

Families For Children

Program Newsletter

September 2007

15 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

On July 21, 2007 U.S. Agency for International Development celebrated 15 years of partnership with Ukraine at Ukrainsky Dim (the Ukraine House Cultural and Trade Show Center) in Kyiv. Since the Treaty of Co-operation between the Agency and Ukrainian Government was signed 15 years ago, USAID has provided more than \$1.5

million of non-repayable technical assistance to Ukraine to build market economy and democracy and to reform Ukraine's social sector. The United States will continue to provide technical assistance to the country.

U. S. Ambassador William B. Taylor explained that Ukraine is



U. S. Ambassador William B. Taylor welcomes guests during his opening remarks

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demonstrating the advantages of democratic reforms that have been carried out in Ukraine during the past 15 years. The U. S. remains committed to supporting the country in its transition to European standards.

Mission Director Earl Gast explained that in 15 years Ukraine has developed into one of the most democratic nations in the post-Soviet region. One of its most significant reforms is the development of civil society. ▶▶

ATTENTION!

See Notice of Intent to Announce Grant Competition on page 7

COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

Two more kids from Makeyevka Baby Home will be placed in a family soon

HoltInternational
ПРОГРАМА «РОДИНА ДЛЯ ДИТИНИ» В УКРАЇНІ

Families For Children Program in Ukraine is a USAID-funded program implemented by Holt International Children's Services
Kyiv 01030, 25/40 I. Franka str., office 31
tel. (044) 494-0349, fax (044) 234-5470
fcp@holtintl.org.ua, www.familiesforchildren.org.ua


USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

15 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

► The jubilee event included information fair and the launch of a traveling photo retrospective, entitled «15 years of Partnership». Families for Children Program that has been implemented in Ukraine by Holt International with the support of USAID for more than 3 years participated in the event. The keen interest shown by the guests in FCP activities and achievements presented at the information fair highlighted the importance of innovative changes in the national child welfare system.

«Children have to live in permanent and loving families. They don't have to live on the streets or in institutions. Families for Children Program does its best to unite children with families,» said Olena Gerasymova, FCP director, in an interview to the Voice of America international broadcasting service. ❖



Families for Children Program was presented at the information fair



Victor Groza,
Professor of Social Work,
Case Western Reserve,
University of Cleveland, Ohio

September 2007

What a warm fall means in Kiev. It means waking to seeing your breath in the morning. I walk the street with a long sleeve shirt and sweat jacket, moving briskly to work up warmth. I think about

REFLECTIONS ON UKRAINE

buying wool slippers and gloves from the little old lady knitting in a chair with a plethora of blankets around her. I learn to stay off the street benches, even when you are tired, because the cold goes up your pants and wraps around your spine. Warm in Cleveland is very different then warm in Kiev!

This is my sixth trip over 2 years. It has been an amazing journey. Winter, spring and fall follow each other and each visit has built on the last one. There have been political appointees that have come in and out of my experience but a core of dedicated governmental and nongovernmental staff who have been my teacher as much as they claim I have taught them. They have been the pioneers of innovation in Ukrainian child welfare.

With so many priorities and amidst the chaos of change, I have witnessed how a little information can lead to large outcomes. One of the areas we focused on was using evidence to inform policy,

programs and practice in domestic adoption. From conceptualization to a pilot study to a large study of successful domestic adoptions, my Ukrainian colleagues have begun to develop a knowledge base about adoption in Ukraine. They have learned how to use evidence to inform how they go about building a strong, successful domestic adoption program.

Foster care moved from an idea to actuality, helping move children into family care who otherwise would be in group care. Policies, procedure, standards and curriculum have all been developed over this very short period of time. Borrowing what is good from other countries, Ukraine is developing its own style of foster care. That is the only way it can be. Ukrainian foster care cannot be an exact copy of the American foster care system or any other country's system; it wouldn't work. It has been exciting to witness the transformation of child welfare from only an institutional-based

► system of care into models of family-based system of care. Even with a long way to go, so many innovations are happening.

It has been a wonderful experience for me. I have learned that as different as we are, when it comes to the care of children, we share many commonalities. We all work within the

limits and restrictions of our systems but they do not deter the dedicated from pushing forward and pushing against the status quo. I am hopeful about the future of Ukraine and the care of the most vulnerable children in Ukraine. We know that international adoption is not the long term solution for child welfare problems. It has a role and needs to be managed for

transparency, predictability and quality. But in the long term, Ukraine will need to develop a system of modern child welfare that eventually will be managed internally. From what I have witnessed in these last two year, I have great optimism and expect they will be leaders to assist other post-communist countries in their child welfare transformations. ❖

TRAINING FOR NEW PILOT SITES

One of the areas of FCP program activities is capacity building and professional development for Ukrainian service providers. In the last two years, Victor Groza, Professor of Social Work, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, provided a series of trainings for FCP partners both on the local and national levels. In addition to that, he was actively involved in designing the surveys of adoptive families in Ukraine starting from developing survey questionnaires and then summarizing results and formulating basic recommendations for policy makers.

In September Victor conducted training for FCP partners from two new pilot sites from Donetsk and Odessa oblasts. The training was aimed to strengthen the expertise of the local partners in the development of successful adoption and foster care programs. The training participants were practitioners representing local departments of children and centers for social services. They expressed their need to receive additional knowledge and skills in this

area as it was quite recently that adoption issues were transferred from departments of education to the departments of children. Both departments of children and centers for social services were staffed with new personnel who needed professional training. Thus, the training conducted by Victor Groza was very timely. The participants were exposed to the concept of adoption and foster care from a different perspective, the one that implies that the best interest of the child is the main principle of the child welfare system. The training covered the following issues: overview of child welfare system in the USA, permanency and placement, child specific recruit strategies, matching parents and children, recruiting and training of adoptive / foster parents, adopting children with special needs, etc

Some topics that raised a lot of discussion during the training included the secrecy of adoption, child and parents matching process, timely determination of child's legal status, etc. Victor Groza also stressed the need for a mandatory pre-

adoption training for the prospective adoptive parents. He also presented some of the key issues of this training which he believes helps to reduce the number of failing adoptions and increase the number of successful adoptions.

Families for Children Program initiated the implementation of pre-adoption training for prospective adoptive parents in Ukraine. The training curriculum «Parents in Process», developed at Holt International, has been already translated and is in the process of adaptation. The curriculum will be presented to program partners and pilot training for adoptive parents will be conducted this December. And after that TOT for partners from pilot sites will be conducted.

The training participants went back home with new understanding of adoption related issues. They will be also conducting targeted informational campaigns to recruit prospective adoptive parents who would be willing to participate in pre-adoption training. ❖

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the three years since Families for Children Program started working in Ukraine the Grant Program has become one of the key elements of our program activities.

The objective of the Grant Program is to support implementation of Local Action Plans developed by our partners in pilot localities in response to the child welfare sector needs. These Local

Action Plans emerged as a result of child welfare community workshops and trainings on family based care initiated and held by our Program. The Action Plans outline a number of steps directed at launching, strengthening and sustaining models of family preservation, foster care, family type homes, domestic adoption, provision of training and technical assistance to service providers as well as public

awareness and media campaigns on family based care.

Three categories of grants are available to support these steps.

Open Competition Grants

These are grants aimed at building the capacity of organizations providing direct services, service delivery itself, for example family preservation and other



CONSOLIDATED GRANTEES' PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (as of September 30, 2007)

TRAININGS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

	TOTAL:	Dnipropetrovska	Donetska	Kyivska	Cherkaska	Pilot regions	National level
Total no. of trainings	555	208	25	176	61	84	1
Total no. of people trained	9609	7525	123	1015	524	398	24
Of them, service providers	1903	748	98	699	167	167	24
decision makers	78	18	0	29	15	16	0
parents	865	514	25	242	48	36	0
children	6744	6236	0	44	287	177	0
media	19	9	0	1	7	2	0
Number of guidelines/tools developed	23	14	0	0	5	4	0

PUBLIC AWARENESS

	TOTAL:	Dnipropetrovska	Donetska	Kyivska	Cherkaska	Pilot regions	National level
No. of media appearances (publications, radio/TV programs)	16123	198	17	21	170	31	15686
No. of products developed	225	22	20	5	52	20	106
No. of community events	243	84	22	57	78	2	0
No. of community groups established	26	3	0	6	15	2	0

PLACEMENT OUTCOMES

	TOTAL:	Dnipropetrovska	Donetska	Kyivska	Cherkaska	Pilot regions
No. of children placed into family care	65	47	2	14	1	1
No. of children returned to birth families/remaining in birth families	456	123	0	261	45	27

SERVICES TO CHILDREN

	TOTAL:	Dnipropetrovska	Donetska	Kyivska	Cherkaska	Pilot regions
No. of children receiving:						
Psychosocial support, total	1562	255	55	527	629	96
Of them, legal support	215	63	27	52	58	15
medical support	841	129	23	136	465	88
educational support	638	85	27	236	194	96
early intervention	422	36	1	250	112	23

SERVICES TO FAMILIES

	TOTAL:	Dnipropetrovska	Donetska	Kyivska	Cherkaska	Pilot regions
Total number of families who received services:						
Psychosocial support, total:	899	243	36	333	259	28
Of them, legal support	290	59	19	94	98	20
medical support	385	108	0	172	105	0
educational support	334	100	21	134	58	21
early intervention	328	26	0	147	129	26

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

► family based services, and information and awareness campaigns. The grants are awarded on a competitive basis following grant competitions open to all interested organizations, both governmental and non-governmental.

In 2005/2006 FCP ran three open grant competitions through which 40 grants were awarded.

The objective of **our very first open grant competition** announced in July 2005 was to support the development of information and methodology base on family care and provide training to professionals and organizations who would then implement projects promoting family preservation, foster care and national adoption in their pilot localities. The first competition grants allowed to hold information campaigns on family-based care, to develop methodology resources and train public officials, child welfare officers and social workers, to build capacities of daycare centres for children with special needs and children affected by HIV/AIDS, to raise awareness of professionals and general public on the needs of such children, to set up regional resource and training centres on family-based care and to develop and disseminate information products. Many project

activities were carried out not only in FCP pilot sites but nationwide as well.

The second open grant competition focused on the development of continuum of family based care for orphaned children and children deprived of parental care. The projects were to respond to one or several priority areas of the competition: prevention of child abandonment; implementation of comprehensive services for families at risk and in crisis; development of foster families and family type homes; development of national adoption programs; prevention of child neglect and homelessness; support to children and families affected by HIV/AIDS. The second competition grants helped to further develop the network of foster families and family type homes, promote domestic adoption, expand the system and improve the quality of services for vulnerable children, in particular, children in institutions, with special needs and affected by HIV/AIDS. Besides, the projects also supported publication of information materials and information campaigns on local and national TV and radio channels aiming to recruit foster or adoptive parents for individual children living in institutions in FCP pilot localities.

Given results and achievements of our partners in the framework of two earlier open grant competitions, **the third competition projects** were to focus on children in institutions and cover the following priority areas: child's reintegration into birth family, placement in foster care, family type home, kinship care or adoption; development of programs and services for children with special needs and their families; social integration of graduates of institutions for orphaned children and children out of family care. Following this competition, FCP supported projects aimed at expansion of services of rehabilitation and social integration for children with special needs, life skills and independent living skills programs for institution graduates, reintegration of children into their birth families and their placement in foster care.

Special purpose grants

Special purpose grants are designed to support specific, clearly identified activities and are awarded following a restricted competition among qualified organizations which have experience and capacity to implement these activities.

Families for Children Program ran two special purpose grant competitions which resulted in 12 grant awards.

The objective of **the first special purpose grant competition** was to support children and families affected by HIV/AIDS, in particular, by establishing comprehensive care centres for families, children, and pregnant women affected by HIV/AIDS and holding public awareness campaigns and developing media materials. Grants awarded within the framework of this competition allowed to support four already existing comprehensive care centres in Kyiv, Brovary (Kyiv Oblast), Cherkasy and Kryviy Rig (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), extend the range of their services for children and families and improve their quality. Thanks to grant financing



Children's Rehabilitation Center in Uman, Cherkasy Oblast, received financial support for remodeling that included the purchase of new equipment for the kitchen unit



Ilona, a 10 grade student of Uman City Boarding School, participates in FCP supported Program of Social Integration for Institutions Graduates

► a totally new comprehensive care centre was set up in Dnipropetrovsk. This initiative was endorsed by Dnipropetrovsk City Council which will be responsible for the centre’s operation, including its financing, after the grant funding is over. Comprehensive care centres provide education and child development services, case management and home visits for centres’ clients, support

groups, counselling, psychological, legal, social support etc.

The second special purpose grant competition was dedicated to the development of a model of services for children from families at risk and/or in difficult life circumstances and provision of social services to their parents. Three projects were supported within this grant competition. They have been implemented in Brovary

Rayon (Kyiv Oblast), Uman and Uman Rayon (Cherkasy Oblast) for nearly 12 months now. These projects aim to replicate the Relief Nursery model of family preservation in Ukraine and we already wrote about them in the earlier issues of our newsletter.

Quick start partnership grants

Quick start partnership grants are our Program’s efficient tool for responding quickly to the urgent needs of our partners. In the three Program years 28 partnership grants were awarded. They allowed our partners in pilot sites to train regional trainers on foster care, to hold information campaigns to recruit prospective foster parents, including those for HIV-positive children in institutions, to provide social services to children from vulnerable families and children and families, affected by HIV/AIDS, to provide parenting skills training to parents from at risk families based on the «Make Parenting a Pleasure» module.

On the next pages of this issue you will find the summary of our grantees performance indicators. In total, throughout the whole term of FCP implementation in Ukraine, our grant fi-



Natalka and Katya together with their parents are clients of the family preservation model program that is being piloted in Uman Rayon, Cherkasy Oblast

► financing reached nearly 3.9 million hryvnyas.

The next open grant competition is to be announced October 2007. The Request for Applications and application forms will be available on our website www.familiesforchildren.org.ua.

Grant Committee

Following 2007 rotation, the FCP Grant Committee met in its renewed composition on September 21, 2007. Members of the Grant Committee are representatives of state agencies, non-governmental and international

organisations working in the field of child welfare. The main task of the Grant Committee is to oversee the grant award process. In addition to evaluating project proposals and deciding on the award, the Grant Committee offers technical expertise in outlining FCP strategies. ❖

NOTICE OF INTENT

By this notice the Families for Children Program in Ukraine implemented by Holt International Children's Services Inc. with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), informs all interested parties that it intends to **launch a Request for Applications «Child's Right to Live in a Family»**.

Locality of projects: Gorlivka of Donetsk Oblast and Bilgorod-Dnistrovsky Rayon of Odessa Oblast

Areas of activity that may be supported: prevention of child's removal from the family and institutionalization, development of family type care models for orphans and children deprived of parental care, support to children

living in institutions in social integration, awareness campaigns promoting family type care

Eligible applicants: non-governmental organizations and public agencies that are involved in the provision of services to children and families.

Tentative date of announcement of the Request for Applications: October 2007

The Request for Applications and application forms will be published on the Families for Children web-site www.familiesforchildren.org.ua and on the internet-resources for non-governmental organizations.

LOCAL COORDINATION COUNCILS MEETINGS IN PROGRAM PILOT SITES

In September the meetings of Local Coordination Councils took place in localities where Families for children Program had worked for over three years: Brovarsky Rayon in Kyiv Oblast and Uman City and Umansky Rayon in Cherkasy Oblast. The agenda of the meetings included an overview of program achievements and outline of the work plan activities for 2008. FCP staff also presented Holt Sponsorship Program as an additional source to support successful development of family-based care system in Program sites.

Overview of program achievements in child welfare. Community family care workshops that were held in each pilot site in the first program year and involved community members, representatives of local admini-

strations, NGOs and Families for Children Program staff led to the development of the local action plans. These plans were aimed at building a continuum of family-based care.

To implement the local action plans a significant number of child welfare specialists have been trained. The trainings took place in Ukraine as well as in the United States during the study tours organized by Holt. Ukrainian and international experts were invited to conduct the trainings.

The launch of Grant Program in pilot sites was the first step towards practical implementation of the local action plans. As of today, the Families for Children Program has awarded 15 grants totaling UAH 627,000 in Uman city and Umanskyi rayon and 14 grants

totaling UAH 560,000. Local Centers for Social Services in FCP pilot sites carry out regular public awareness campaigns to recruit prospective foster parents and conduct trainings for them; children that fall out of their families go directly to foster or adoptive families avoiding the institutions; the process of deinstitutionalization of children living in institutions has started; the spectrum of services to children with special needs and those affected by HIV/AIDS has been expanded; family support and rehabilitation programs for street children have been supported as well.

FCP 2008 Work Plan outlines the major activities aimed at further development of successful family preservation and deinstitutionalization models, includes trainings for FCP ►►

LOCAL COORDINATION COUNCILS MEETINGS IN PROGRAM PILOT SITES

► partners and assistance in conducting public awareness campaigns to promote foster care and adoption. Program Child Welfare Taskforce will summarize the experience of family support practices, describe the model, develop a set of basic documentation and practical guidelines to replicate the model countrywide. «Make Parenting a Pleasure», a training program for parents, that has been piloted in Ukraine will be adapted to Ukrainian needs.

In 2008 the FCP program activities will target both national and local levels. Program's major effort will be put into developing a continuum of family-based care services for children out of family care in Program's two new sites - Bilgorod-Dnistrovskyy rayon in Odessa oblast and Gorlivka city in Donetsk oblast.

Holt's Sponsorship Program. The participants of the meetings were briefed by the Program staff on Holt's Sponsorship Program as an additional source of funding available now along with the grant program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

By soliciting contributions from the American people Holt gives support to the most vulnerable groups of children in 13 countries including Ukraine. Holt accumulates the funds and allocates them to where there is pressing need for them.

Children from «Sunshine» and «Father's house» Foundations as well

as children affected by HIV were the first ones to benefit from Holt's Sponsorship Program. In accordance with the next year Program Work Plan Holt will continue expanding its Sponsorship Program in Ukraine. Sponsorship Program will be directed to support family preservation programs and centers of comprehensive services for HIV-affected families and children.

To promote Sponsorship Program and to inform prospective sponsors about the ways to support a child Holt International holds various fund-raising events, distributes printed and video materials about concrete children in need. Every child in Holt Sponsorship Program has his own life story, his preference, dreams, achievements and challenges. While Holt's ultimate goal is to unite these children with loving, permanent families, Holt Sponsors provide the means for the children to receive care they need. With Sponsorship Holt gives hope to a child and satisfaction of making a significant difference in his life – to a Sponsor.

Holt International puts a lot of effort to bring a vivid life story of a child to the sponsor. Sponsors receive regular progress reports with photos of a child. When a child finds a permanent family or returns to rehabilitated birth family, Holt sends a letter to a sponsor explaining that a child has left Holt's care. This is an important and exciting moment not just for a child and his family but also for those who all that time were by his side, yet on the other side of the ocean. ❖

Activities Planned for October – December 2007

Local Coordinating Councils Meetings:

October 9 –
Gorlivka, Donetsk Oblast

October 10 –
Bilgorod-Dnistrovskyy Rayon,
Odessa Oblast

Training for Trainers on Foster Care:

October 23 – 30, Kyiv

Announcement of Open Grant Competition:

October

National Conference on Institutional Reform (initiative of the Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports of Ukraine):

October 19

Study Tour to the USA:

October 3 – 11

Special Purpose Grant Competition Announcement:

November

Social Work Practical Skills Training:

December 3 – 5

Grant Committee Meeting:

December 7

Local Coordinating Councils Meetings:

December 11 –
Uman, Cherkasy Oblast

December 12 –
Dnipropetrovsk

December 13 –
Brovary Rayon, Kyiv Oblast

Families For Children is a quarterly newsletter of a USAID-funded program implemented in Ukraine by Holt International Children's Services.

Program Director:
Olena Gerasimova

Program Staff:

Olesya Galchinska, senior programs manager

Larissa Kurashyna, communications manager

Olesya Dolinska, grant program manager

Natalia Kovalenko, program assistant

Natalia Gulianitska, grant program coordinator

Natalia Logvinova, financial manager

Olena Skorobohata, financial and administrative assistant