



IREX/ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS (ARO) PROGRAM



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HIV Training in Magnitogorsk

Marina Akulova and Anna Zagaynova from the Irkutsk Branch of the Red Cross conducted a training of trainers entitled “Conducting seminars for employees of kindergartens in Magnitogorsk on HIV issues and the integration of children affected by HIV in school” in the industrial city of Magnitogorsk on June 4-8. Fourteen employees of the “Civil Initiative” Charity Foundation successfully completed the training and will use the knowledge they attained to lessen the stigma against children affected by HIV by training preschool and kindergarten teachers on HIV-related issues throughout Magnitogorsk.

Child Welfare Study Tour to Anchorage, Alaska

On June 8-15, seven ARO and Russian government representatives, including Head of the Tambov Oblast Department of Education and Science Natalya Astaf'eva, Head of the Tomsk Department of Family and Children Services Lyudmila Eftimovich, and Deputy President of the Jewish Autonomous Okrug Maria Zhirdetskaya, traveled to Alaska to study the child welfare system in the 49th State. Due to its many similarities to the Russian Far East and Siberia in terms of terrain and social issues, Alaska is ideal for showcasing effective social welfare services in the US.

The study tour began in Fairbanks with an introduction to the Child Protection System by the Fairbanks Office of Children's Services (OCS). The OCS staff explained their functions and how their system is able to work in an immense area with few resources to their Russian colleagues. The group then had the unique opportunity to visit three villages in rural Alaska: two Alaskan Native villages, and one “road” system with a large population of Russian immigrants. The study tour participants interacted with the locals and were able to learn more about the services provided in rural communities.

Summary:

ARO organized multiple educational activities in June, including study tours to Velikiy Novgorod, Valday, and Alaska. ARO consultants conducted training seminars on child abandonment prevention services in Iskitim and Khabarovsk.

The Child Helpline Program continues to expand rapidly and released its first hotline directory. The Child Helpline Program also completed a series of training seminars for hotline consultants in Reutovo and organized an interregional conference for hotline experts in Novosibirsk.

The HIV/AIDS program component of ARO continued to conduct HIV prevention training for students and teachers at vocational schools in St. Petersburg. Likewise, ARO provided training for social workers working with families and children affected by HIV.

In June, the ARO Grant Department traveled to Khabarovsk and Tomsk to provide grant management training to recent grant recipient organizations intended to function as training centers in the future.



