

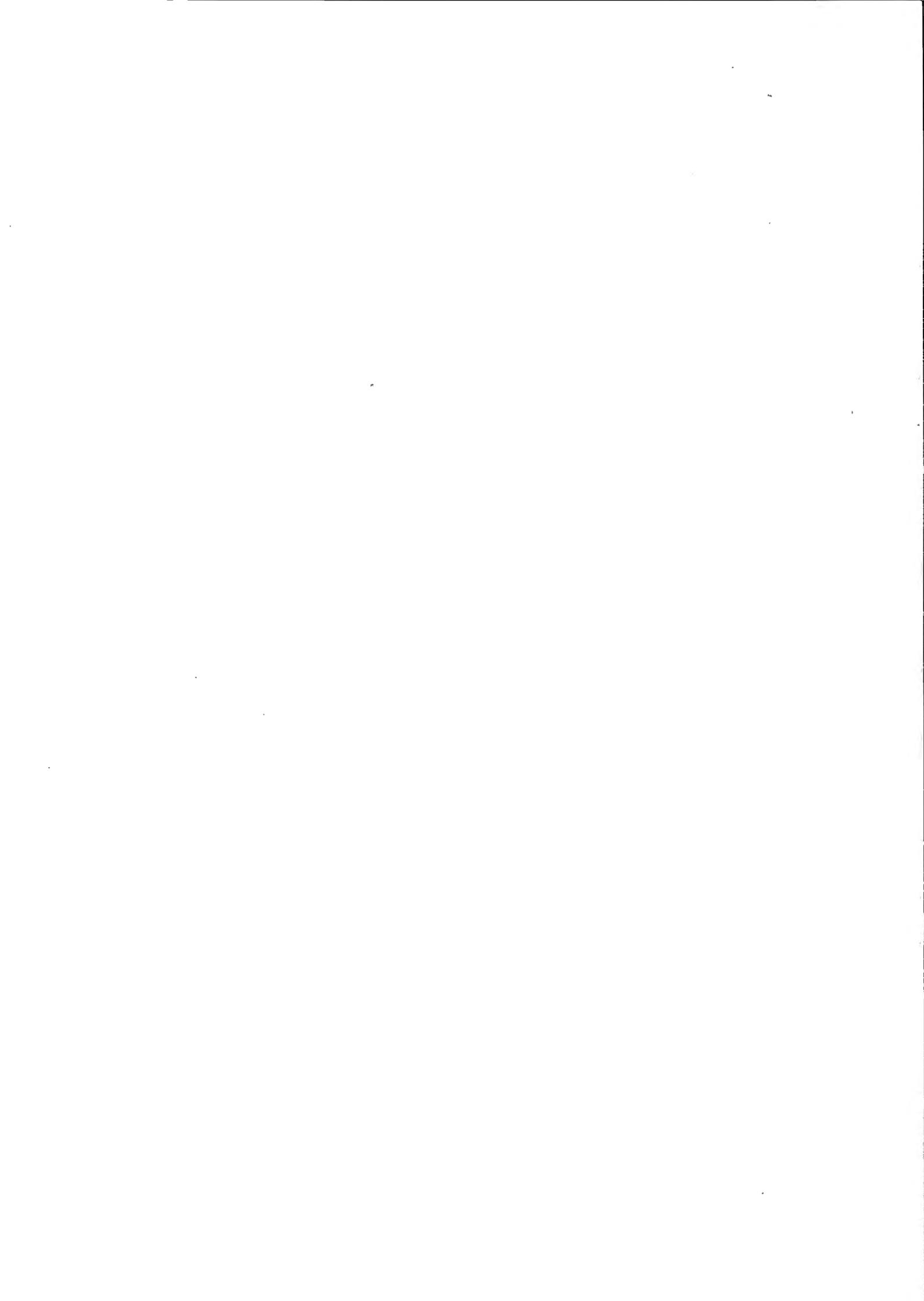


# A COMPASS FOR CHILDHOOD

SUCCESS STORIES COLLECTION  
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## Introduction



Dear Readers,

I invite you to celebrate with us first and second year successes achieved through 'A Compass for Childhood' – a four-year USAID-supported Program which began in 2010 and aims at strengthening the capacity of the child welfare system across regions in the Russian Federation. The following pages contain information on those successes.

'A Compass for Childhood,' implemented by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, is designed to provide regional child welfare and child protection authorities with a 'compass' to guide their planning and actions to improve the performance of their social services by providing support to families and children at risk for abuse, neglect or abandonment. In order to achieve its goal of increasing the capacity of the child welfare system of Russia, the Program seeks to accomplish the following tasks:

- 1) Develop a Toolkit for planning, implementing and monitoring regional programs
- 2) Create inter-regional Centers of Excellence (CoEs)
- 3) Disseminate and institutionalize Program results

The Program synthesizes Russian best practices and develops a toolkit for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of regional programs. This emphasis on best national practices is supplemented by methodological support from international partners based in the United States and a strong component of exchange and mutual learning. In its first year, NFPCC experts collected over 1,200 materials from 73 regions in Russia on current child welfare practices, and supplemented this research with analysis conducted in site visits to ten regions. Out of this work came a list of 25 recommended preventive services for families and children in the early stages of crisis. Using the list as a basis, service standards were developed for each. Each standard will be supplemented by guidelines offering methodological support in their successful implementation. NFPCC partnered with the Center for Fiscal Policy to develop a model and tools for assessing regional needs in child welfare. In addition to the basic package of recommended services and tools for regional needs assessment in child welfare, the Toolkit components include training program modules; tools for monitoring the implementation of regional programs and quality of service provision; and regional program modules.

During its second year of implementation, the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program focused on creating regional child welfare Centers of Excellence – child welfare resource centers which serve as dissemination sites for up-to-date technologies and provide continuing education and training to specialists, as well as professional support and methodological expertise. Each Center of Excellence (four in total, each serving a separate federal district in the RF) is unique to the child welfare needs of the regions it serves and some of them oversee practicum sites within its district, where technologies can be refined and field-tested. As of September 2012, the four centers are based in the Republic of Buryatia, Perm Kray, the city of Moscow and Volgograd Oblast.

Considerable efforts are being taken to disseminate and institutionalize the Program's results. Apart from the regions housing CoEs, six additional regions had been selected for proactive dissemination of the Toolkit components – Irkutsk, Tomsk, Novosibirsk and Tambov oblasts, Stavropol Kray and Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Okrug. Other dissemination mechanisms include meetings of the Program's Advisory Council, presentations at federal and regional levels, holding nationwide conferences, round tables, and other events on child welfare issues, updating Program's news and developments online ([sirotstvo.ru](http://sirotstvo.ru)), and regular interaction with mass media.

In the following pages are presented the Program's successes over the course of the first two years of implementation. Each story reflects NFPCC's ongoing efforts to build bridges of mutual exchange, increase knowledge-sharing, promote effective legislation and regional program implementation and ultimately influence for the better the life of children in the Russian Federation.

Sincerely,  
Marina Egorova

President, National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children / Program Director, 'A Compass for Childhood'  
Member, Governmental Commission on Juvenile Affairs and Their Rights Protection  
Member, Coordination Council under the President of the Russian Federation on the Implementation  
of a National Strategy to Promote Children's Interests, 2012-2017

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# Russian Regions Unite to Support Vulnerable Children / August 2010

**To create the Basic Package of Preventive Services, NFPCC requested every Russian region to send materials documenting regional best practices and innovation in child welfare**



*The map indicates the regions (marked in blue) that responded to NFPCC's request and sent materials documenting best practices in child welfare*

**'The most effective way to protect children from abuse are early preventive measures.... the main objective of which is the preservation of the family and the creation of conditions conducive for the child's proper upbringing in his or her family. To reach this goal, it is necessary to arrange comprehensive social and psychological support for families and children to provide assistance to parents in raising their children, and ways to monitor family life and conditions for children in at-risk families,'**  
**B.A. Bazhenov, Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth Policy of Zabaikalskiy Kray**

The USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, implemented by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), is conducting a wide-reaching campaign to attract regional authorities and professional networks from the regions of the Russian Federation to collaborate in creating an effective child welfare system. For this purpose, in August 2010 NFPCC wrote to all heads of Russian regional governments requesting them to send materials containing best practices in child welfare, including those focusing on child abuse prevention, children's rights protection and the prevention of social abandonment.

It is planned that over the course of the four-year 'A Compass for Childhood' Program (2010-2014), NFPCC's team of experts will review and analyze best regional practices directed at the improvement of the child welfare system, and use them as a basis to create and disseminate a package of methodological and practical guidelines on regional planning. These guidelines will facilitate the introduction of a more effective child welfare system in the Russian Federation. These activities will address pressing issues, such as the protection of children's rights; prevention of family crisis; social abandonment; homelessness, neglect and crime among juveniles; and family-based forms of care for orphans.

Within the first month only, over 60 regions of the Russian Federation responded to NFPCC's request and sent in materials in the form of methodological manuals, abstracts from conferences and seminars, publications, analytical reports, presentations and regional programs descriptions. By the end of September 2010, NFPCC is planning to collect more feedback from the regions, uniting their efforts in providing support to vulnerable children and building a stable system of child welfare in Russia.

# Alyssa Leggoe Makes Every Effort to Improve Child Welfare in Russia / September 2010

**Alyssa Leggoe was able to bring USAID, NFPCC and the Gorbachev Foundation together for the sake of child welfare, and secure concrete aid for orphanages in Novosibirsk**



Photo: A. Rudakov

*Alyssa Leggoe speaks with William Slater, Director of the USAID/Russia Office of Health, during a presentation of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program being implemented by NFPCC. The event was held in Moscow on September 9, 2010 to raise awareness about the new USAID-supported program, which is aimed at consolidating best practices in child welfare and creating a Toolkit for Regional Planning in child welfare*

**As part of the Memorandum signed by NFPCC and the Gorbachev Foundation, the parties will share their respective strengths, experience, technologies, methodologies, and resources to improve the health and well-being of children in Russia**

NFPCC has a long record of interaction with Alyssa Leggoe, Deputy Director of the Office of Health at USAID/Russia. In early 2010, Ms. Leggoe facilitated collaboration between USAID and the International Foundation for Socio-Economic and Political Studies (the Gorbachev Foundation). Her efforts resulted in the two signing a Memorandum of Cooperation in March 2010 to establish a framework for collaboration to further the welfare, health and well-being of children in Russia.

Ms. Leggoe's activities subsequently led to NFPCC being granted an award through USAID to implement a program facilitating policy dialogue on child welfare reform in Russia, in partnership with the Gorbachev Foundation. The program will expand discussion on child welfare issues and increase the involvement of the government at regional and federal levels in policy development.

In 2009, she successfully negotiated with Hewlett Packard for the donation, delivery and installation of 30 computers to pilot sites in Novosibirsk, to institutions identified by NFPCC and the Government of Novosibirsk. Ms. Leggoe traveled to Novosibirsk to visit the orphanages and vocational schools, to conduct needs assessment and plan project activities. The computers are intended for use by orphaned or abandoned children who have limited opportunity to develop communication skills and contact outside of their immediate circles and orphanages. In Novosibirsk, nearly 95 percent of orphanage graduates go to vocational schools, where they live in dormitories together and continue to be isolated from socializing with their peers. The low level of organization, communication and information on life outside of the orphanage or dormitory environment place them at high risk of negative outcomes, including making them targets for trafficking and abuse.

The proposed U.S.-Novosibirsk Digital Kids Pilot Project seeks to correct these deficiencies in part by providing laptops with Skype and other technologies, and training in their use, to staff and orphans at the selected government-run orphanages and vocational schools in Novosibirsk.

# Single Toll-Free Telephone Helpline Number for Children Introduced in Russia / November 2010

**USAID-supported 'Assistance to Russian Orphans 3' (ARO-3) Program successfully implemented telephone helplines project**

*Никто не сможет избавить тебя от всех проблем, но рядом есть люди, готовые помочь тебе их решить.*

Позвони нам...

**714-76-18**

понедельник – суббота с 14 до 20 ч

Анонимно, бесплатно



Поддержку службы осуществляет  
Национальный фонд защиты детей от жестокого обращения

*One of many fliers advertising telephone helplines for children: this provider operates in Moscow with support from the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) a leading Russian think-tank in child welfare*

**Telephone helplines are social and psychological services that are widely accessible and reach a great number of people in a short period of time. Helplines for children and adolescents play a special role as an early indicator of children in crisis. Helplines make it possible to act quickly to prevent undesirable consequences arising from family conflict, including but not limited to, running away from home or suicide attempts**

Anna\*, who is 12, called the children's helpline in the city of Barnaul in Altay Kray, from her village to speak with a counselor about a problem – her stepfather beat her regularly. Her mother knew of the abuse, but instead of offering protection, she urged Anna to 'be patient' because she did not want to lose her husband. Anna loved her mother very much, and understood her situation, but could endure the abuse no longer. The counselor initially suggested that a social worker visit the home, but after Anna objected (fearing the abuse would grow worse), they discussed other options. The one they settled on was having Anna call her grandmother who lived in another village and ask her for help.

Children's helplines are an effective tool in child abandonment prevention. According to surveys conducted by NFPCC, the number of telephone helpline services grew threefold over the last five years. At present, there are approximately 200 services in Russia providing emergency psychological care over the telephone. That is why providing technical assistance and training to new helplines has become one of NFPCC's top priorities. NFPCC, as part of the USAID-supported ARO-3 program implemented from 2006-2009, founded the Russian Child Helplines Association, to ensure adequate protection of children's rights in the face of violence and neglect, and to raise the quality of the psychological care provided at the helplines.

At present, 268 service providers in 68 regions have joined the Association. The project's implementation promoted a federal-level decision on the establishment of a single toll-free nationwide number for the child helplines, and funding for training and methodological assistance for child helpline service providers.

In Barnaul, Anna called back after two months to report to the helpline that she was doing better. Her grandmother came to take her to live with her. She goes to a new school, she helps her grandmother, and she is happy. She misses her little brother and looks forward to seeing him over the holidays.

\*Name changed

Photo: NFPCC

# Early Intervention Technologies Take Root in Krasnoyarsk / November 2010

**NFPCC implemented two USAID-supported projects in Krasnoyarsk intended to create a system of psychological support for children with disabilities and reduce abandonment and disability level**



Photo: NFPCC

*A specialist practices inclusion techniques to introduce a child with disabilities to a group of children without disabilities at Krasnoyarsk Government Orphanage #3*

**“Early intervention technology suggests as early support to child and family as possible, and that is why it was vital to create a system of early detection of children from the target group in need of assistance. This demanded collaborative work on the part of doctors, using experience of early intervention services from other cities”, - says Elena Basheva, Head of Department of education for children with special needs, Ministry of Education and Science of Krasnoyarsk kray**

Using an innovation approach developed by NFPCC, early intervention technology to improve the lives of children with special needs aged zero to four was introduced in Krasnoyarsk. As part of a partnership program between Krasnoyarsk Administration and USAID, the latter supported two projects: 1) Reducing abandonment rates and disability levels of children in orphanages and 2) Developing a system of psychological and pedagogical support for children in families. Both projects were funded through the Siberian Center for the Support of Public Initiatives and were implemented from 2007-2010.

The first project helped create the conditions necessary for the introduction of early intervention technologies and trained specialists in orphanages using NFPCC’s training models. The second project focused on introducing comprehensive case management, developing individual support programs for children, and widening the range of services available to families and children.

The projects in Krasnoyarsk were strongly supported by the local ministries of health and education, as well as by a number of NGOs and governmental organizations. In order to meet project goals, a regional system of early assistance providers was created and united in one network in Krasnoyarsk Kray. A well-trained team of specialists put in considerable effort to accomplish this laborious and long-term work, part of the reason why one of the project’s emphases was to train specialists on the full circle of early intervention programs and forming a team of professionals.

Over the course of project implementation, 125 families with children with special needs received psychological, medical and pedagogical assistance. The projects resulted in a fifty-one percent decrease in the morbidity rate among children; positive results in physical development (the average growth in weight was 828 grams and in height, 4.8 cm); increased socialization – children acquired new behavior skills and self-control; and finally, three children with special needs were adopted in 2009.

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# New Computers Open Up a Wider Window to the World for Orphans in Novosibirsk / December 2010

**30 computers were delivered to 3 orphanages and schools in the Novosibirsk region, and over 300 children have access to new technology thanks to the efforts of American sponsors**



Photo: NFPCC

*Children in Orphanage #7, Novosibirsk, explore the new computers donated to them by American friends with the help of the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*

*New computers and the Internet means no more computer classes on machines that at times would stop functioning, stall, or turn off during class*

**“We told them [the children] that friends in America organized these computers for them.” — Natalya Zotkevich, Orphanage Director, Orphanage #7, Novosibirsk**

Children at orphanage #7 in the city of Novosibirsk were used to getting their technology second-hand. All the computers in their orphanage were old and outdated. New programs were almost impossible to run on the computers. According to Director Natalya Zotkevich the children worked on computers every day which had low memory and capacity, that would load slowly, shut down in the middle of work or restart without warning.

Enter the Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher Foundation (DNA), which requested USAID to find an organization to deliver computers to children in Siberia. The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was only too happy to oblige. A coordinated effort between the DNA Foundation, USAID, Hewlett-Packard and Microsoft, resulted in new computer classrooms for Orphanage #6 and Orphanage #7 in Novosibirsk, and Vocational School #16 in Berdsk, reaching nearly 300 children at those institutions.

These computers, and the connection to the Internet for these orphanages, will open new horizons for the children, including tools for career development and self-advocacy. On the internet, a wealth of services are available for orphanage graduates, including access to legal advisors, networks of former orphanage graduates, and advocacy groups, as well as distance education, jobs and career opportunities. Through the initiative, they will receive special training in the use of email, internet search engines, how to navigate the internet and the use of programs such as Skype.

The computers were a welcome addition to the homes. Mrs. Zotkevich reports, ‘The children are so happy, very grateful. They have new computers! Before, there were things they could not do with them, now everything is possible. We told them that friends in America organized these computers for them.’

# At-Risk Families and Children Find a Road to Recovery in Tambov / January 2011

**The USAID-supported 'Assistance to Russian Orphans 3' (ARO-3) Program, implemented by NFPC, introduced early detection and case management technologies in Tambov Oblast**



Photo: NFPC

*Participation in the project means new renovations at home, including the acquisition of a new desk, school supplies, school clothes and shoes, for the participants like those pictured above. The project helps families address the healthcare, self-esteem and hygiene-related concerns of their children. The result: 100% of families participating in the project increased their quality of living and decided to keep their children within the home*

**Nikolay Gordenkov, Deputy Governor of Tambov Oblast, understands the importance of combining early detection and case management techniques with financial support in the early stages of crisis, and distributing these techniques throughout 10 regions of Tambov Oblast**

The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children recently witnessed the fruits of the year-long project 'Helping the Family — Helping the Child,' in Tambov Oblast. The project (2009-2010) was supported through grants from the Russian government, administered by the National Charity Fund.

Specialists participating in the project selected two pilot areas for its implementation — one in the city of Tambov and one in a rural region. Twenty five families (with 45 children) identified as being in the early stages of crisis and at-risk for child abuse or neglect were selected for assistance.

A cornerstone of the project was providing direct, immediate assistance and support to children and families in need, many of whom faced significant financial pressures and struggle with depression and alcohol abuse. Each family received extensive social, psychological and pedagogical support, as well as financial assistance in the sum of 10,000 rubles (approximately 350 dollars). Fifteen caseworkers, specially trained by NFPC, monitored the use of these funds, helped plan child-oriented family budgets, and developed individualized rehabilitation plans for each family.

Effects of the new approach were immediately visible in cases like Elena (name has been changed). A single mother of five children, Elena presented with a history of repeated neglect of her children's basic needs, including their appearance, health and education. She found it difficult to attend to household duties and regularly abused alcohol. Following the intervention and care she received through participation in the project, her life slowly began to turn around: she started home renovations, began to take care of household chores, do the shopping, and participate in her children's education. Elena's family and many others started down the road of recovery thanks to the timely intervention of the project and its implementers.

Although USAID did not directly fund the initiative, its support of the ARO-3 Program (2006-2010) resulted in the development of the early detection and case management techniques successfully implemented in Tambov via 'Helping the Family — Helping the Child.'

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# Laying the Groundwork for the First Inter-Regional Center of Excellence / February 2011

**Centers of Excellence are designed to promote a unified, effective approach to rendering child welfare services. Their creation answers the call from regional specialists and practitioners for direction, reform and innovation in the services they provide**



Photo: NFPCC

*Finalizing details for the creation of the Center of Excellence. Gathered around the table are members of the Steering Committee on Child Welfare Issues in the Republic of Buryatia, including the ministers of education, public health and the Commissioner on Children's Rights*

**“We have been working to build up experience in the Republic in social abandonment prevention and the use of family-based forms of care. Through the creation of a Center of Excellence and use of the Toolkit developed by ‘A Compass for Childhood,’ we will finally be able to systematize those forms of assistance and increase the effectiveness of our services”, says Svetlana Khabarkova, Director, Family and Child Services Agency of the Republic of Buryatia**

With support from USAID/Russia and its joint collaboration with National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), the latter is reaching out to help local child welfare service providers in the Republic of Buryatia.

Centers of Excellence are part of the USAID-supported effort to push for child-welfare reform in the Russian Federation. Centers serve as sites for the testing, implementation and subsequent dissemination of innovative practices in child welfare that are part of the being-developed Toolkit for Regional Planning.

The plan to create a Center of Excellence in Buryatia was made official in January, 2011 through a signed agreement between the Government of the Republic of Buryatia and NFPCC. Planned activities of the Center include assembling and training a team of local trainers, supervisors and social project planners. These teams will unite with leading Russian and international specialists to tackle the most pressing child welfare issues in their region, giving local child welfare providers the support, tools and training to increase their professional qualifications and improve the services they offer to the region's most vulnerable resource: its children.

Child welfare institutions and providers have long been voicing the desire for greater support and initiative in regional child welfare programs. Through the Center's work, NFPCC hopes to lay the foundation for a systematic, unified approach to child welfare practice.

The Center at Buryatia will be a model for change in the country: NFPCC will support its affiliation with two pilot sites that will provide services on social abandonment prevention and/or family-based care. Two more Centers are planned, each serving a different federal district. In the future, these centers will expand to serve most regions of the Russian Federation.

The Center of Excellence is a key element in the USAID-supported ‘A Compass for Childhood’ Program, whose goal is the modernization and dissemination of effective child welfare practices in Russia. Thanks to this effort, the children and families of Siberia will be able to get the services they require, from specialists better-equipped to handle their needs.

# Advisory Council for 'A Compass for Childhood' Approves List of Recommended Services / April 2011

**The first meeting of the Advisory Council for 'A Compass for Childhood' reviewed major strides made in Program implementation: the development of 25 preventive services to assist vulnerable families and children**



Photo: NFPC

*Marina Egorova, President of the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, program implementer of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, addresses Advisory Council members*

**“Before us is the possibility of the creation of a professional and productive system of assistance in the Russian Federation. Other, more productive approaches in Russia are hard for me to name, although I am constantly occupied with them at the regional level in the Civic Chamber.” –Nadezhda Vavilina, Chancellor, the New Siberian Institute; Member, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation**

The USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program has completed the selection and analysis of over 300 best child welfare practices from 74 regions of Russia and, on the basis of this analysis, has compiled the list of 25 services essential for vulnerable children and families.

The list has been presented to the Program's Advisory Council which convened its first meeting on April 12, 2011. The Council consists of representatives of the State Duma, the Federal Ministries of Health and Social Development and Education, the Civic Chamber, and leading NGOs, such as the Russian government-funded Russian Children in Need Fund and UNICEF.

The meeting was headed by Nadezhda Gerasimova, the Deputy Chairwoman of the State Duma. Services from the list will form the basic package of interventions to preserve families and children at early stages of crisis, support foster families, and facilitate social adaptation of orphanage alumni. Services will be supported by detailed guidelines for care delivery and quality evaluation also developed through the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program. The Council approved all 25 services and recommended them for wide use in Russia.

At the conclusion of the meeting Nadezhda Gerasimova noted: "Compass has applied unique research methods and achieved great results. I propose that the services be sent to all Russian regions with a recommendation by the State Duma for its use in work with children." Almost 120,000 children in Russia currently live in institutions and almost 1 million remain at- risk of institutionalization. The 'A Compass for Childhood' Program contributes to the efforts of the Russian Government and of Russian civil society to reduce the number of children living without family care. It is implemented by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

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# Child Welfare Forum Boosted Bilateral Efforts to Improve the Lives of Children / August 2011

**The first Russian-American Child Welfare Forum gathered over 200 participants from 35 regions of Russia and eight US States including government officials, high profile health and social experts, universities, NGOs, community organizations, law enforcement agencies and child welfare services providers**



Photo: NFPCC

*Ceremony of the official opening of the Forum in the meetings hall of the Government of the Republic of Buryatia, Ulan-Ude. The Forum resolution will be posted on forum web-site: [www.rus-us.org](http://www.rus-us.org)*

**“Our countries must be the world leaders in child protection. The United States and Russia share an absolute commitment to the health, safety, and welfare of our children. Joined together on issues of child protection United States and Russia can influence change around the world.”— taken from the video-greeting to the Forum participants by Andrew Oosterbaan, Chief of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section in the Criminal Division of US Department of Justice**

August 1-6, 2011 the first Russian-American Child Welfare Forum initiated by the group of Russian specialists to continue the discussions of the Child Protection Sub-Group under the Bilateral Presidential Commission’s Civil Society Working Group was conducted in Ulan-Ude and the Lake Baikal (Buryatia). Hosted by the Government of the Republic of Buryatia, the Forum was co-organized from the Russian side by the Office of the Children’s Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation and the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC). Organizers on the US side included the US Department of Justice, the US Agency for International Development, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, and the Institute for Human Services.

The Forum was opened by Vyacheslav Nagovitsyn, President of the Republic of Buryatia. The goal of the Forum was to further develop Russian-American dialogue and partnership in resolving pressing national and international child protection related issues. The central part of the event focused on early identification and prevention of child abuse, emergency assistance and long-term rehabilitation for abused children and their families. The participants discussed negligence; sexual and physical abuse and abandonment of children; child pornography and trafficking; best practices in conflict resolution and family preservation and reunification; and alternative care and social adaptation for orphans and abandoned children. Other issues of mutual interest were interdisciplinary approach and quality assurance in service delivery, human capacity strengthening, monitoring and evaluation, budgeting and fundraising tools. Special attention was paid to the role of civil society in protecting children.

The format of the Forum included plenary sessions, lectures, roundtables, workshops, master-classes, a presentation fair, and visits to pilot sites under the USAID-supported ‘A Compass for Childhood’ Program, implemented by NFPCC. The participants decided to continue on-line the exchange of experiences and sharing best practices and suggested that a Russian professional association of child abuse prevention be created.

# State Duma Recommends Preventive Services to the Regions / August 2011

**Interim results of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program—the development of 25 recommended child protection services—receive a major boost through their distribution to the Russian regions by the State Duma**



Photo: NFPCC

*Deputy Chairwoman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Nadezhda Gerasimova, Vladimir Kabanov from the Ministry of Education and Science, and NFPCC President Marina Egorova discuss the dissemination of interim Program results*

*At the meeting, Ms. Gerasimova proposed the distribution and recommendation of the List of Best Services developed through the Program to each Russian region*

**“In what was accomplished [the List of Best Services] I actually see a compass—a landmark, an instrument which gives one direction and shows a large field for development...the proposed materials receive high marks and can be sent to the regions for use in their work.” Vladimir Kabanov, Division for the Development of Family-Based Forms of Care for Orphaned and Abandoned Children at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and member of the Advisory Council for 'A Compass for Childhood'**

Recent developments in the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program supported through USAID and implemented by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children include the approval of a package of 25 preventive services and the decision by Nadezhda Gerasimova, Deputy Chairwoman of the State Duma, to recommend it for use in all the regions. The List was sent to the heads of each region in early August 2011 with a letter from Ms. Gerasimova recommending its use.

To compile the list, NFPCC collected more than 700 materials providing information on best practices from regions across the Russian Federation. Important criteria for selection included the relative cost and cost-effectiveness of each service: it should be available to less wealthy regions for implementation as well as in areas with more economic resources. Also, services had to be flexible and available for implementation in most regions based on their staffing capacity and capabilities.

In Russia the activities in child protection are directed mostly at families in stages of chronic crisis; however, if families can be identified and assisted in the early stages of crisis, the more serious consequences that occur later as family crisis deepens, including child abuse and the eventual deprivation of parental rights, can be avoided.

Services target families at the early stages of crisis, families of children with disabilities, foster-families and guardians, and long-term residents of orphanages or government boarding schools. Themes span anger management to training foster families to providing support to women at-risk for newborn abandonment.

Ms. Gerasimova praised the work of 'Compass' on the preventive services at the Advisory Council meeting in April 2011, saying, 'I see here the possibility for government officials and civil society organizations and even people who are simply not apathetic, who want somehow to help centers, and civil and public organizations... to be able to use this work!'

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# Perm Kray to House an Interregional ‘Center of Excellence’ / October 2011

**‘Collaboration with the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is going to lead to the organization of effective work in protecting the rights of children and families.’ – M. Kuzhelnaya, Chair of the Department for Human Development of the Government of Perm Kray**



Photo: NFPCC

*Vera Kozharskaya, PhD, center, is the head of the NGO ‘Vector,’ which will serve as the basis for the second Center of Excellence for child welfare practices as part of USAID-supported ‘A Compass for Childhood’ Program*

*Dr. Kozharskaya is pictured as a participant in the First Russian-American Child Welfare Forum, held from August 1-6, 2011 on Lake Baikal in the Republic of Buryatia. As a participant she had the opportunity to closely work with another Center of Excellence counterpart, Svetlana Khabarkhova of the Child and Family Services Agency of the Republic of Buryatia, who helped organize the event*

The ‘A Compass for Childhood’ Program recently hit yet another major milestone: an Agreement of Cooperation between the Government of Perm Kray and the Program’s implementer, the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was signed on September 12th, 2011.

The Agreement establishes Perm Kray as the second location to house a Program ‘Center of Excellence,’ which will serve as a center for monitoring the quality of child welfare services and a methodological resource center for various child protection service providers in the region. The Center in Perm will be the second of three: the first center was established in the Republic of Buryatia in early 2011.

The child welfare system in Perm Kray will receive the assistance necessary to introduce standards and establish a monitoring system for service quality and effectiveness through the Program. Better quality control monitoring for child protection service workers will boost the effectiveness of services for families and children.

The Center will be created on-site at the regional NGO, ‘Vector,’ headed by Vera Kozharskaya, PhD. NFPCC staff will also be heavily involved in the organization of working groups and interagency commissions related to child welfare activities created in the region. Key areas of collaboration include social abandonment prevention and early detection of child abuse and children’s rights violations, as well as strengthening the system of family-based forms of care for orphaned and abandoned children.

Perm Kray is already successfully implementing several services from the recommended Package of Services developed by ‘A Compass for Childhood,’ including those focused on newborn abandonment prevention, early detection of child abuse and casework. The Package of Services was recommended for use by the Deputy Chairwoman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation in August 2011.

# 'A Compass for Childhood' Makes Its Debut at the Federation Council / November 2011

**The first year results of the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program were presented at the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation**



Photo: NFPCC

*Moderator Valery Sudarenkov, member of the Federation Council Committee on Education and Science, welcomes participants to the meeting, where NFPCC President Marina Egorova and Executive Director Alexander Spivak presented the first year results from the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program*

**'Collaboration with NFPCC allowed us to attract the best Russian experts and provide a fairly high standard of scientific and methodological support in developing the child welfare system and preventing social abandonment. Our experiences in developing the system of children's rights protection in instances of child abuse received high marks by the Government and the Ministry of Health - that is, at the federal level.'**

**– Marina Garmaeva, Deputy Head of the Representative for the Republic of Buryatia under the President of the Russian Federation**

Representatives from the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) President Marina Egorova and Executive Director Alexander Spivak presented the results of the USAID-supported Program 'A Compass for Childhood' to a wide-ranging audience on November 7th, 2011.

The event was held at the upper chamber of the Russian parliament (Federation Council of the Federal Assembly). The topic of the roundtable, 'Best Practices in the Russian Child Welfare System,' provided a perfect opportunity to showcase the successes of 'Compass.' Marina Egorova presented a package of 25 best Russian services for child abuse and social abandonment prevention to a special subcommittee of the Federation Council on child welfare issues, with more than 40 specialists, regional representatives, NGO leaders, and government officials in attendance.

NFPCC staff and experts collected and analyzed over 1,200 practices for work with at-risk families and children from 73 regions of the Russian Federation, accounting for nearly 90% of the territory of the country. Analysis of best practices was conducted using a three-stage model. The first stage involved documenting best regional practices wherein more than 300 were identified. At the second stage, practices were systematized to allow choosing the best of them; this stage cut the list down to 56 services. At the third stage, the NFPCC team chose the final 25 services included in the package, using a family-oriented approach and prioritizing social abandonment prevention, early detection and case management. In early August 2011 Nadezhda Gerasimova, Deputy Chairwoman of the State Duma and 'Compass' Advisory Council Chair, sent out the package of services to the regions with a recommendation for its use.

The roundtable participants recommended that regional legislative bodies consider including the package in the list of regional governmental services for the educational and social protection sphere, and that executive bodies consider supporting NGOs that provide these services.

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# Child Welfare Training Assists Specialists Achieve Goals in Buryatia / February 2012

**'A Compass for Childhood' Activities Reach Child Welfare Workers and Specialists across Buryatia through a Program-developed Center of Excellence**



Photo: NFPCC

*Specialists from the Muiskiy region of Buryatia participate in a workshop on early detection technologies and case work with families, led by NFPCC-trained CoE specialists*

**'The reality is, without necessary skills it is impossible to establish a partnership with families in work. The very first visit to the family for every specialist sets the tone for further work with that family. We focused on this in the workshop.'** - I. Chepak, senior specialist, Center for Work with Families and Children of the Zheleznodorozhny district of Ulan-Ude

'Recently I haven't shown as much patience as needed in my work with clients...I could already feel that something was not right in my practice, that I was beginning to fall away from proper technologies.' So begins the specialist of the Center for Work with Families and Children from Ulan-Ude, Irina Chepak, who was one of the more than 70 specialists trained last fall through the USAID-supported initiative, 'A Compass for Childhood.'

Through the Program, three inter-regional Centers of Excellence (CoE) are being established in Russia, to provide methodological support, training and access to best practices for family and child service providers. The first Center is located in Buryatia, and began training specialists almost immediately, in the fall of 2011. For those working in child welfare and implementing new technologies in early prevention and early child abuse detection, the work can be not only emotionally taxing, but lonely without professional support networks. The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Moscow partnered with the Republic of Buryatia to remedy the obstacles to providing best practices, including access to the newest technologies, training, and especially, creating a community of support among child welfare workers.

Training for the specialists occurred in stages – allowing them access to a wide range of topics. Participants learned assessment techniques to gauge the risk of abuse within a family, on establishing trusting relationships and forming partnerships with families, case-work planning and preventing emotional burnout in social workers.

Participants noted the relief of being able to come together with colleagues for discussion, and emphasized the need for training, especially for those working alone in farther-away regions, where they are badly in need of support and the ability to consult on difficult cases with colleagues.

The CoE is changing the way social work is approached through disseminating best practices and forming a resource hub of child welfare activity for the district. Further development at the CoE will include training professional teams comprised of trainers, supervisors and social project planners, who will actively disseminate and implement new technologies and best practices in the region.

# NFPCC Supports Irkutsk Child Protection Initiative / February 2012

**A Compass for Childhood' is expanding its influences in regions throughout the Russian Federation. Recently USAID partner the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has been assisting Irkutsk Oblast in its child protection goals through the use of program-developed technologies**



Photo: NFPCC

*Child welfare specialists in Irkutsk in September 2011 receive training in child abandonment prevention services developed through the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program. NFPCC expert Nina Koroleva conducted the training*

**"The materials you have provided are going to be used in our further work in creating and developing a regional child protection system, and implementing current technologies in prevention." – V. Voblikova, Vice Chair of the Government of Irkutsk Oblast**

The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) is expanding the use of early detection and preventive technologies in the regions through its four-year program, 'A Compass for Childhood.'

In December 2011, NFPCC President Marina Egorova was invited to join the Steering Committee of the Irkutsk Oblast Governor on Issues of Child Rights Protection and Social Abandonment and Abuse Prevention.

NFPCC has been active in the region in supporting its child protection goals. Last year the Irkutsk region began a three-year program, 'Tochka Opory.' As part of this program regional authorities addressed to NFPCC to analyze the child protection processes in the region and identify problem areas and shortfalls with a view to create a comprehensive system of assistance to children and families. NFPCC partnered with the local Ministry of Social Development, Custody and Guardianship to conduct research into the state of the social abandonment prevention system and the provision of methodological support for the program. NFPCC provided training in Compass-developed techniques to law enforcement officials, various child welfare authorities, agencies and specialists last year.

More recently, in the fall of 2011, a group of child welfare specialists and agency leaders traveled to Buryatia, where one of the three inter-regional Centers of Excellence created through 'A Compass for Childhood' is based, to witness the work being accomplished through the Program. Afterwards, Irkutsk expressed its intention to implement services developed as part of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program.

Marina Egorova's membership in the Steering Committee of the Irkutsk Oblast Governor is one more step forward in promoting child protection best practices throughout the Russian Federation, and increasing the visibility of NFPCC as a leading child welfare think-tank.

# International Partnerships Provide Excellence in Training to Child Welfare Service Providers / May 2012

## Center of Excellence Teams Undergo Training on Effective Supervision



Photo: NFPCC

*Moscow CoE team members discuss clear communication strategies with Ruby Johnston of IHS. Below, potential Perm CoE team members pose with Ms. Johnston at the end of three days of training*

**'The team found especially valuable the chance to work out general conceptions of the main functions of supervision, including supportive, educational and normative supervision. Many participants noted that before this workshop, they had only heard a one-sided view on the function and use of supervision.'** – Vera Kozharskaya, Director of the Perm NGO, 'Vector' and CoE team leader

A core component of the 'A Compass for Childhood' being implemented by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, is the creation of regional resource centers (Centers of Excellence) for child welfare specialists. Three CoEs will be created across the Russian Federation – one in the Republic of Buryatia, one in Moscow, and one in the Urals-based city of Perm. Key to the successful functioning of the centers is strengthening capacities of its teams, which are responsible for the dissemination and implementation of best practices in child welfare.

A particularity of the evolving Russian social services sector is that many people occupying management-level positions in the transitioning social services system were originally trained as psychologists and therapists. One of their greatest needs has been access to information and training in supervision of social workers and proper management approaches to provide adequate support and increase effectiveness in work with families.

With that in mind, NFPCC arranged for potential staff in Perm and in the city of Moscow to undergo training in this area. The two three-day trainings were conducted by a colleague from the Compass program's American partner organization, the Institute for Human Services based in Columbus, Ohio. Ruby Johnston, the Director of International Field Programs for IHS, offered the teams her years of experience in child welfare and leadership training.

Participants learned about personal communication styles, learning styles, ways of identifying and assessing situations which call for a different approach, and communication techniques to make clear and effective leaders. With regard to staff development and assessment, participants learned about troubleshooting low performance and distinguishing between worker performance and competence.

Compass is making inroads in training CoE personnel. Similar training will be held in the Republic of Buryatia through the Institute from Human Services in the fall of 2012.

# Conferencing to Build a Better, Standardized Child Protection System / May 2012

**The USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program brought together NGOs, government officials and child welfare practitioners for a three-day national conference in building an effective and comprehensive child welfare system**



Photo: NFPCC

*Alina Levitskaya, Director of the Department of Upbringing and Socialization of Children at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, presents data and new legislation regarding orphaned and abandoned children in Russia in the conference hall of the Administration of the President on August 25, 2012. In addition, Ms. Levitskaya is an Advisory Council member of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program*

**"It is only through the use of standards that... the credibility of new programs and services can be verified. Standards influence and transform the way we live, work and communicate. They fuel the development and implementation of best practice programs and services to ensure safety, permanency and well-being of children and families."— Ruby Johnston, Director of International Field Operations, Institute for Human Services, Columbus, OH, USA**

On April 25-27, 2012, NFPCC held a national conference on 'Government Policy in Child Welfare: Legislation, Standardization and Practice.' Collaborators in the conference were the Federal Ministries of Health and Social Development, Education and Science, and Internal Affairs. The conference was included into a series of events involved in the draft package of measures to facilitate child welfare reform being developed by the Russian government.

The conference particularly highlighted the interim results of NFPCC's 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, which aims at developing the Toolkit for Regional Planning based on the analysis of best national practices in child welfare and corresponding standardization of services for child abuse and social abandonment prevention (minimal recommended package of 25 services). An opening plenary and discussion panel with presentations launched the event, which was held at the conference hall of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation. Representatives from the Federation Council (upper chamber of Parliament); the three Federal Ministries listed above; the Ministry of Economic Development; the Civic Chamber; UNICEF; the Center for Fiscal Policy; and others, presented. Panel participants discussed a number of issues related to standardization of child and family services, including common challenges and necessary steps forward in forming a comprehensive, secure and effective child protection system.

Topics for the following two days of workshops and roundtables included early detection of child abuse, suicidal behavior and its prevention in children and adolescents, and supporting foster families raising children with deprivation disorders. NFPCC's Library on Social Abandonment Prevention and draft interactive map of best Russian practices in child welfare were also presented to the audience.

Participants spanned the expert community of child welfare practitioners and NGOs, federal and regional government authorities. Over 200 participants from 60 regions across Russia attended the three-day event. Guest speakers included the representatives from the Republic of Armenia and the United States of America.

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# Center of Excellence Reaches out to Local Leaders in the Republic of Buryatia / May 2012

**There are three child welfare Centers of Excellence, each serving a separate Russian federal district**



Photo: NFPC

*Tatyana Vezhevich, Children's Rights Commissioner for the Republic of Buryatia, addresses Compass Chief of Party Saeed Burkhanov and other participants of the presentation of the Buryatia Center of Excellence*

**'The creation of a Center of Excellence in Buryatia is one of a series of steps to strengthen the Republic's child welfare system. NFPC's attention to the development of preventive services in the child protection field and training specialists in innovative technologies in the Republic of Buryatia speaks of Buryatia's accomplishments in this area. For my part, I am ready to collaborate with the Center of Excellence for the sake of our mutual goal: protecting the rights of children.'** – Tatyana Vezhevich, PhD, Children's Rights Commissioner for the Republic of Buryatia

During its second year, the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program is achieving successes in key areas of program implementation. Activities include the creation of three interregional CoEs, which are designed to be platforms for the dissemination of child welfare best practices, child welfare resource centers and training. The first CoE region to be announced was the Republic of Buryatia; it was chosen through a competition which focused on regions' commitment to implementing innovative technologies and the level of support provided by regional governments.

The CoE is being created on the base of the Republic's Informational and Methodological Center. A special team of experts have been undergoing intensive training from specialists both in country and abroad, and is now gearing up to begin functioning in full force to reach out to organizations and specialists across the district. To that end, regional government authorities and NGOs, whose involvement and cooperation are pivotal to the Center's success, gathered to hear a high-level presentation of the Center of Excellence at the Child and Family Services Agency by Center Director Elena Sadykova. Afterwards, a lively discussion on the Center's development was held.

Sadykova noted: 'I am fully confident in the competence and preparedness of our team of specialists. We set as our first task increasing the professional qualifications of child welfare specialists across the Republic of Buryatia through continuing education.'

Key participants included the Commissioner for Children's Rights for the Republic of Buryatia and representatives from various government ministries, including the Department for the Social Protection of the Population. 'A Compass for Childhood' Chief of Party Saeed Burkhanov and other core Compass staff were in attendance. Other regions selected to host Centers of Excellence are Moscow and Perm Kray.

## **'A Compass for Childhood' Advisory Council Reviews Accomplishments and Looks Ahead to Future Needs / May 2012**

**The second meeting of the Advisory Council for 'A Compass for Childhood' announced the creation of three Centers of Excellence and continuing work on developing service standards**



Photo: NFPCC

*Nadezhda Gerasimova, a deputy of the State Duma, leads the second Advisory Council meeting for the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program*

**"We worked with all regions in the Russian Federation, many who see problems in their own regions and are using the materials and giving their suggestions and recommendations. This is a colossal work, work which NFPCC took upon themselves to do: they broke down the existing problem and created preventive measures necessary for families where there are problems." –Nadezhda Gerasimova, Deputy, State Duma, and Advisory Council member**

At the last Advisory Council meeting of the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program in April 2011, the results of the Program's first year – a package of 25 recommended preventive services in child welfare, were presented and approved. Councilwoman Nadezhda Gerasimova, a deputy of the State Duma, announced her intention to send the Compass-developed Package to the regions with a recommendation from the State Duma for their use.

At the second Advisory Council meeting, which took place on May 17, 2012, NFPCC President Marina Egorova and NFPCC Vice President Alexander Spivak discussed Program accomplishments to date. After the package of services was distributed to the regions, NFPCC received a large volume of positive responses, from nearly every region in the Russian Federation with the exception of five or six. Several indicated their intent to distribute the materials to agencies, NGOs and authorities in the region working in the sphere of child protection.

NFPCC has continued to use feedback from the regions to continue to adapt program standards, fulfilling recommendations from the first Advisory Council meeting. Other activities and major achievements of the Program include: beginning work on continuing education programs for specialists implementing services, working with regional governments to determine budgets and cost estimates for services, and establishing the infrastructure for three Centers of Excellence in Perm, Moscow and the Republic of Buryatia. The three Centers are a core component of Program success, as they will be training sites for professionals, child welfare best practice resource centers, and dissemination sites for Program technologies.

Participants discussed new legislation and the growing need for service standardization in the regions and effective monitoring to streamline provision and inter-agency communication. Compass efforts continue to address deficits in these areas across the Russian Federation.

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# Russian and American Child Welfare Professionals Develop New Interaction Mechanisms / July 2012

**The Second Russian-American Child Welfare Forum, held in Chicago on June 27-30, 2012, was designed to build lasting partnerships between child protection leaders and specialists from both countries**



Photo: APSAC/NFPCC

*Two plenary sessions and 11 workshops injected a multidisciplinary focus into the dialogue by offering in-depth information about various aspects of child maltreatment identification and intervention in law, medicine, law enforcement, social work, psychology, and mental health*

**“The global challenges which the majority of countries are confronted with today, including Russia and the United States, formulate new tasks for us. The undisputed priorities for us are protection of families and children and children’s rights, and early prevention of family crisis and child abuse.” – Pavel Astakhov, Children’s Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation**

Over 200 participants from Russia and the U.S. gathered in Chicago to continue dialogue on pressing issues related to child welfare that started in summer last year as part of the First Russian-American Child Welfare Forum held on Lake Baikal. This year’s Forum – second in a row – was held at the 20th Annual Colloquium of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC).

From the Russian side the Children’s Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation and NFPCC organized the event in close collaboration with their American counterparts – the U.S. Department of Justice, APSAC, and the Institute for Human Services (IHS), Columbus, OH. The Forum was also supported by the Embassy of the United States in Moscow and USAID/Russia.

The topics selected for the Forum span the continuum of child protection issues, and included child protection law and public policy; prevention of child maltreatment and child placement; supporting and sustaining families; crimes against children; the role of the Internet and mass media in raising awareness and combating crime; innovative service programs to help maltreated children and their families; child advocacy; identifying and responding to child trauma; assessing risk and ensuring children’s safety; permanency planning; and the development of a well-trained, professional work force. The workshops combined presentations with facilitated discussions to promote joint dialogues and problem solving by participants.

“NFPCC presented the Package of 25 Preventive Services for Children and Families, developed as part of the USAID-supported ‘A Compass for Childhood’ Program, which was broadly discussed at the Forum. The discussion showed that the priority of preventive work is acknowledged by specialists at all levels in both our countries. The work implemented by NFPCC since the first Forum, allowed us to involve many Russian experts in the development of the package of service standards,” says Alexander Spivak, NFPCC Vice-President.

## Ohio's Experience in Child Welfare Put to Use to Improve Lives of Russian Children / July 2012

**The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC) and the Institute for Human Services (IHS) organized a study tour for Russian specialists and managers involved in child welfare to the state of Ohio as part of the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program**



Photo: IHS/NFPCC

*IHS founders, Judith S. Rycus, PhD., MSW, Program Director and Ronald C. Hughes, PhD., M.S.c.S.A., Director (center), deliver a welcoming speech to the Russian delegation in Columbus*

**“The Delegation from Russia exemplifies the international movement to end permanent orphanage placement as the only means of responding to child maltreatment and is working to build community based supportive services for families.” - A. Troy Miller, President Pro Tempore of the City Council of Columbus, Ohio**

A recent U.S.-based study tour for Russian child welfare regional government representatives was initiated by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Moscow and hosted by the Institute for Human Services in Columbus, Ohio. The tour proved to be another effective step in building lasting partnerships to tackle challenges that both nations face. IHS is a leading child welfare agency in the development and provision of competency-based training for child protection service providers in Ohio, several states, Canada and internationally.

A nine-member Russian delegation visited a variety of programs in the state of Ohio, which has been hailed by other states and nations for success in training child welfare professionals and finding homes for hard-to-place children. High-level officials from various Russian regions came to Columbus to witness firsthand the work being accomplished, as far as caseloads, disability issues, finances and regulations are concerned. The agenda of the tour included exploring mentoring and job training skills systems for older foster children and services designed to keep troubled families together.

“We can't be just kind to children and give them our hearts, we need to be professional and have best practices that will help them in life,” said Alexander Spivak, NFPCC Vice-President, at a welcoming brunch at the Statehouse hosted by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, which is responsible for running the state's child welfare and foster programs.

One more trip through the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program is planned in the fall, this time for specialists from Program-established interregional Child Welfare Centers-of-Excellence in Buryatia, Perm, Moscow and Volgograd, and from regions assisting in dissemination of the NFPCC-developed Toolkit for Regional Planning.

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# The U.S.-Russia Dialogue in Child Welfare Gains Momentum / July 2012

**Members of the Child Welfare Section of the Civil Society Working Group of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission met in Chicago to continue overwhelming dialogue and experience sharing on a wide range of issues**



Photo: APSAC/NFPC

*Pavel Astakhov, Children's Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation, delivering a speech at the meeting*

**A group of experts from NFPC, who are implementing a USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood Program', actively participate in the work of the Child Welfare Section. Says Alexander Spivak, NFPC Vice-President: "The Russian Government considerably widened the support for child welfare services by providing federal funds to the regions for a number of activities to improve the situation with families and children in need of assistance. The most important of them are social abandonment prevention, family support, training and consultancy to service providers."**

Yet another meeting of the Child Welfare Section of the Civil Society Working Group of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission took place on June 26, 2012, in Chicago as part of the Second Russian-American Child Welfare Forum. The Russian delegation at the meeting was headed by Pavel Astakhov, Children's Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation; and Konstantin Dolgov, Commissioner on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The U.S. side was represented by Thomas O. Melia, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the U.S. Department of State; and Andrew Oosterbaan, Head of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Andrew Oosterbaan reminded the audience about significant breakthrough since the creation of the Child Welfare Section and mentioned a series of events that took place in Moscow, Washington, and Lake Baikal, highlighting the importance of joint programs and projects. In his speech Pavel Astakhov stressed that early prevention of family crisis and child maltreatment is an undisputed priority of child welfare in Russia. Konstantin Dolgov noted that the Child Welfare Section considerably moved forward in its work for the benefit of children in both countries. He also said that the issues related to the protection of children's rights have an utmost importance in Russia and the U.S.

A group of leading NGO representatives and child welfare professionals participated in the meeting, including Alexander Spivak, Vice-President of the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPC), and Ronald Hughes, Director of the Institute for Human Services, President Emeritus of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC). Specialists presented at the continuum of child protection issues including prevention of family crisis, child alert system, protection of rights of physically challenged children, promotion youth safety through public awareness, etc. A proposal on establishing a Center for Missing and Exploited Children in Russia was also discussed.

## Child Welfare Center of Excellence Will Open in Volgograd / August 2012

**The Center of Excellence in Volgograd will be the third child welfare resource center created through the Program in the Russian Federation**



Photo: volganet.ru

*Deputy Chairman of the Government of Volgograd Oblast Yuri Sizov congratulates NFPCC President Marina Egorova on signing an Agreement on Cooperation, which includes a new collaborative initiative to establish a Center of Excellence in Volgograd. The Agreement was signed on August 8, 2012*

**'We will arm ourselves with your experience and through our joint efforts we will try to make it so that every child can be happy.'**  
– Yuri Sizov, Deputy Chairman of the Government of Volgograd Oblast, thanking President Marina Egorova for the significant work in child welfare being accomplished through NFPCC

On August 08, the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPCC), the implementing partner of the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, signed an Agreement on Cooperation with the Government of Volgograd Oblast. As per the Agreement the parties will cooperate in the sphere of children rights protection, social abandonment prevention, and family forms of care for orphans and children without parental care, including the establishment of a regional child welfare Center of Excellence (CoE).

The agreement was signed by Yuri Sizov, Deputy Chairman of the Government of Volgograd Oblast. It gives Compass the green light to scale up local best practices in serving vulnerable families based on case management approach.

In a few months, following comprehensive technical assistance from NFPCC, the Center will kick off its first hands-on training program for social services providers in Volgograd and neighboring regions. The CoE will teach how early prevention could be provided through regular, interdisciplinary local-level councils that meet to develop, monitor and evaluate social rehabilitation activities for clients.

These activities focus on mobilizing community resources and offer a variety of supportive services, including a home assistant, crisis consultations from a psychologist, social and monetary benefits, after-school or nursery care and tutorial assistance for children, strengthening social networks, peer support and AA groups, better employment and housing opportunities, referrals to health care, if needed, etc.

Similar services are provided in Buryatia which, in 2011, became Compass' first pilot region. The interdisciplinary approach which Compass has introduced in Buryatia indicates a high level of social work professionalism and is similar to the system working in most states of the U.S.

# First 'Social Cluster' for Child Welfare in Russia to Open in Tambov / August 2012

**NFPCC and the Administration of Tambov Oblast launched a joint project to create a child welfare 'social cluster'**



Photo: State Broadcasting Company "Tambov"

*The concept for the project was presented and discussed in July 2012 at a meeting of the Coordination Council on Social Abandonment and Child Abuse Prevention, chaired by Vice Governor of Tambov Oblast, Nikolay Gordenkov*

**'Using a cluster approach, a concept taken from the realm of economics, in the social sphere is particularly relevant today, especially where complicated social problems must be addressed by involving many participants from various agencies and levels of authority,' says Marina Egorova, NFPCC President**

The social cluster on child welfare, which is named 'An Innovative Regional Child Protection System for Tambov Oblast,' will be the first of its kind in Russia. The project was developed by NFPCC specialists and experts as part of the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the child welfare and social abandonment prevention system in Russia.

Work objectives for the new cluster were presented by NFPCC president Marina Egorova. The cluster will be instrumental in increasing the level and quality of life of children and families and providing comprehensive rights protection. Marina Egorova noted that new technologies in early detection of at-risk families, and innovative services on social abandonment prevention will become the cluster's priority work. In addition, competition-based mechanisms for financing service providers rendering timely assistance to families with children using progressive technologies and innovative standards will be introduced. Special attention will be paid to advancing the region's system for training professionals working with children.

The Administration of Tambov Oblast and NFPCC chose the governmental budget organization Center for the Development of Family-Based Forms of Care for Orphaned and Abandoned Children, 'For the Future,' to be responsible for the cluster's development and coordination of the activities of all participating parties. NFPCC anticipates that the social cluster on child welfare will start functioning at full capacity by 2016. Through the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program, NFPCC will provide the new project with not only methodological assistance, but will also allocate financial support and other resources to train specialists in innovative child welfare technologies.





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