

IREX/ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS (ARO) PROGRAM



Child Welfare Services in Khabarovsk are Cost Effective

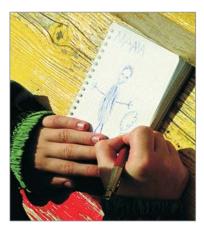
The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), IREX's implementing partner for the USAID-funded Assistance to Russian Orphans Program (ARO), hired an expert to conduct a cost measurement analysis of the longterm economic impact of five innovative child welfare services for preventing social abandonment developed by the ARO program in Khabarovsk Kray. These services are part of the broader effort to develop an innovative system for preventing child abandonment in the kray. The five services examined in the analysis were early intervention services, social hostels at schools, social clubs at libraries, services providing family-based forms of care, and services for families affected by alcoholism.

Cost estimates for the services were necessary in order to give the city and kray leaders responsible for choosing kray/city child protection policy a base estimate of budgetary costs connected with expanding the services, and if they are institutionalized, to provide an estimate of what first needs to be spent as well as estimated social-economic effects of the services. The findings of the report will be used in developing the government child welfare plan for 2010–2012 based on ARO models and methodology.

The necessary documents and data were gathered from meetings and interviews with representatives of the Khabarovsk Kray Government, Khabarovsk City Administration, various institutions, service providing agencies, and statistics agencies in order to receive up-to-date, first-hand information. The final analytical report included: a calculation of the cost of each of the five services for preventing social abandonment; a prediction of the needs of the services dependent on the potential number of users; a prediction of the needs of the financial service; an estimate of social effects of the services; and an estimate of possible budgetary savings as a result of increasing the scope of services and further expanding them.

The results of the analysis were extremely positive. All of the ser-

vices examined are highly effective and will save the Khabarovsk Government money in the long term. Over the next 10 years, for every ruble the government spends on these services, it will save between four and seven rubles.



Highlights of the report included:

Social hostels, social clubs and services for families affected by alcoholism complement each other and provide a valuable social benefit to society – they promote the early detection of at-risk families and prevent situations from getting worse.

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The 20 social hostels in 80 schools in Khabarovsk, five social clubs in libraries and one service for families affected by alcohol have a total annual budget of 11 million rubles. By providing support to atrisk children, these services reduce the number of children needing to be institutionalized. The savings from reducing the number of institutionalized children will cover the budget of these services in the second year.

Year-long support for four foster family services costs 2 million rubles and will pay for itself when two teenagers living with foster families do not have to be returned to orphanages. In addition, tax revenues will increase because the number of socialized and employed adults will increase due to more children growing up in foster families rather than in orphanages. This will increase every year and eventually exceed the cost of the services.

Early intervention services pay for themselves after a few years because without these services, children receiving assistance need more support for longer periods of time. Additionally, it costs less to educate a child in a typical institution, which covers the costs of supporting three early intervention centers for a year.

The findings of this analysis will be submitted to the administrations of other ARO priority regions (Novosibirsk, Altay Kray, Tambov), other potential regions interested in adopting ARO models, and the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Development, and will continue to make the case for a continued rollout of AROdeveloped models, technologies and systems to enhance the dissemination and institutionalization of improved child welfare services at the national level.

General News

IREX and NFPCC Move Offices

On July 17, the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), IREX's implementing partner for the USAID-funded Assistance to Russian Orphans (ARO) Program, moved to its own office. Before the move, NFPCC and IREX shared an office, but NFPCC changed locations to help further strengthen its sustainability and independence. The new office is located at 30/1 Pokrovka Ulitsa, Moscow, 105062, Russia and its telephone number is +7 495 956 1400. The office has a conference room and a space that can be used as a library. The new location is close to the IREX office, so it will be convenient and easy for the two organizations to continue working together.



NFPCC's new office.

IREX also moved to a new office at the end of July. The new office is located in the same building on Khokhlovsky Pereulok (13 bld.1 Khokhlovsky Pereulok, Moscow 109128, Russia, telephone: +7 495 956 0978), but is on the second floor instead of the first. Both offices are up and running after the move.

ARO3 Program Receives a No-Cost Extension

The Assistance to Russian Orphans 3 Program (ARO3) received a five-month no-cost extension from USAID. ARO3 was originally planned to end on August 31, 2009, but will be extended until January 31, 2010. The no-cost extension was requested due to difficulties in giving funding to partner organizations, and the extra time needed to finalize agreements at the federal and regional levels and complete institutionalizing child welfare services.

Russia Orphans Attend a Concert with Michelle Obama and Svetlana Medvedeva

On July 7, 28 orphans from ARO partner orphanages attended a USAID-organized VIP concert at the Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater. The Moiseyev Dance Troop performed at the concert, which also featured Russian folk music and was attended by over 100 children. Michelle Obama and Svetlana Medvedeva were special guests at the event.



Meeting with Department of Family and Children Issues Representatives in Tomsk

In July, a meeting on standards for family and child social services was held in Tomsk with four representatives from the Department of Family and Children Issues. The new version of the standard for "Supporting Foster and Adoptive Families," which was adapted by NFPCC specialists according to regional law requirements, was reviewed and discussed at the meeting. This standard will be reviewed by the Tomsk Administration's legal department in August.

Seminar in Tambov

A seminar was held in Tambov which focused on standards for services that develop family-based forms of care. During the seminar, specialists analyzed the development of family-based forms of care in the region. They also discussed how guardianship departments and foster family services can work together. Participants developed the structure for the service standards and created an action plan for further developing and implementing the standards for the services.



Seminar Participants in Tambov.

News From Our Partner

NFPCC made several Media Appearances after International Conference

In July, NFPCC staff made several media appearances after the international conference "A Childhood without Cruelty and Abuse: Protection and Assistance," which was the final ARO3 conference. The conference raised awareness about child welfare issues in Russia and gave NFPCC the opportunity to reach a broader audience through radio programs and a newspaper article. The additional publicity included:

- Marina Egorova, the president of NFPCC, appearing on the radio program Real Time and discussing parental responsibility. She also wrote an article for Novie Izvestiya on the increased prevalence of child abuse in Russia.
- Alexander Spivak, the NFPCC director of analytical and informational programs, appearing on the radio program Moscow Speaks and discussing whether child abuse has increased in Russia due to the crisis.

Marina Gordeeva, the president of the Russian Children in Need Fund, also participated in both radio programs with NFPCC.

In addition, after the conference several Russian regions that are not part of the ARO program, including Tver, Ryazan and Perm, approached NFPCC about future cooperation. NFPCC is currently corresponding with these regions to see how they can best work together.

Upcoming Activities:

Novosibirsk Oblast August 20-30 Monitoring of Child Welfare Services August 26-27 Supervision for Specialists at Child Helplines Tomsk Oblast August 27 Seminar on Child Welfare Standards

Krasnoyarsk Kray August 17-21 Monitoring Visit

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