

# MOTHER AND CHILD HOUSE

23552 Lübeck, Mengstr. 62, Tel. 0451-7060191, Fax: 0451-72840

Sponsor: "Registered Society für the Protection of Life"

Member of the umbrella organization of the Protestant Social Welfare Work

Donations: bank account 224 250 12, Volksbank Lübeck, bank code number 230 90 142

## C a m p a i g n f o r t h e F o u n d l i n g

Since the end of June 2000 there has been in Lübeck the so-called "SOS life-saving lock", better known by the expression "baby hatch". In the Mother and Child House, Mengstr. 62, it is fitted into an inconspicuous basement door. Therefore it presents an opportunity to put up a baby in need safely, anonymously and without getting into any personal contact.

Prior to the project many months were passed discussing this subject, talking to the founders of the Hamburg "baby hatch" and settling questions of security. Five years of practical experience gained by intensively living together with mothers and children in distress were very informative. We often saw under what pressure mothers might get by partners or members of the family when they are expecting a child they do not want. This leads from a concealed pregnancy to a secret birth (as was the case with the first foundling in the Hamburg "baby hatch"). It might also lead to painful abortion for fear of losing the partner or of being rejected by the family. In such a difficult situation the mother might also agree to the adoption of her child against her own motherly feelings. Having got to know all these different problems encouraged us finally to set up the "baby lock". Making use of it probably means the most urgent signal from a mother who does not see another way out of her situation.

It is understandable that in difficult situations one first of all thinks of the mother whereas the important question concerning the child's right to live often remains unconsidered. In its helplessness it depends on the adults who decide whether a child is worth living or not. The "baby lock" presents a solution helping the mother as well as the baby. Children who are very much wanted by their potential adoptive parents have every chance of a promising future. They do not present an accident, a slip or a burden, but a gift for those who are denied children of their own.

At the present time, a childless family in Lübeck has to wait about eight years to be able to adopt a new-born baby. On the other hand, 250,000 children die in the Federal Republic every year through abortion. In view of these figures we wish people in our society would rigorously change their minds. The "SOS life-saving lock" could give many of these children the chance to live. To become a mother could mean getting into a hopeless situation for one person whereas for another it could mean great happiness. *"Children as the weakest are destined to receive love and to give love." (Mother Teresa).*

We are pleased when a mother in distress hands over her child to us personally. But we are also pleased when we may take it through the "baby lock". We are thankful for every child that is allowed to live.

Friederike Christine and Günter Garbe

Julia Porath and her family

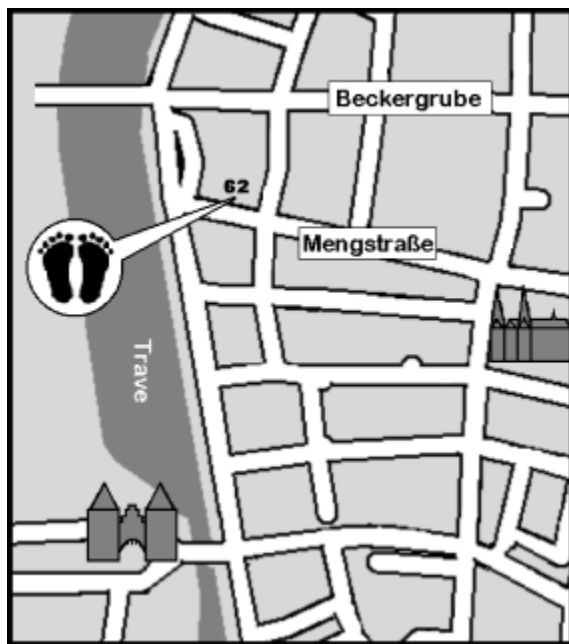
Supported by friends and helpers in our Mother and Child House

*If you consider entrusting your newborn child to us by way of the "baby lock",  
please read also the information on the back.*

# What you might also want to ask

## **How can I hand over to you my newborn child?**

You may hand over personally your child to us at the Mother and Child House, Mengstraße 62, or put it in the "baby lock". If you decide in favour of the latter, go with the newborn child to the "baby lock" (left of the front door of the Mother and Child House). Open the lid and lay the child through the opening on the heated bed which lies behind it and which is always kept at a temperature of 37° C. Then please take with you the "letter to the mother" which is attached to the inside of the lid. The letter contains a mark which identifies you as the mother. You need it if you want to get your child back. After closing the lid it cannot be opened again from outside.



## **Will I remain anonymous?**

In order to be sure to remain anonymous you should go to the "baby lock" after 8 p. m. as at that time there will usually be hardly any passers-by in the street (Mengstraße) and you need not fear that you will be noticed. The alarm informing us that the "baby lock" has been used is not activated until one minute after the lid has been closed so that you have enough time to go away without being recognised.

## **What happens to my child after I have left it in the "baby lock"?**

Not later than two minutes after the alarm is triggered off we will be with your child and take care of it. We, i. e. two experienced mothers who permanently live at the Mother and Child House. As soon as we have received the newborn child we will take it to hospital where it will be medically examined. Should it obviously be ill we will, instead, call the emergency paediatrician who will be with us very quickly. In order to be able to properly take care of your newborn child until the arrival of the doctor, we have been trained in first aid for cases of emergency concerning children. After the medical exam we will take the child into our house.

## **How much time do I have to change my mind, if I want to get my child back?**

According to German law we can keep the child with us for no longer than eight weeks until we have to hand it over to the youth welfare department. Within this period of time you can get in touch with us at any time and get the child back. If you need more time to think about it, you should get in touch with us all the same within this period of time. We will then have the possibility of applying to the youth welfare department for a personal guardianship so that the baby will be able to stay with us longer. Your anonymity will in any case be preserved, even if you contact us personally.

## **How long does it take until the child is definitely adopted by a family?**

After eight weeks we have to hand over the child to the youth welfare department. If we do not apply for personal guardianship (see above), the authority will then foster the child out with a carefully chosen family who wants to adopt it. The procedure of adoption will then take about one year. During that time the child will, however, already live with its future family.

## **Can I also deliver anonymously?**

If you want to remain also anonymous when giving birth at the hospital, please contact us in good time before the date of the birth. We will then find for you a possibility of an anonymous delivery.