

# **DSWD, ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Bata to work together for child protection program**



*Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian meets with Bantay Bata 163 representatives for possible partnership in child protection on Monday, February 13, 2023 at the DSWD Central Office.*

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian met with the representatives of Bantay Bata 163 of the ABS-CBN Foundation to further improve the Department's initiatives and efforts on child protection on Monday, February 13, 2023, at the DSWD Central Office.

The discussion focused on how to strengthen and enhance the implementation of the Department's child protection programs and interventions for abused, neglected, and abandoned children, among others.

Currently, the DSWD implements programs for child protection including but not limited to the Strategic Helpdesks for Information, Education, Livelihood, and other Developmental Interventions or SHIELD against child labor; Unlad Kabataan Program, Supplementary Feeding Program; Recovery and Reintegration Program of Trafficked Persons; Comprehensive Program for Street Children, Street Families, and Indigenous Peoples especially Sama Bajaus; Residential Care Facilities; and other community-based programs and services addressing children in need of special protection from abuse and exploitation.

Meanwhile, the meeting aimed to partner with other child protection program implementer outside the Department, such as

Bantay Bata 163, to supplement the Department's initiatives and to come up with a total child protection package. The package will target specifically children who are needing temporary shelter and rehabilitation and are admitted in DSWD-run centers and residential care facilities.

The Secretary emphasized that the package should include holistic and integrated approaches, as well as clear pathways for the exit of children from different centers and residential care facilities.

He added that child protection does not stop at putting children, who have been reached out by the Department from difficult circumstances, in the different facilities. They should be prepared for alternative parental care like adoption, foster care, kinship care, or reintegration or independent living, based on the result of the assessment of the case manager.

"Give them a clear pathway to become successful in life," Secretary Gatchalian said.

The DSWD vowed to partner with non-governmental organizations, such as Bantay Bata 163, to develop mechanisms for child case referral, assessment, and provision of social services, among others, to ensure the protection and development of children who are victims of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

Bantay Bata 163 is a child welfare program established by the ABS-CBN Foundation to protect disadvantaged and at-risk children through a nationwide network of social services. ###