

CHILDHOOD

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FOUNDED BY H.M. QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN



PARENTS AND BABY UNIT

Chernigiv oblast, Ukraine

NARRATIVE REPORT

April 2006

1. 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the Project: Parents and Baby Unit.

Location of the Project: Chernigiv oblast, Ukraine

Reporting perion of the Project: October 2005 – April 2006

Project partners:

1. EveryChild, Ukraine
2. Chernigiv Oblast State Administration, represented by Family and Youth department
3. The State Centre for Social Services for Youth

Project overall goal

To prevent the institutional placement of babies by young mothers and fathers living in Chernigiv oblast, Ukraine

Project objectives

To develop and operate a Parents and Baby Unit with the capacity for 8 temporary accommodation placements for young parents and their babies;

- To prevent abandonment of babies among young parents;
- To develop a social support mechanism for parents placed in the Unit;
- To raise public awareness of institutionalisation and social problems faced by young parents;
- To carry out a PR campaign providing the community with information about the Unit as a successful mechanism for prevention of child abandonment and institutionalisation;
- To lobby national government to establish Parents and Baby Units within the whole country.

Target group:

- Young mothers and fathers who are at risk of/intend to abandon their babies;
- Students
- Parents
- Graduates of childcare institutions
- Young pregnant women who are at risk of abandoning their babies.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Partnership established and legal basis for the project implementation

The project is being implemented in partnership with both governmental and non-governmental organisations. On June 30th, 2004 EveryChild Representative Office in Ukraine, the State Centre of Social Services for Youth and Chernigiv Oblast State

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Administration signed the trilateral Agreement on implementation of the social project “Establishment of Parents and Baby Unit”.

On February 1st, 2006 four-lateral Agreement of co-operation was signed between Chernigiv oblast state administration, represented by Department for Family and Youth and Healthcare Department, Chernigiv Oblast Centre of Social Services for Youth and EveryChild Representative Office in Ukraine. Its purpose was to put into operation Chernigiv Parents and Baby Unit and to enable its effective functioning. In terms of the agreement, which is an important document for interagency co-operation, the Unit has elaborated and approved:

- Mechanism of referring clients to Parents and Baby Unit
- Mechanism of social support of the clients based on the world best practices
- Strategy of action and prospects for the Unit development in the framework of babies’ abandonment prevention
- Monitoring and Evaluation system of the Project (within each 6 months)

In order to ensure that referrals are received from throughout the oblast Everychild Ukraine initiated the signing of individual agreements between the Parents and Baby Unit and each rayon/city administration. These agreements ensure that the local administrations maintain responsibility for clients referred and are committed to providing continuing care and social support in the longer term.

Mechanisms for signed agreements between the Unit and it’s individual clients have also been developed including agreement of the rights and responsibilities of both parties and adherence to internal regulations. Standards and rules for periods of stay in the Parents and Baby Unit are develop and set up.

2.2 Building refurbishment

The major repair works at the Parents and Baby Unit have been completed and approved by the Act of State Construction Inspection Board on 27 March 2006.

In accordance with the Act the Commission approved
Building external refurbishment
Building basement works, water proofing
Building project documentation



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Building external refurbishment included:

- External wall battening
- Roof repairs and water proofing
- Installation of the drain-pipes and snow-holders
- Fencing the territory
- Setting the gates, asphaltting the backyard

Works on refurbishment were challenged by the encountered problem of hydroisolation. Situated in the lowland, the building has been dilapidated and uncared for the last several years. At present front side of the building is fortified, the source for water penetrating has been found and eliminated.

2.3. Furniture

Each parents room contains a shower, a toilet and all the necessary furniture and equipment that is required for parents and their babies. There is a shared kitchen, where parents cook and eat and a separate room for laundry with washing machines and drying located there. One room is installed a lounge room that each of the residents can use as a recreational space to have rest, watch television and socialize with the other residents of the unit. This room is equipped with computer which has an access to the Internet.



2.2 Recruitment and training of social workers

Following an open recruitment and selection process involving representatives of the EveryChild office, a team of 7 social workers commenced work on January 15, 2006 (under the Agreement of co-operation between Chernigiv Oblast State Administration, represented by Department for Family and Youth and Healthcare Department, Chernigiv Oblast Centre of Social Services for Youth and EveryChild Representative Office in Ukraine dated February 1st, 2006).

Training programme has been developed and two courses have been completed.

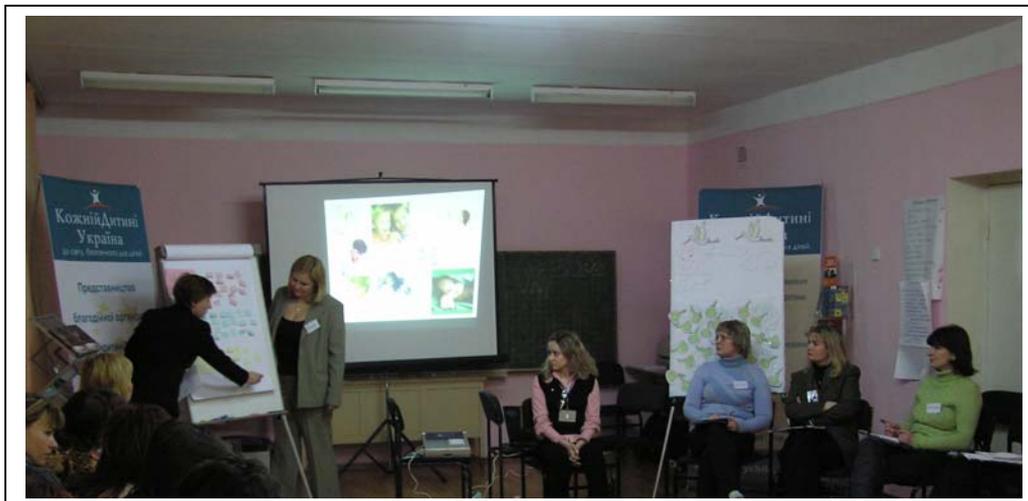
**Parents and Baby Unit,
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19-20 January, 2006

Prevention of infant abandonment: working through the model of Oblast centre for social and psychological assistance “Mother and Child together”

20 - 22 March, 2006

New models of social work on the prevention of early orphanhood.



Further trainings will be provided during the next six months:

- Strategies for Early Intervention
- Features of social work in maternity hospitals
- Interdepartmental co-operation
- Work with the young mothers

2.5 Interagency co-operation

In order to consolidate the interdepartmental co-operation and to enhance collaboration between Parents and Baby Unit and experts of the Project a range of round tables and presentations were conducted together with:

- 1) Healthcare Department (Chernigiv oblast state administration)
- 2) Heads of Municipal Maternity Houses
- 3) Heads of the Departments for Families and Youth (rayon state administrations)
- 4) Heads of the rayon and city Social Centers for Families, Children and Youth

A series of meetings were organized and carried out with Head of Chernigiv Oblast Administration, Chernigiv City Mayor, Head of Departments and Directorates for children and youth Chernigiv Oblast Administration. The EveryChild Country Director Volodymyr Kuzminsky and the Head of the State Social Services for Family, Children and Youth, Svetlana Tolstoukhova participated in all the meetings.

2. 6 Lobbying national government to establish Parents and Baby Units within the whole country.

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Amendments to the Regulations authorizing the activity of Parents and Baby units were approved by a Decree of Chernigiv oblast state administration. These amendments were subsequently introduced to and adopted by the State Social Services for Family, Children and Youth.

The model established by the Chernigiv Parents and Baby Unit will be extended throughout Ukraine. Similar Parents and Baby Units are planned to be opened by the end of 2006 in:

- Khmel'nytska Oblast;
- Autonomous Republic of Crimea;
- Kyiv Oblast;
- Lviv Oblast;
- Sumy Oblast

All these centres are integrated into the system of the State Social Services and financed by the state.

2.7 PR campaign providing the community with the information about the Unit as a successful prevention mechanism of child abandonment and institutionalisation.

The official opening of the Parents and Baby Unit is planned on May 12, 2006. It is devoted to the Mother's day (celebrated on May 13) and International Family Day (celebrated on May 15). In addition to the local community in Chernigiv and representatives of the partner organisations other guests have been invited including the Prime Minister of Ukraine Yuriy Yekhanurov, wife of Ukraine's President and Chairwoman of supervisory council of International Charitable Foundation "Ukraine – 3000" Kateryna Yushchenko, Regional Director of the International Charitable Organization "EveryChild" Joanna Baskott (UK), Executive Director of World Childhood Foundation Anna de Geer (Sweden), representatives from the Government of Ukraine, governing authorities of Chernigiv oblast, mass media representatives, others.

It is assumed to ensure best coverage of the event through coordinated actions and efforts. Shortly before the Unit opening a press release will be distributed to local and national press agencies and media.

Information campaigns and competitions are being held in local schools. Informational booklets and leaflets have been developed and disseminated to healthcare and socialcare offices providing information about the activities of the Parents and Baby Unit activities.

A book by the EveryChild expert Richard Carter, called "Family Matters. A study of institutional childcare across Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union" was translated and published in Ukrainian and has been widely disseminated both locally and nationally.

3. Project activities for next reporting period:

For the next reporting period the following activities are planned:

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- Provide training for social workers and other Unit's staff
- To conduct an information (PR) campaign within the community to inform the general public about the activities of the Unit and to attract attention to the issues surrounding child abandonment.
- To place young parents with their babies.
- To develop self-help groups of young parents.
- To present results of Project implementation and evaluation to mass media and public.
- To conduct a project evaluation.