

PRAY

**21-day prayer
guide for TCKs
and families**

**Wyc|iffe
Bib|e
Trans|ators**



DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER

TCKs

'A Third Culture Kid or TCK is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of a similar background.'

D Pollock, *Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing Up Among Worlds*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing: 2017.

Children who grow up overseas become people with an expanded view of the world, multi-skilled both practically and relationally. Yet they face some unique challenges. Wycliffe seeks to support children and families in every area of their lives so they thrive wherever they find themselves. Part of that support is through prayer.

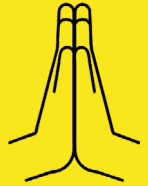
At Wycliffe Bible Translators, we believe God calls families into a relationship with him through Jesus. And blesses them in order to bless the nations.

**DEVOTE
YOURSELVES
TO PRAYER**

Our desire and prayer is that families who are part of Wycliffe thrive wherever they may be. Please join us in praying for 21 days for our third culture kids (TCKs) and their families.

Day 1

Identity



Story

I know I am British because my parents are British. I have family in the UK, friends now and I work here as a primary school teacher. I look British but coming back to the UK from The Gambia at 16 years old I didn't really know how to be British! This year, I returned to The Gambia to volunteer as a 20-something. I had the most amazing time and it was special to be back where I grew up. My Gambian friends welcomed me back with wide open arms. They insisted that their Gambian sister had finally returned. I may not always feel British but I am not Gambian either! Identity is complex for me, but I do know that I belong to my family and I have global friends and 'family' who I have something in common but most importantly God is my Father, He gives me my identity in Jesus.

Pray

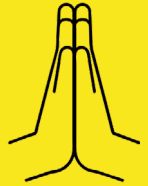
- / TCKs will know their identity in God and celebrate their uniqueness.
- / TCKs know their family identity and that they are valued and loved.
- / TCKs to experience God's transformation of events in their lives so they reach their potential.



**You have searched me Lord
and you know me.
(Psalm 139:1)**

Day 2

Belonging



Story

Our children speak Hungarian (my language), English (their father's language) and Romanian. They were able to learn to read in a language that they already spoke. They have made friends in their various schools, and they have been exposed to different opinions and encouraged to think about issues that in their home countries they wouldn't have given a thought to. People in a small village do not easily accept newcomers, so making friends is possible, but it is often difficult. Our daughter says, 'While you do not really know where you belong, you do belong to several places at once to some extent.'

Pray

- | TCKs feel secure in the love from their parents and know they belong to them.
- | TCKs know they can belong to God through Jesus and heaven has a place for them where they will belong forever.



But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Luke 18:16)

Day 3

Mobility



Story

The frequent house moves and big transitions have been difficult for our children; saying goodbye to friends is hard, and something that makes me question if we have done the right thing. But on the whole our children would say themselves that they are grateful for the experiences they've had, and they are aware they've seen places in the world they wouldn't have otherwise ever seen. If it's God's will for you to be doing something, then there is no better place for you and your children to be.

Pray

- | TCKs will be supported well by others (friends, churches, family and TCK workers) during times of transition.
- | TCKs will be able to say goodbye to things that they lose when they move and then be able to say hello to new people, places and plans.
- | The assurance of God's presence with TCKs wherever they are and whatever they are going through.



***Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there; If I make my bed in the depths,
you are there. (Psalm 139:7-8)***

Day 4

New families



Story

'It was foundational that God called us as a family,' says Timothy*, who serves with his wife Anna* in Southeast Asia. 'The door was closed when we were young, married and free and could go whenever we wanted. It opened when we had three children. God has our children's lives in his hands, and if we submit to his plan, he makes the way. It might be hard at times, but ultimately he's a good, loving God. Being in his will is the best place for you and your family, but you need to be sure it is God's will.'

Pray

- | New families to join Wycliffe to be part of Bible translation.
- | For the interviewing, orientation and preparation of new families, that God would guide each person involved in the process.
- | Growing families to know God's love, protection and provision for them.

*name changed for security reasons



**Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
(Matthew 28:19)**

Day 5

Partnership

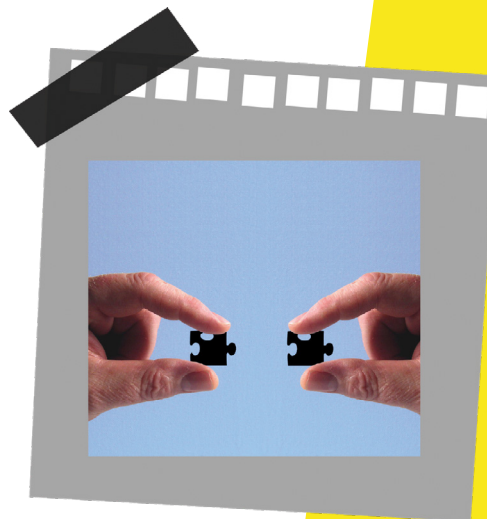


Story

We have lots of great supporters whom we email prayer letters to and now while we're back in the UK on home leave we will be visiting them. It's going to be busy as we visit three churches in three weeks, then we'll see family, up north for a week and then head home to Nigeria. It's good that we meet with those who pray for us and give financially for Bible translation in Nigeria, although it can be really tiring too! Churches tend to allocate time for us to share in the church services what's happening with the work. I'm rarely involved but it depends on what the situation is.

Pray

- | TCKs and their families will know that they are partnering with God because of what they are doing in Bible translation.
- | TCKs will know there are lots of people who are partnering in prayer for them.
- | Churches and partner organisations will work together to effectively care for TCKs.



In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. (Philippians 1:4-5)

Day 6

Language



Story

Our children are fluent in Hungarian and English (their father's language), and are doing satisfactorily in Romanian too. Romania has a good system of mother-tongue education for ethnic minorities. I am from Hungary, and there are so many Hungarians living in Romania that there are Hungarian schools in many parts of the country. This means that the children are taught in Hungarian from playschool onwards, and learn Romanian as a second language. That makes for longer schooldays, but the children get to know their ancestors' culture, language and literature.

Pray

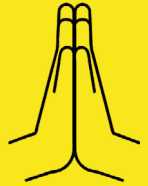
- | That TCKs will have motivation and skill in learning the language and culture of the host country.
- | For families who are investing time and energy in keeping up children's heritage languages.
- | For TCKs, that they will forge strong friendships in their host country and passport country.



After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. (Revelation 7:9)

Day 7

Safety



Story

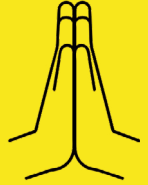
It started with the power staying off for longer than usual. Rebels had taken control of the power stations. We were supposed to stay away from the windows, in case soldiers fired through them; as a result, we slept in the corridor between the bedrooms. We ended up staying five days before we were able to leave. We received an escort of soldiers.

Pray

- | Parents of TCKs, that they will support their children and re-establish normal routines after trouble strikes.
- | The availability of professionals to support families in times of crisis.
- | The spiritual protection of TCKs at every stage of their life, recognising that they can be spiritually sensitive and vulnerable.



The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. (Psalm 18:2)



Poem

There's no electricity, the weather's quite warm.
There not much here of the festive Christmassy norm.
No lights or choirs out on the street.
No Santa in a hut whom you can meet.
No snow or biting cold
No Christmas treats to be sold.
This is an MK's Christmas Eve!

But there is still joy and festivities and fun,
All happening under the hot African sun!
Baking lovely pies, pastries and cakes.
Not with raisins, but with peanuts and dates.
There's pineapple and watermelon for a chocolate fondue
As we remember that Jesus came just for you!
This is an MK's Christmas Eve!

Pray

- | TCKs on birthdays, at Christmas, and on special holidays, that God will bring comfort for those their missing family and friends, and provide special ways to celebrate.
- | Spiritual discernment and sensitivity for TCKs and their families as they get involved in the celebrations of their host culture.
- | Families to find creative ways to connect across the miles.



***I will give thanks to you,
Lord, with all my heart;
I will tell of all your
wonderful deeds.
(Psalm 9:1)***

Day 9

Grief and loss



Story

The thing I miss most is friends, going round to someone's house to play, being able to go outside and talk to people. You can't do that in the UK, just go round to someone's house. People are not as willing to spend time together after school, and when we first got back and I was in primary school it had to be arranged by your parents, not by the kids themselves. It's different not knowing everyone, like we did in Ukarumpa [Papua New Guinea]; in the UK people won't talk to you because you're not connected in any way. It's a lot lonelier. I also miss the heat! I miss the ability to live outside, our big garden, playing and rolling around down the hill. Our UK garden is very small.

Pray

- | Courage for families willing to face goodbyes, which do not get easier as the years go by.
- | TCKs whose precious items have been stolen or damaged, a loss that can come very hard on top of many other goodbyes.
- | Counsellors, caring adults, and peers to be alongside TCKs in times of heartbreak when tragedies occur.



***Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod
and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)***

Day 10

Schools



Story

On days when I have to go to school, I wake up at around 6am and then get to school at around 7am (school starts at 7:40am). I play basketball with my friends, and most classes I have here are similar to ones in the USA. Because our school follows the American system, we don't have GCSEs or A-levels. Instead, we have APs, which is about half an A-Level. I'm starting Grade 10 (Year 11) this August, in which I'll be taking my first APs. After school finishes (2:35pm) I either go and hang out with my friends or stay home. On some days I stay for basketball practice or basketball matches. Once I get back home I do my homework and then mess around for the rest of the day.

Pray

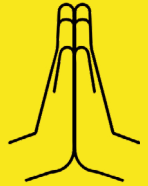
- | TCKs being educated in Christian schools, that they will make the faith of their parents and teachers their own.
- | Discernment for TCKs attending national schools where the values may be in conflict with their biblical and family values.
- | Perseverance for TCKs who need extra schooling to prepare for their passport country education system.



**Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance.
(Proverbs 1:5)**

Day 11

Home education



Story

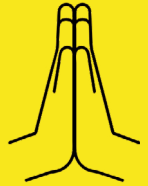
My sister was homeschooled by my mum alongside a small group of the local church children. This grew into a pre-school and so for Year 1 and 2, while my mum was running the school, a young woman from Canada came out to teach my sister and her best friend. Those two years were good and my sister loved being taught by the short-term worker. The following year she went to boarding school for missionary kids. She was only seven years old. She struggled with being so far from home so came back after a year. The school helped provide a curriculum for her Year 4 work but, while my mum was busy with the pre-school, she was mostly self-taught. Thankfully an 18-year-old gap year student from Germany came out the following year and helped my sister through Year 5.

Pray

- | Home school weeks to be a time of equipping and encouragement for TCKs and their parents
- | TCKs who spend a lot of time in isolated situations, that they are able to build social networks and enjoy the company of other children
- | Praise God for the young adults who are willing to go and help educate TCKs which frees up their parents for mission work.



***Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.
(Proverbs 9:9)***



Story

Our little one has Sensory Processing Disorder. That's turned our family upside down a bit, but we've got the support that we've needed. The other international school in town has a really good physical therapist – I think she's a believer, and she saw us for free and did an evaluation. So God has provided even when we didn't know where we could go for those things. Someone else sent us a sensory parcel with all sorts of toys in it. God puts people in our lives who are able to support us even from a distance.

Pray

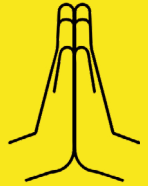
- | God will continue to provide for TCKs and their families.
- | TCKs will celebrate and share the stories of how God has provided for them, to encourage others.
- | Learn to be good stewards of their money, time, and energy, and, out of this, live generously.



***Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."
(John 6:35)***

Day 13

Sending church



Story

When we returned to the UK unexpectedly for a short time, one of the sending churches which was local to where we were staying pulled out every stop imaginable.

They brought round boxes of toys for our children, then aged four and seven, so the children had some lovely toys and activities to do. The church has also got some of the church family to sign up to a meals-on-wheels kind of thing, so we got meals delivered to our door for the first week or so!

We felt so loved and supported at a time when things were very tough for all of us.

Pray

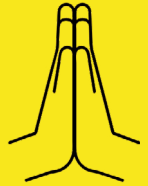
- | God to provide supporting churches full of people who will listen to TCKs with compassion and understanding.
- | Sending churches to know how to provide for TCKs whether they are overseas or in the passport country.
- | Sending churches to pray regularly for TCKs, for protection, provision and spiritual growth.



News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. (Acts 22:11)

Day 14

Family and friends



Story

We homeschooled through primary school, so a 20th-century history course was the perfect excuse to build relationships with older relatives and significant family friends. We peppered them with emails (which at that time went on a disk to the capital and then got uploaded and sent, and the replies came back via the reverse process!). 'Do you remember when the NHS began? What difference did it make to you?' or 'Who do you think was the most important person in the 20th century?' or 'What was your favourite shop when you were little?' These lovely folk wrote back and our children were able to see them as real people, and not just names we mentioned. It meant they weren't strangers when the kids met them the next time. It made school a lot more interesting, and it really blessed me to see that so many people cared enough to invest in our children like this.

Pray

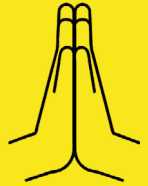
- | Good internet connection and suitable devices, which really helps with communication!
- | Extended family to take the time and energy to maintain and grow relationships with TCKs, to help them know they are loved and belong in the family.
- | Churches and friends keep in touch with the family to enable TCKs to feel 'at home', connected with the passport culture, friends, and supported in educational development.



Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7)

Day 15

Home leave



Story

We spent half of 2020 on home leave in England, where our younger daughter was born. In some ways the restrictions made life in the UK more familiar to her siblings, without soft play areas, double-decker buses or an English-language library. They relished time with grandparents and cousins, adventures in forests and playgrounds, Sunday school crafts and iPlayer. But they also longed to return home. As my homesickness was soothed for a while, theirs was deepened: through this contradiction, we understand one another better.

Pray

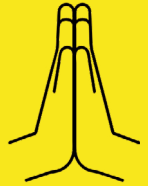
- | TCKs and their families prepare well before their transition and trust in God in this unsettling time.
- | TCKs will adjust well during home leave and are able to connect with friends and family.
- | Sending churches will understand how to love and engage with TCKs when families visit to raise funds and awareness.



**Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.
(Psalm 90:1)**

Day 16

Re-entry



Story

I am from England, my mum is from Armenia and my dad is from England. I grew up in West Asia where my parents served. I attended an international school for missionary kids. Now we are back in England. I continued my previous school online until the summer holidays. Now I go to a new school in the UK. At my new school, people often use God's name in vain, which they did not do at my previous school; and people tease me more and make fun of me more. I am shocked at this and a bit sad. At my old school people were much kinder and did not use God's name in vain. Please pray for me that I will learn to cope with this, and have a good influence on my friends' behaviour, with Jesus' help.

Pray

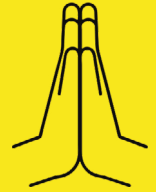
- | TCKs and their families prepare well before their transition and trust in God in this unsettling time.
- | TCKs to rest in God's care as they re-enter their passport country or enter it for the first time.
- | Understanding from the extended family, home churches, schools, agencies, and friends.



In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling. (Exodus 15:13)

Day 17

Culture shock



Story

I am a missionary child who lives in Ethiopia, with an unusual past and a strangely mixed heritage. I was born in England, and am from Germany, Finland, South Africa and Italy. Having lived in a foreign country for most of my life, I have been exposed to more different cultures and experiences in my 15 years than most people experience in a lifetime. I know more about the world than a lot of people do, and yet the more I see, the more I realise that I still have a lot left to learn.

Pray

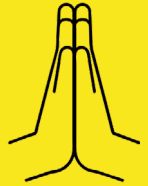
- | TCKs who struggle to adapt to an unfamiliar culture and language.
- | God's help in making friends, which does not come quickly or easily for all TCKs.
- | Parents and other adults to be sensitive to TCK struggles, and to persevere in their support.



But you, Lord, do not be far from me. You are my strength; come quickly to help me. (Psalm 22:19)

Day 18

Spiritual growth



Story

At their baptisms, both our girls talked about how this time in Africa grew their faith; they had seen times when we leant on God immensely, and they grew in many ways through witnessing that. And we learnt that God is reliable... and surprising. We never knew how things would work out, and things that were very bleak would suddenly turn a surprising corner. It can only be him. He is solid, reliable. We might never understand some of the things, but it doesn't mean we stop trusting.

Pray

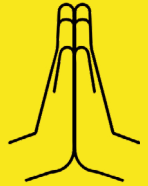
- | TCKs will know that God is for them and not against them.
- | There will be a space and chance for TCKs to come to a place of owning their own faith and relating to God in the best way for them.
- | TCKs will fall in love with Scripture and know that God can speak them through it and will shape them to become the people he wants them to be.



**So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him.
(Colossians 2:6)**

Day 19

Parents



Story

'We did encounter lots of people being fearful for us,' says Anna*. 'It's one thing sending us, but sending us and our children, who were 10, eight and six... Maybe people prayed for us more because of the children!'

'Sometimes I question if we have done the right thing,' Timothy* continues. 'But our children say that they are grateful for the experiences they've had.'

Pray

- | Give thanks for parents who choose to bring their children up overseas and for good work and family life balance.
- | The parents of TCKs who sorrow over the emotional and spiritual pain of their children, struggling with unresolved grief and anger from their childhood experiences.
- | Pray for unity between families where children have been hurt by their parents' decisions and how mission may have negatively impacted on their lives.

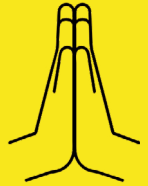
*name changed for security reasons



The living, the living – they praise you, as I am doing today; parents tell their children about your faithfulness. (Isaiah 38:19)

Day 20

TCK carers



Story

Every family is different and each child, teen or student is unique and it's my privilege to walk with these people as they look to answer God's call to work in mission, whether overseas or in the UK. I see that family life is a joy; it's busy, it's fun, it's unpredictable and not without its struggles and disappointments.

I hope by listening to families and individuals, encouraging them, equipping them and linking them to professionals if need be, that every person in each family knows they are loved and valued by me and God and are given the very best chance to thrive where they find themselves.

Pray

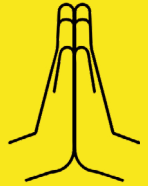
- | Give thanks for those who have responsibility for taking care of TCKs and their families.
- | Pray for wisdom, insight, compassion in order to help TCKs as best as they can.
- | Pray for new workers to join this vital part of world mission.



He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Luke 10:2)

Day 21

Reconnect



Story

We began each day with worship, fun games – like how quickly can you eat a strawberry lace – and creative presentations of the book of Ruth.

Then we moved into Ruth Groups, where we split into smaller groups for Bible study and chat about transition and saying goodbye. This year it was hard to hear one lad say ‘saying goodbye makes my tummy hurt’. Although, it was good to be able to pray together too.

We asked the kids to sum up Reconnect in three words and these are some the words they used: fun, exciting, sad, great, helpful, awesome, joy, amazing, cool and really perfect!

Pray

- | TCKs, that they will find safe places, like Reconnect TCK Camp, to talk about the ups and downs of their TCK experience.
- | The leaders on the camp would love and serve the TCKs and families well.
- | The TCKs would grapple with their transition, know healing and find hope because of what God has in store for them and because he is kind.



**You have made known to me
the paths of life; you will fill
me with joy in your presence.
(Acts 2:28)**

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All the stories in this booklet were contributed by TCKs and/or their parents and carers: we are very grateful for their contributions. Please note that, as such, they represent the personal experiences and views of the writers.

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