





### IREX/ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS (ARO) PROGRAM



# 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.



Activities • Activities

### Child Helpline Program Joins NFPCC Website

IREX's key implementing partner the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) launched the Child Helpline Program component of their official website on July 2. The Child Helpline section provides relevant information on the Program's objectives and activities, as well as information on the hotlines the NFPCC cooperates with. Hotline consultants will also find free methodological materials in both Russian and English and a monthly bulletin on the activities of Russian and international helplines around the world.

<www.sirotstvo.ru/telefon>

# HIV Study Tour to St. Petersburg

On July 3-7, a project coordinator, a psychologist, and a social worker from the Irkutsk Red Cross took part in a study tour organized by ARO to the "Innovation Center" NGO in St. Petersburg. The participants studied techniques used to provide psychological support to HIV-positive mothers and pregnant women at risk of child abandonment.

### Visit to Tambov Oblast Baby Home

ARO Expert Consultants Valeriy Yarygin and Dina Zelinskaya conducted a site visit and seminar on best-practice child welfare services at Tambov Oblast Baby Home on July 10, 2007. During their visit, ARO experts had the opportunity to meet with administrators and staff at the baby home to learn more about their system of operation and provide recommendations for improvement.

Tambov Oblast Baby Home currently does not utilize best-practice services such as Early Intervention, which provides client-oriented development programs for children with disabilities aged 0-4 years old.

Based on their review, ARO Expert Consultants Valeriy Yarygin and Dina Zelinskaya gave a presentation on Early Intervention, including fundamental aspects and benefits of the technique and the functions of a Lekoteka (libraries where families can borrow toys employed in developmental exercises for special-needs children). A preliminary agreement has been reached with the baby home to introduce Early Intervention services with support from ARO.

# Tour of Tambov Child Welfare System

On July 16-18, ARO Co-Director Marina Egorova, ARO Regional Coordinator Natalya Fomushkina, and ARO Educational Consultant Dr. Eileen Lally traveled to Tambov to tour the city's social welfare system. During their trip, the ARO study group met with specialists from the Department of Guardianship, the Social Welfare Department, and the Commission on Children's Issues to learn more about the services provided to families at risk of child abandonment in Tambov.

ARO representatives were also able to accompany social workers on visits to various families, including families with special-needs children, guardian families, and families in crisis. At the end of the visit the study group met with managers and chief administrators to debrief and provide recommendations on transitioning from orphanages to family-based care and the use of Family Intervention services. The Dean of the School of Social Work at Tambov State University also attended the meeting and agreed to further discuss workforce development and retraining with ARO in the future.



Director of the Center for Family-based Forms of Care Elena Barsukova, Director of Lunacharskiy Orphanage Ludmila Trishina, IREX Educational Consultant Dr. Eileen Lally, and Head of the Department of Guardianship and Custody Marina Bykova at an orphanage in Tambov

#### HIV Seminar in Irkutsk

Sixteen doctors and nurses from Irkutsk City Hospital #8 participated in a seminar conducted by the Irkutsk Oblast AIDS Center on July 19-20 as part of ARO's "Child Abandonment Prevention for Children Born to HIV-Positive Mothers" program component. The participants discussed medical aspects of observing and diagnosing children who have had perinatal contact with HIV. Other issues explored during the seminar included methods of establishing effective lines of communication with HIV-positive patients, how to identify patients' social and psychological problems, and how to best inform clients of existing social services for people affected by HIV/AIDS.



### Early Intervention Seminar in Khabarovsk

On July 25-27, Head of the ARO Expert Consulting Group Antonina Shepina and ARO Consultant Dmitry Grigor'ev conducted a seminar entitled "Creating organizational foundations for the development of family forms of care" in the Far Eastern city of Komsomol'sk-na-Amure as part of the 2006 agreement between the ARO Program and the Khabarovsk Krai Administration to create a package of child abandonment prevention services in the region.

Over 25 specialists from institutions for orphaned and abandoned children as well as Department of Education managers in Komsomosl'sk-na-Amure, Amursk, Blagoveshchensk, and the Amursk Municipal Region of the city of Khabarovsk participated in the seminar, which focused on the development of support services for foster families. Antonina Shepina and Dmitry Grigor'ev discussed the various stages involved in organizing such services and the importance of providing support to foster and guardian families, who otherwise may not be prepared for the challenges involved.

# New Publication in NFPCC Library



The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) published a new book entitled Psychology of Children in Orphanages in late July as part of its ongoing efforts to provide up-to-date information on child welfare issues. The latest publication explores unique psychological aspects of children raised in orphanages.

The authors discuss how the psychology of these children differs from that of those raised in families, how orphaned and abandoned children behave and see themselves, and how they evaluate their futures. This book will be of particular interest to parents, teachers, and practical psychologists working in orphanages and other state institutions.

# NFPCC Receives Grant from Ministry of Education and Science

The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) received a one-million ruble grant announced by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation for the organization of an all-Russian competition to identify the best innovative models of family-based care for abandoned children. The NFPCC will also conduct a national conference on family-based care in December 2007 and will develop a national training program on Early Identification of families at risk of child abandonment in the framework of the grant.

### **Upcoming Activities:**

#### August 1-3 (Tomsk):

Meeting of expert council to select recipients of the grant for family-based forms of care for abandoned children.

#### August 9-10 (Irkutsk):

Seminar for medical workers on HIV/AIDS issues conducted by Irkutsk AIDS Center.

#### August 16-17 (Irkutsk):

Seminar for medical workers on HIV/AIDS issues and psychological support conducted by the Irkutsk AIDS Center.

#### August 21-22 (Tomsk):

Conference on family-based forms of care.

#### August 25-31 (St. Petersburg):

Meetings with health councils from seven vocational schools to plan activities for 2007-2008 and evaluate the program, conducted by "Stellit" NGO.

#### August 26-September 1:

Camp for street children in the Leningradskaya Oblast as part of the program to assist abandoned and neglected children in St. Petersburg, organized by the "Doctors to Children" NGO.

#### August 27 (St. Petersburg):

Presentation of HIV Prevention Program at two vocational schools, conducted by the Korchakovskiy Center.

#### August 27-30 (Tomsk):

Seminar on training of trainers for social workers conducted by Dr. Eileen Lally and Antonina Shepina.

#### August 29 (Tomsk):

Project seminar for recipients of the grant to create projects devoted to family-based forms of care.

#### August 30 (St. Petersburg):

Training on the psychological aspects of social projects and working with families.

#### August 30-31 (St. Petersburg):

Seminar for specialists from the Krasnogvardeyskiy and Kalininskiy regions on improving the quality of life of HIV-positive women and their children, conducted by psychologists from the "New Steps" NGO.

