

## **WHY SUCH A STRICT POLICY FOR TAKING PICTURES OF ORPHANAGE CHILDREN?**

Why must OSSO have such a strict policy on taking pictures to remember the children we serve and love? Taking pictures at first may seem like the most natural and harmless thing in the world, but it can create major problems. Here's an explanation of some of the reasons:

1. Ecuadorian law protects the privacy of the children in the institutions we work in. Except for very specific purposes, it's illegal to take pictures of them. Each institution interprets the law differently and allows different things, but to take pictures without the institution's permission is illegal and, although not likely, could be punished by being sent to jail. There are many legitimate reasons for protecting the privacy of the children.
2. Most orphanages have been the victims of slanderous reports that make it look like they do not take good care of the children. They must walk a fine line of letting people know that they need help to care for the children, but still proving to the government and local community that they're taking good care of the children they're responsible for. They're very sensitive of any pictures or other information that reflects poorly on the job they're doing.
3. Past OSSO volunteers have stretched or broken the rules regarding taking pictures of children. This has resulted in a lack of trust and even tighter restriction on present volunteers. There has been serious talk in the past at some orphanages of throwing OSSO volunteers out of the orphanages because of violations of picture taking rules. If we want current restrictions to be relaxed, we must follow them to the letter.
4. If you were to come into my home to care for my children, there would be certain rules you'd have to follow. I may not ask your opinion of the rules that I have in my home. If you did not respect my rules, the fact that you didn't agree with my rules wouldn't matter. You wouldn't be invited back. We owe the orphanages the same respect we'd want to receive in our own homes. If they can't trust us, our ability to work together is severely handicapped.
5. The children need the love we give them. We cannot risk losing the opportunity to help them, simply to get pictures of them to remember them by.