



# AN OUTSIDE CHANCE

**Street Children and Juvenile Justice  
- an International Perspective**

Marie Wernham



*“We find out too soon that one shouldn’t mess with the law. We find out too soon that unlike other systems in the government, this one is swift and unforgiving – especially when you are poor and powerless. Especially when you are a street child.”*

**Filipino street child<sup>1</sup>**

*“Come close to me, hear our cries  
You come from far away just to criticise  
Locked up at eight, what am I gonna do?  
The ones who escape are only a few  
Nothing but beatings for us who remain  
I swear I don’t get this place, this pain  
Many have a skill, a future to fulfil  
With hope for a career  
We wouldn’t be in here  
This dark place where there is no play  
My soul smiles only at the break of day  
Justice refuses to hear my voice  
I’m just locked up, I have no choice”*

**Rap performed by boys at a juvenile detention centre in São Paulo, Brazil<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in UP CIDS PST, *Painted Gray Faces, Behind Bars and in the Streets: Street Children and Juvenile Justice System in the Philippines*, Quezon City, UP CIDS PST and CSC, 2003, p.46.

<sup>2</sup> Footage from Blewett, K. and Woods, B., *Kids Behind Bars* [film], True Vision productions, 2001.

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About the artist: 16-year-old Joseph Betarmos, from Mindanao in the Philippines, is one of the young people who took part in the Philippine National Consultation Workshop on Street Children and the Juvenile Justice System in August 2001 as part of the international project on which this publication is based. He is an active member of a community theatre based in Davao City. Toots, as he is more popularly known, believes that art is a great tool in educating people. An advocate for children's issues, he happily describes his work as light and funny but capable of creating great impact in the community. His dream is to become a professional artist. Like his life story, Toots' drawings come from the heart, one that is resilient and full of desire to continue and enjoy living while helping others in need.

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**COMMUNITY  
FUND**  
*Lottery money making a difference*

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# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

## STEP 1

**DON'T PANIC!** There is a lot of material but you don't have to read it all! The following guidelines will help you to navigate your way through the book.

## STEP 2

Use the detailed contents page to identify the sections that interest you most.

However, it is strongly recommended that everybody should read:

- **Chapter 2:** to get an overview of the key policy messages which are featured throughout the book;
- **Chapter 5:** for an overview of the system and actors involved;
- **Chapter 8:** to familiarise yourself with the recommendations that apply to you.

## STEP 3

Read the brief 'chapter overviews' and 'chapter summaries' at the beginning and end of each chapter to get a clearer idea of what each chapter contains.

Within each chapter children's quotations, case studies, project examples and practical tips are clearly marked.

## STEP 4

Please feel free to give us feedback: Which parts were most useful? How have you used the book?

How can it be improved? Do you have better project examples or case studies to share?

Email [info@streetchildren.org.uk](mailto:info@streetchildren.org.uk)

## *Acknowledgements*

CSC would like to thank all those who contributed to this project. Special thanks go to the children who had the opportunity to take part in this project, as well as to those who did not: those who are still on the streets or behind bars. Hopefully this project will go some way towards sharing their stories and highlighting their incredible resiliency, courage and imagination in the face of exceptionally difficult circumstances, reminding us that street children are first and foremost children, humans entitled to human rights, who need us to work together as a matter of urgency to put the 'justice' back into the 'justice' system. This book is for them.

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## **REFERENCES**

## **APPENDICES**

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3. Juvenile Justice Checklist (from UNICEF CRC implementation handbook)
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9. Racism in criminal justice systems
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## **CSC: STREET CHILDREN AND JUVENILE JUSTICE PROJECT (JAN 2002 – DEC 2003) - INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS**

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