IREX/ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS (ARO) PROGRAM

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Alaska Study Tour for Social Workers

On July 1-15, fifteen Russian social workers from Altay, Magadan, Barnaul, and Tomsk took part in the second of two ARO study tours to the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) to learn the art of supervision and leadership from UAA Professor Chad Morse and Dr. Ruby Johnson from the Institute of Human Services in Columbus, Ohio. The participants attended a series of lectures on supervision, Early Intervention, and case work and visited service providers throughout the state of Alaska, including the Office of Children's Services in Kodiak. The informational exchange involved in the study tour proved mutually rewarding for all involved, and ARO is confident that the Russian social workers came away from the trip with new views on child welfare work and child abandonment prevention models.

Russian social workers during a lecture at University of Alaska Anchorage

Summary:

In July, ARO representatives made several trips to Tambov to further evaluate the child welfare services in the city and provide recommendations for improvement. ARO continued its educational activities throughout the month, holding seminars in Khabarovsk, Tambov, and Irkutsk on ARO-services and how to effectively implement them.

ARO conducted a study tour to the University of Alaska Anchorage for Russian social workers and a study tour to St. Petersburg for Irkutsk Red Cross workers on providing psychological support to HIV-positive mothers.

In late July, a tender for social service projects in the child welfare arena was announced in the city of Tomsk. Seventy-six organizations applied for grant funding from the $183,000 available. ARO will announce the grant recipients in August.

IREX's implementing partner in Russia, the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), expanded their website by adding a section for the Child Helpline Program, which provides emergency psychological aid to children and adolescents in crisis. The NFPCC also received a grant to conduct a competition to identify the best models of family-based care for abandoned children from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

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