

IN FOCUS

Money Follows Child

> *The Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports and State Social Services for Family, Children and Youth are currently addressing the issue of adequate funding allocations for orphans and children deprived of parental care.*

This activity is supported by the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children" through a partnership agreement with the State Institute for Development of Family and Youth signed on 14 July, 2006. One of the objectives of this partnership is to complete an analysis of best practice for allocation of funding according to the "money follows child" approach, as referred to in the Decree of the President of Ukraine # 1086 of 11/07/2005 "On priority measures targeted at social protection of child-orphans and children deprived of parental care". An equally important objective is to conduct a comparative analysis of costs for maintaining children in residential care of different types, foster families and family type homes and costs of family support services in Kyiv oblast.

As **Yuriy Dzhygyr**, EU Project Financial Expert points out "money following the client" approach in social service delivery - or "money following the child" in our case - is contradictory to the existing system in Ukraine where currently "money follows the service providers". The new approach is to create opportunities and incentives for the "contractor" (statutory authorities responsible for funding the services) to adequately assess demand for services and provide them in the most efficient way. Within this the authorities would protect the interests not of the selected service provider (residential care state or privately owned institution - foster family or family type home), but of a specific client - namely the child. Such a change is a complicated process, taking into account that this requires reform of those agencies providing services and development of relationships between them and the contractor. The reforms will

also support "new non-institutionally based service providers (including private ones)".

Although there is a special regulation for allocation and distribution of state social welfare benefits for children placed at family type homes and foster families (Resolution of the Government of Ukraine #106 of 06.02.2006), the issue of funding for children placed in other types of care - residential institutions, guardianship placements - has not yet been resolved. As a result an analysis of costs for maintaining orphans and children deprived of parental care in various types of care will provide the baseline information required to further develop financial guidelines for providing welfare benefits and thus to the development of recommendations for improving the current legislative framework.

The assessment has three stages: during May-July 2006 the analysis of current financial provisions for orphans and children deprived of parental care placed in guardianship and foster families, family type homes and residential care institutions was conducted; during August-September the development of mechanisms for allocating funding according to the "money follows child" approach which would serve as the basis for the draft government resolution on introduction of single mechanism of financial provision for such children; during the third stage (October-December) a public discussion of the draft mechanism will be convened with the involvement of professionals and community representatives. The objective of the final assessment stage is to conduct a range of seminars to discuss the "money follows child" mechanism and publish relevant methodological guidelines.



The assessment outcomes are expected to provide conclusions regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of statutory welfare benefits to the above groups of children, and alongside to develop a relevant mechanism in order to resolve current financial issues in line with the "money follows the child" principle.

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INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Study Visit to Latvia

> *Representatives of Ukrainian Ministries and the working group responsible for the development and implementation of the national and local legislative framework for the "money follow child" mechanism undertook a Study Visit to Latvia in August 2006 within the framework of the EU Project.*

The Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports established links with the Ministry for Children and Family Affairs in Latvia specifically because Latvia has recently reformed their childcare system in accordance with the EU standards. Introducing the Ukrainian delegates to the achievements of their Latvian colleagues is in line with the objectives of the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children".

The group included delegates from the Ministries of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports, Finance, Labour and Social Policy, from Kyiv Oblast State Administration and the State Institute for Development of Family and Youth, and they were introduced to Latvian best practice in the field of legislation, policy development, structural change for management of services and financial supports and mechanisms for vulnerable children.

The Study Visit aimed to demonstrate the links between legislation, practice and financing in a country which, as part of the former Soviet Union, has a shared history with Ukraine but which is now an EU Member State.

Both formal and informal meetings allowed participants to evaluate the practical and legislative developments made in Latvia and identify opportunities for their application in Ukraine. **Elena Lashkova**, Social Services Manager in Rezekne told that their social services had been established 10 years previously to provide cash benefits. Now following a Danish model they provide a comprehensive range of services under one roof including a children's shelter (similar to mixed type home), a family support center, a crisis center (where families in crisis and teenage mothers with their babies can be accommodated for up to 6 months) and a day center for children with special needs. The Service is supported and funded by Rezekne city council and a single entry approach is a part of the local cost effective model. For the local council it is more effective to

establish such a centre rather than construct and maintain residential children's home or place the child in some other district.

This has also improved team work and communication between specialist social workers from the different services which in turn supports them in managing and solving problems and difficult issues. Information on cases in need of social intervention (phone calls from police office, from the neighbors and/or extended family or anonymous calls) is referred to the social worker acting as the point of single entry.

being moved into adoption or guardianship. In Latvia this problem was successfully resolved and the Ukrainian delegates received copies of the relevant legislation which supports this mechanism. Delegates also had the opportunity to meet representatives of



The meeting at Riga Municipality.



Participants of the Study Tour and representatives of the Orphans' Court at the footsteps of Riga Municipality.

The social worker's responsibility is to make an initial assessment and refer the case further to a relevant service within clearly defined timescales. Children can stay in the Children's Shelter until they are 18 years old. The majority of children under four years old are adopted and although it is more difficult to find adoptive parents for older children many of them have weekend and holiday foster care and this may turn into an adoption at a later stage. Although the state budget does not provide wages for foster cares for weekends and holidays, the shelter provides an allowance for food and clothes.

Fedir Hrytsenko, Deputy Director of the State Department for Adoption and Protection of Child Rights said that reforms taking place in the sphere of child welfare began with the Decree of the President of Ukraine #1086 on Protection of Children's Rights. According to the government by-law #106 of 06.02.2006 social welfare benefits are to be provided to orphans and relevant costs to foster parents and parents of family type homes. However a new legislative framework is needed to include children currently placed in residential care and/or

the Ministry for Children and Family Affairs, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Health Care in Latvia to discuss the approach to provision of services for vulnerable children and families and the similarities between the agencies and state structures in both countries which have

responsibility for childcare. It was also interesting for delegates to note that in Latvia local authorities regulate the "money follows child" mechanism with the principal aim of providing children with family-based care and mainstream secondary education, professional education at technical colleges and continuum of higher education. Alongside the above the municipal government ensures all welfare benefits, including picking up children and bringing them to school and there is a possibility for a child to be under the jurisdiction of other district authorities. Mr. Hrytsenko noted that the study tour to Latvia generated 4 major conclusions:

1. national adoption is to be the priority (it is planned to provide one-off financial support to parents equivalent to 8 500 UAH),
2. the need for interdepartmental cooperation,
3. using the pilot findings currently carried out in Kyiv oblast and including the amount of costs paid to vulnerable children estimated to two living minimum standards with further replication onto other oblasts of Ukraine,
4. introducing favourable and supportive economic environment for strengthening the efficiency of local government.

The Institute for Development of Family and Youth, EU Project staff, NGOs and Ministerial representatives are currently working on the implementation of the "money follows child" mechanism, as it is required that the money allocated for individual child maintenance could move with the child and not be confined with some specific institution. In Latvia it happens through the national government guarantees being implemented by the local governments. The future administrative-territorial reform in Ukraine provides much hope on successful change of local governments, specifically related to childcare.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

> Methodological guidelines "Social support for families in crisis: 25 Questions and Answers" is being prepared for publication. It will provide practical advice for social workers in their working activities.

October, 2006

> Training "Development of Family Types of Placement" will be conducted out, within the framework of the EU Project, for social workers, employed in Family Support Services. The module will cover the issue of peculiarities of work with children in the process of recruiting foster families and creating FTCH.

> Training on "Reintegration, Socialisation and Support to Care-Leavers" will be conducted out, within the framework of the EU Project, for social workers and managers of Family Support Services, Reintegration Services and directors and staff of residential institutions from the pilot sites. The module will cover the issue of protection of rights of care-leavers and children from families in crisis, their preparation for independence, child participation, support for state agencies and communities regarding employment of care-leavers.

November, 2006

> Training "Protection of Children's Rights as a Priority in Social Work" will be conducted out within the framework of

EU Project, for social workers and managers of Centres for Social Services, senior managers and social workers of village and town councils in pilot rayons. The trainers will discuss the issues of child protection as a professional duty for social workers, and present forms and methods of child participation.

November, 21, 2006

> The innovative models of social services for vulnerable families and Children developed within the framework of the EU Project will be presented to Kharkiv oblast and Kharkiv city administrations for beneficiaries and partners of the Project "Facilitating Reform of Social Services", supported by the UK Government Department for International Development (DFID).

Policy and legislation

It is sad that not all Ukrainian children have a happy childhood surrounded by their family although up to 85% of children deprived of parental care have living parents. Article 52 of the Ukrainian Constitution states that, "maintenance and up-bringing of orphans and children deprived of parental care is the responsibility of the government. The government encourages and supports charity activities maintained in the interest of children". However it is recognised that poor harmonisation and lack of some legislative provisions hinders their implementation in administrative and judicial practice, thus making barriers to the development of family based care. For instance extracts within articles 265-271 of the Family Code stating that extended families or other individuals are to maintain the child deprived of parental care under the condition they are able to provide such maintenance is in conflict with the provisions of laws on social support for children and families and the "money follows child" principle.

Social work in this area can be timely and effective if supported by stable and up to date legislation. In July 2006 Experts of the EU project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children" in cooperation with the Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports have prepared an overview of Ukrainian legislation relating to children. As **Oleksandr Vinnikov**, EU Project Legal Expert states "the objective of this overview is to ensure the development of recommendations regarding amendments to the provisions of current legislation with the view of development of family-type care in Ukraine for orphans and children deprived of parental care".

The overview includes analyses of current legislation in terms of right to provide care for children; the procedure for acquiring carer's responsibilities; persons entitled to act as carers; rights and responsibilities of a carer; breaching the carer responsibilities and penalties incurred; as well as recommendations regarding amendments to child care legislation. This

information will be useful for social workers facing discrepancies of legislation and experiencing complications with a child's placement, as well for the carers who need to overcome barriers when collecting the required documentation.

The overview is planned to be used first of all by the Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports - namely the State Department for Adoption and Protection of Children's Rights responsible for making formal amendments to child care policy. The Department is also responsible for developing the data bank of potential carers, provide monitoring and supervision, methodological support to local authorities responsible for child placements and is entitled to overview child family based placements (Resolution of Government of Ukraine # 367 of 25.03.2006).

To receive the overview of legislation please e-mail hh@everychild.kiev.ua. You may also access the legislation overview at EveryChild Ukraine web-site: www.everychild.org.ua.

Training component

With the aim of strengthening capacity of social services and social workers and contributing to their overall professional development the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children" have planned a programme of trainings and workshops from June 2006 - June 2007. The programme includes workshops on the following topics: "Emergency child protection, prevention of child abandonment, supporting children and families" (Trainers: **I.Zvereva, O.Naumych**, and Trainers of the Training Centre based at Kyiv Oblast Centre of Social Services);

"Reintegration, socialisation and providing care to children in institutions (Trainers: **Gavin Swann, Zh.Petrochko**); "Development of family type care placements (Trainers: **I.Zvereva, Zh.Petrochko**, and Trainers of the Training Centre based at Kyiv Oblast Centre of Social Services). Social workers and managers of early intervention and family support services, health care workers of the pilot regions, social workers of foster care services, services for minors staff, trainers of the training centr, social workers of the reintegration services, directors and staff of the pilot institutions will participate in the training sessions.

This issue of the newsletter contains information provided by Kyievo-Svyatoshyn and Stavyshe rayon Centers of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth, and Brovary city Center of Social Services. We express our gratitude to the Directors of these Centers **Yuliya Pustovgar, Oleksandr Patsiuk** and **Liubov Kvasha**, and also to social workers of the Early Intervention Services **Natalya Myroshnichenko, Liudmyla Mokrytska, Iryna Halych**.



Equipment to the value of EUR 400,000 was granted to statutory social services and local governments in Kyiv oblast working in the interests of children.

> On September 12, 2006 a press-conference dedicated to the transfer of equipment for beneficiaries purchased under the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children" was held.



Liudmyla Nikolayenko, the Director of Kyiv Oblast Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth, receiving the transport vehicles for the centers.

The press-conference was attended by: **Vladislav Milenky**, Deputy Minister of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports, **Vira Ulyanchenko**, Kyiv Oblast Governor, **Volodymyr Vovk**, Deputy Director of State Social Service for Children, Families and Youth, **Elayn Sammon**, Team Leader EU Project and representatives of other agencies working in the field of childcare and family support.

The Department for Adoption and Protection of Children's Rights of the Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sports, State Social Service for Children, Families and Youth, 32 Rayon and Municipal Centres of Social Services for Children, Families and Youth in Kyiv oblast, Department for Family and Youth, Service for Minors, Department of Criminal Militia

for Minors, Department of Education and Department of Health Care under Kyiv oblast state administration will receive equipment and resources within the framework of the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children", including 40 cars, 3 minivans, 40 PCs, 10 laptops, 40 printers, 20 copiers, 1 digital multifunctional copier station and 40 sets of office furniture. The purchase for total value of EUR 400,000 was undertaken in an open and transparent manner through a tender procedure conducted by the Office of the European Commission.



Participants of the press-conference, held on September, 12, 2006, UKRINFORM.

The equipment will serve in the preparation of experts and social workers who work with vulnerable families and strengthen capacity of social services centers providing direct services to most at risk families and children.



32 Centers of Social Services receiving the modern furniture sets, computers and office equipment.



"Our Centre supports 18 families in crisis, living in Pereyaslav-Khmelnysky rayon. These 18 families live in different villages and I have to travel 45 km to see one family and another 35 km to a family in another village. If I had a car I could cover these distances more quickly, spend more time with the clients and increase the numbers of families I can help."

Larysa Bobrovnyk, the social worker of the Family Support Service of Pereyaslav-Khmelnysky Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth.

"If a social worker has an office, equipped with computers, office utilities and modern furniture, this not only motivates him in his work, but also raises his profile in the community where he is helping to solve people's problems."

Iryna Khaschivska, the social worker of the Family Support Service of Brovary City Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth.

"302 disabled children and 15 families with parents who have disabilities live in Brovary city. We invite them to meetings, to attend celebrations and festivities organised by the city but, unfortunately, not everyone can get to the event venues. We hope that this problem will be solved when we can have access to a vehicle."

Liubov Kvasha, Director of Brovary City Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth.

"There are 58 towns and villages in Vyshgorod rayon. Having our own transport will mean we can visit the families we support in shorter time and be much more efficient."

Nataliya Rudko, Director of Vyshgorod rayon Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth.



WORKING ON THE GROUND

News from Irpin city

> The city of Irpin is gradually developing and implementing European standards of social protection and the enthusiasm for new approaches for the protection of children's rights and the rights of families in crisis is obvious. This was noted by the Director of EveryChild Ukraine **Volodymyr Kuzminsky** while signing the partnership Agreement in Irpin on development of new specialised social services within the framework of the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social

Services for Exposed Children and Families". The Agreement was signed on September, 26, 2006 by the Executive Committee of Irpin City Council, the Department for Family and Youth of Kyiv Oblast State Administration, Kyiv Oblast Centre of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth and EveryChild Ukraine. The Family Support Service is already active in Irpin Centre of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth and the Early Intervention Service and Family Care Support Service will start functioning according to the signed Agreement. The system of social services, being

developed in the city, will coordinate and focus local agencies and organisations towards the provision of comprehensive support for the protection of children's rights.



The signing the Partnership Agreement in Irpin.

Success stories

The social workers of the early prevention services have collected case studies of their clients.

> On 1 August, 2006 the head of the neonatal unit based at a rayon maternity hospital reported the admission of Anna, an unmarried pregnant woman usually resident outside Kyiv oblast. Anna already has a son of 8 years and had declared her intention to give up her newborn baby. She had moved to Kyiv oblast to work and was living in very poor conditions. Her parents had been caring for her older son and because of family conflicts they had indicated that they could not support her if she had a second child. The baby's biological father told the social worker that he was not going to acknowledge the baby or support him.

By 8 August 2006 Anna was accommodated in the ward with her baby, breastfeeding and constantly changing her mind about her further actions towards her son. She was provided legal counseling regarding welfare benefits for her older child and was helped to register the baby and received his birth certificate. Anna agreed to keep her baby with her and was referred to the Fastiv Mother and Baby Unit where they could live together temporarily. Anna's parents decided to visit their daughter and new grandson and agreed to help her to look after both children.

This was a case with a successful ending for the baby who was potentially at risk of being brought up in the non-family environment. The early prevention service made every effort to provide psychological and legal support to Anna and strengthen her decision to keep the child.



> Svitlana was 19 when she had her baby in March of this year without medical assistance. After the baby was born she was referred to the post delivery unit of the local hospital who referred her to the social work team. Although both Svitlana and her baby were physically healthy she had no clothes, shoes, toiletries or documentation and ID documents. The social worker helped to arrange her documentation and ensured that Svitlana received all her benefit entitlements. They arranged with the medical staff of the pediatric unit based at central rayon hospital to provide her and the baby with temporary accommodation as it was impossible for her to go back home at that stage because of poor sanitary conditions.

An appeal was launched in the local newspaper and the community responded with clothes, food, money, baby items, etc. The rayon branches of political parties granted baby cot and pram. The social workers provided psychological support and long term counseling for the young mother on parenting skills and child development.

Subsequently the rayon Centre for Social Services for Children Family and Youth referred Svitlana and her son to Fastiv Mother & Baby Unit where they are currently living. The Unit's staff have helped her to find new accommodation and arrangements are underway for Svitlana and her son to move into their new home. They continue to receive support from their social worker.



ABOUT SERVICES

Early intervention services

> Approximately 12-14 thousand of the 100 000 children-orphans and children, deprived of parental care in Ukraine, were abandoned by parents immediately after the child was born.



In 2005 the same story happened to 1200 newborn infants. These infants are the prospective children in long-term care. To prevent babies entering the system an early prevention service has been established to intervene to support mothers and parents to prevent this early infant abandonment. This supports the primary goal of the EU Project "Development of Integrated Social Services for Exposed Families and Children" which

is to reduce the total number of children in residential institutional care in Kyiv oblast. The early intervention service workers carry out family assessment; provide prevention of family crisis which can result in the placement of children into state institutions.

By 1 July 2006 EveryChild Ukraine has signed relevant agreements on project implementation jointly with 24 rayon and 10 city state administrations in Kyiv oblast setting out the establishment of 34 early intervention services involving more than 60 social workers.

The effectiveness of newly established services can be tracked following the outcomes of their activities as for the first half of 2006: out of 464 families (1093 children) that were provided with support the cases of 223 families were successfully closed (478 children) with 16 families (38 children) the intervention was not successful. The remaining cases are still open and families continue to receive support from social workers.

Project Assistant **Oleksandr Romanuha** reports that the establishment of a range of

counselling units based at the maternity units in rayons and towns of Kyiv oblast has contributed to reducing the numbers of infants abandoned. The counselling units provide the following services: social and pedagogical support, social and economical services and advocacy. The so-called "schools of young families" also play an important role in prevention of child abandonment by providing preparation of mothers-to-be for low-stress delivery, training on neonatal care and child development under 3 years of age.

Social workers in Kyiv oblast registered 44 cases of child abandonment over the first 6 months of 2006. Resulting from the support of early intervention teams 25 parents have changed their mind and 26 babies, including one set of twins, consequently have avoided abandonment; out of those 5 mothers with their babies have been placed in Kyiv oblast Mother & Baby Unit located in Fastiv. Nevertheless 19 babies were moved to Kyiv baby homes collecting infants from the whole oblasts.

The early prevention services offer a broad scope of support to their clients: they teach parenting skills, advocate for the arrangement of welfare benefits and entitlements, initiate contact with extended families, provide counselling support and act as an intermediary for the client with other agencies. Specially trained social workers are able to make an essential input into family preservation and prevent children from being institutionalized.

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