferees pledged to "...work hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder to realize our goal with full passion and determination and start a new stage of care of Chinese orphans and handicapped children." They also defined the "new stage of care" as "a richer and more stimulating environment of love," "inspiring education," and an atmosphere where children's "individuality and potential" can be developed fully.

The Chongqing national training also launched the first National Child Care Research Project, which will study methods of orphan care, including Half the Sky's programs that are located in 25 social welfare institutions across China, to determine the most effective course for setting and implementing national orphan care standards.

Since its founding in 1998 by a group of American parents who adopted children from China, Half the Sky Foundation has been planning and operating programs that provide one-on-one, nurturing caretaking, early education and individualized learning opportunities for children in Chinese welfare institutions that supplements the basic care provided by the Chinese government. Half the Sky currently provides such care, which neuroscientists have found is crucial for children's healthy development, for 3,000 children in Social Welfare Institutions all over China. Because the Chinese government's new standards of care will be nationwide, when they are implemented, nurturing, individualized care will reach many more thousands of children.

Half the Sky will work closely with CCAA on the new child care research project and the new national standards. Says Bowen: "We are proud and happy to know that Half the Sky will play a significant part in the coming developments." Under the forward-thinking, dynamic leadership of Director Lu Ying, the CCAA, which also administers domestic and foreign adoptions, has implemented the Tomorrow Plan, which in short order has succeeded in arranging surgeries and other medical treatments for thousands of orphaned children.

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