

**Meeting “Children on the Street”**

**Ministry of Education, Russian Federation  
Council of the Baltic Sea States -  
Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk**

**Moscow 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2003**

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# Meeting on Children in the Street Moscow 27-29 April 2003

## List of Participants

### Denmark

Jeannie Hegstrup	Streetworker and Director, "Tjek-Punkt"
Margit Kundsén	Co-ordinator, "UFC Bøn og Familier", Member of the WGCC.

### Estonia

Ruth Soonets	Paediatrician, Head of Tartu Child Support Centre
Kristel Altosaar	Social Worker, Tartu Child Support Centre
Anni Vaheer	Psychologist, The Member of Board, Tallinn Child Support Centre

### Finland

Jari Virtanen	Special Adviser, "Save the Children, Finland"
Anne Helena Hujala	Senior Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Member of the WGCC.

### Germany

Daniela Schmidt-Ndasi	Scientific Collaborator, Department of Family Affairs, Information Centre Child Abuse and Neglect, German Youth Institute.
Matthias Heinsohn-Krug	Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Kinderschutz- Zentrum.
Manuel Florian	Psychologist/Psychotherapist, Member of Counselling Team, Child Protection Centre.

Hanna Permien  
Psychologist, Social Researcher in the Department “Youth and Youth Services” in the DJI.

## **Iceland**

Bragi Guðbrandsson  
Director of the Governmental Agency for Child Protection, Member of the WGCC.

## **Latvia**

Diana Vasilane  
Director of the Union for Children, Youth and Family Rights – “BEJATA”.

Laila Balode/Agnese Strauta  
Head of Counselling Department, Centre against violence “DARDEDZE”.

Raitis Zvanitajs  
Director of the NGO “Riga City Mission”

Inette Ielite  
Director, Children’s Forum. Chair of the WGCC

## **Lithuania**

Linas Slusnys  
Director, National University Hospital Child Development Centre.

Zydrė Arlauskaitė  
Program Coordinator, Psychologist, Children Support Center.

Olga Kazliene  
Director, Old City’s Children Day Center

Jurgita Sajeveciene  
Public Relations Practitioner, Project Coordinator, National University Hospital Child Development Center.

## **Norway**

Svein Mossige  
Senior Researcher, Norwegian Social Research (NOVA)

Morten Schau  
Psychologist  
Senior Advisor, Department of Children and Youth, Royal Ministry of Children and Family Affairs DFD-BUA.

Geir Øivind Borgen  
Paediatrician, Head of Project, Norwegian National Resource Centre on Child Sexual Abuse (NRSB).

## **Poland**

Magdalena Wantola  
Senior Advisor, Ministry of Education and Sports, Member of the WGCC.

## **Russia**

Galina Kupriaynova  
Director of the Department of Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, Member of the WGCC.

Tatjana Petrova  
Deputy Director of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Tamara Rostovskaya  
Head of the Social Programmes Unit of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Irina Govorova  
Deputy Head of the Social Programmes Unit of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Roman Alexandrov  
Head of the International Unit of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Svetlana Trifonova  
Director, "Yaroslavl Regional Youth Informational Center".

Marina Miroshkina  
Director, Centre for Development of the upbringing systems, Orekhovo-Zuevo, Moscow Region.

Alexander Poltorak  
Head of the programming-computer education and development of the Youth Foundation "Street Children".

L. Schshukina  
A. Yermolaev

Tatjana Barsukova  
Director Social-rehabilitation Centre for adolescents "Otradnoye".

## **Sweden**

Linda Lindenau

National Coordinator, The National Board of Health and Welfare.

Lena Banck

Psychotherapist, Director of Centre, BUP-Elefanten, Child and Adolescent psych. University Hospital.

## **CBSS**

Lars Lööf

Senior Advisor, Head of Children's Unit, CBSS

Eva Ekmeahag

Senior Advisor, Children's Unit, CBSS



## **Background paper**

### **Concepts, Definitions, Issues and resources available.**

In June 2002, at the meeting of heads of states in St Petersburg, it was seen as a primary consideration for the states in the region to co-operate on the issue of children in the street:

“The Heads of Government note with satisfaction the establishment of the Child Centre for IT-based exchange of information and experiences regarding children at risk and welcome the broadening of this co-operation taking into account i.a. the problem of the large number of street children, homeless children and children in social care institutions.” (From Chairman’s Conclusions St Petersburg summit)

In January the same year President Putin delivered a speech mentioning the state of Russia’s children and encouraging the nation to speak up for the children deprived of adult supervision and care. This in turn paved the way for several initiatives on the political and administrative level in Russia and in the states in the region.

The Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk also decided to include Children in the Street in the Activity Plan which was finalised at the WGCC meeting in Helsinki in September 2002.

### **What are street children?**

In reports and research the term “street children” is used in different ways. In the mind and the perception of the public, the term is usually seen as referring to children that have no home. However, most research and programmes now work with both the term “children of the street” and “homeless children” and thus the term “street children” is used to define a group of children that may not be homeless, but children who spend most of their time on the street. Homeless children is seen as a sub group of the bigger group.

The term “Social capital” has become widely used when looking at the assets that children living in and on the streets create. I include below a passage from an article written by Svetlana Stephenson where she argues for the inclusion of this term in the discourse on Children in the streets:

“Research into street children is mainly associated with the developing countries – particularly those in Latin America and South Africa. The concept of street children encompasses both homeless and street working children, with a greater emphasis on family poverty and child labour than the issues of homelessness. The paradigm of disaffiliation is still very strong. ‘Most writing about children and young people living on urban streets in developing coun-

tries assumes, or even insists, that they live in disorganised, illegal misery—they are described as psychologically and irretrievably damaged, unable to form relationships as the children that they are, and definitely destined for emotional, social and economic failures the adults they will become' (Ennew, 1994). These ideas are being challenged, both from the perspective of children as economic actors, often vital to the survival of their families (Bar-On, 1997) and by looking at the attempts of children to reconstruct the lost families and create self-supportive networks (ie Aptekar, 1988, Swart, 1990, Lucchini 1993 and 1996, Ennew 1994).

One important recent study, which combined a consideration of pathways by which young people come to the streets with a study of the role of social relationships in the street trajectories, was conducted in Canada by Hagan and McCarhy (1997). Although the authors concentrate on the subject of street youth involvement in crime, they suggest a way to bring together the consideration of economic and sociogenic factors through the application of the concept of social capital. They mainly use the concept of social capital to show the deficiencies of families and communities, which lead the youth into the streets. But they also demonstrate how individuals become embedded in criminal communities and 'recapitalize' their diminished social capital". (Stephenson, Svetlana: Street children in Moscow: using and creating social capital, Sociological Review, 2001)

## **Definitions**

"Any girl or boy for whom the street ...has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults."

(Ortiz et al., 1992, taken from Tatiana Balachova)

The European Network on Street Children Worldwide use the following definitions:

### **“Street Children”**

These are children or adolescents, mostly younger than 18 who live and/or work on the streets, victims of extremely difficult conditions of life – such as abandonment, exploitation and sexual abuse – and who consequently are in need of specific protection.

### **“Children ON the Streets”**

These children, who contribute to their families' support and survival, work in city streets while continuing to maintain strong links with their family environment, including sleeping at home.

### **“Children OF the Streets”**

These children, who have left home, live on the streets day and night. They maintain limited or non-existent contact with their family environment and often struggle to survive entirely on their own.

### **“Children at Risk”**

This definition covers a wide range of young people exposed to risk as a result of their way of life: victims of exploitation in the family environment, inmates from penitentiary institutions, survivors of human or natural catastrophe (war)...(<http://www.enscw.org/>)

## **How many Children live on the street?**

All reports state that there are no reliable data on the number of street children. Below I have listed three numbers taken from different reports published on the subject. All these figures are extremely vague and whenever mentioned they are referred to as being only an approximation. Some countries have statistics on children living in dysfunctional families or children living under other forms of stress, but nowhere is it possible to find official figures on the prevalence of children in the streets.

### **Russia**

- Estimated from 1 to 4 million street children
- Estimated 50,000 children run away from their homes every year  
(beginning of 1999, 34.9 million children aged 0-17 in Russia)  
(Taken from Tatiana Balachova)

Russian State prosecutor Vladimir Ustenov during parliamentary hearings in the Duma on the state of Russian Children: Feb 13<sup>th</sup> 2002:

- Approximately 300 000 children were found during January 2002 living in railway stations, at airports and in the cellar of buildings.

### **Latvia**

“In 2000 there were 154 934 children in Latvia living in disadvantaged families. This is 29% of all children aged 0 – 17. the number of children living in dysfunctional families was 18 821.

...

These figures indicate that the number of street children in the country is likely to increase because, as pointed out previously, street children come predominantly from dysfunctional families.” (Lukasinska, Inga: Street Children in Latvia: Problems and solutions. (2002))

### **Estonia:**

“In Estonia we have 100 – 200 street children and 4 000 – 5 000 children in the streets (result of round table)” (From report published by the King Baudoin Foundation in 1999: “Street Children – Children in the Streets)

### **Latin America**

In Latin America it is estimated that out of the **40 million** children that live in the street approximately 75% have family links. The remaining 25% of the street children in Latin America are the ones that are also homeless children. Casa Alianza in Latin America that works mainly with the rehabilitation and reintegration of children in the street estimate that domestic violence and abuse, including sexual abuse are the most common causes behind children’s decision to lead a life on the street.

In describing street children there is usually some form of assessment of

- Links to the family
- Level of deviant behaviours
- Working on the street

If the child is living permanently in the street or if he or she spends most of his time in the street there is an acute risk of further exploitation. Many reports look at the correlations between children in the street and other forms of exploitation. In interviews with children in the street, sexual abuse, physical abuse and crime are seen as major factors behind the child ending up on the street. However, abuse and crime does not stop as the child starts living on the street. The following excerpt may be seen as an example of the extreme situation children on the street face.

A 1991 study of 143 Guatemalan street children by the Centre of Orientation, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Casa Alianza reports:

- 100 percent of children interviewed had been sexually abused, of whom 53 percent were abused by family members; 5.95 percent were abused by friends; 2.7 percent by neighbors; and 46 percent by people they didn't know.
- 64.1 percent of the girls reported that the first person with whom they had sexual relations was their father or mother; 10.2 percent, uncle or aunt; 10.2 percent, brother or sister; 2.6 percent, friend; 5.1 percent, boyfriend or girlfriend; 7.7percent, other.
- 7.7 percent of the boys reported that the first person with whom they had sexual relations was their mother or father; 22.1 percent, aunt or uncle; 5.7 percent, sister or brother; 6.7 percent, friend; 51.9 percent, other. None reported having their first sexual relationship with a boy or girlfriend.
- None of the children used contraceptives.
- About 70 percent had one to two partners per day; 4.2 percent had three to four partners per day; and 25.1 percent (92.31 percent girls), reported more than four partners per day.
- 93 percent admitted to having contracted sexually transmitted diseases (STD), including: genital herpes, 78.3 percent; gonorrhoea, 46.65 percent; papillomatosis, 27.3 percent; vaginal trichomoniasis, 13.29 percent; chancroids, 11.7 percent; and scabies, 69.9 percent.
- 100 percent of the children used inhalants, such as glue and solvents, as their drug of choice. 96.5 percent use drugs daily; 3.5 percent, weekly.

In most countries street children are seen as a group of children that have run away from home, have been turned out of their homes or have run away from institutions. The decision to become a “street child” not being a very active one, but seen by the individual child at that point in time as the only remaining alternative.

Street Children, Children in Shelters and Institutions:

Who are They?

- 90-95 % of children in orphanages are “social orphans” who have a living parent (UNICEF, 1997)

- 98 % children in shelters have a living parent  
(Balachova, 1994)

## **Reports on Children on the street in the Region of the Baltic Sea States**

ILO have published research reports on the situation of “Working Street Children” in Moscow. The report is quite extensive and may be downloaded via the following link: [http://www.ilo.ru/publications/childlabour/Moscow\\_Report\\_Eng\\_1.pdf](http://www.ilo.ru/publications/childlabour/Moscow_Report_Eng_1.pdf)

For a report on the situation of Street Children in Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania it may be well worth reading the report published by the King Baudoin Foundation in 1999: “Street Children – Children in the Streets”

The report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.kbs-krb.be/files/db/en/PUB%2D1020%20Street%20children%20Children%20in%20the%20streets.pdf> (As this is a terribly long link it may be difficult to copy. If so, you can always start at [www.kbs-krb.be](http://www.kbs-krb.be) and click your way to free publications. Under S you find the study.)

The above report has then been followed by another called “Street Children – Children in the Streets 1998 – 2000. Achievements and lessons learned”. This report may be downloaded in the same way at

<http://www.kbs-krb.be/files/db/en/PUB%5F1211%5FStreet%5FChildren%5F1998%5F2000.PDF>

In the richer countries, being a street child is something you become for a very brief time. All definitions however come together when they define street children as children living without adequate adult supervision and care. All work and programme aimed at this group also recognise that these children are at risk of exploitation and abuse since they are left to fend for themselves in a subculture where criminality and exploitation are common ingredients.

“Children live and work on city streets throughout the world, often begging or stealing to survive. Many choose street life as the alternative to poverty or violence at home. It is a harsh choice - with constant threats of hunger, exploitation, violence, abuse and even death.

Some children work on the street to earn money for themselves or their family. They often return home at night. Others have little or no contact with their family and must cope without adult support. These children are often involved in prostitution and drug abuse and consequently there are higher risks of sexually-transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.” (Childhope web site <http://www.childhopeuk.org/>)

## **Example of Press coverage of Children on the street**

Please find included below a press clipping from 1999. It is an example of the kind of reports regarding street children that are common in the west.

Sunday, February 21, 1999:

## **Russian children run gantlet of street life and neglect at home**

More than 15,000 in Moscow alone are 'homeless'

### **Associated Press**

MOSCOW — Bath time is over, and 20 girls face one another in two straight, silent lines along opposite walls of a corridor. Half are combing their hair. The others watch; their heads were shaved for lice as soon as they arrived at the juvenile detention center.

This is a crossroads for Russia's high-risk children — between the tough life on the streets, the stifling existence in state-run institutions, and the alcoholism, violence and neglect some fled at home.

The kids are in for everything from begging to homicide. From here, some will be sent to prison, others to orphanages, and many right back to their families — only to run away again.

Many families have weathered Russia's rocky transition from communism — raising bright, healthy and motivated children despite the social upheaval. But others have proven unable to cope, flooding state institutions and the streets of Russian cities with neglected children.

"I don't want to go home. I don't want to go back on the streets, either," protests Julia, a sullen 15-year-old in black patent-leather pumps who was arrested after she ran away from her family and spent three months working as a prostitute.

The economic slumps and legal chaos of the eight years since the Soviet collapse have brought long-standing problems of child neglect out into the open.

Ragged children trudge through Moscow's subway trains, carrying hand-lettered signs with appeals for money. Kids in thin jackets and torn boots huddle over steam vents on the wintry streets, sniffing glue, drinking vodka, killing time.

Juvenile crime in Moscow doubled between 1990 and 1993, then fell back. Over the past year it's been rising again, and the crimes are becoming more violent and indiscriminate, said Tatyana Maximova, director of the Juvenile Crime Prevention division of the city police department.

"In the old days, if we had five killings a year by juveniles, it was considered an emergency. Last year, we had 48," Maximova said.

Most of the young criminals come from poor families. They've ended up in the same bind as their parents: Their mandatory eight grades of education have given them no skills and no chance of finding a job.

The post-Soviet law on education has allowed parents to keep their children out of school, in exchange for a promise to teach them at home.

"Children 11 and 12 years old end up on the streets, washing windshields. They have papers saying they're studying at home, but who is there to teach them?" said Maximova, the juvenile cop.

And so they join the army of street children, many of whom who ended up homeless when their parents sold apartments and houses. Marginalized families — the poor, the mentally ill, alcoholics — were the first targets of crooked real estate speculators in the early 1990s, when their free housing suddenly became a valuable commodity.

Oleg Zykov, a psychiatrist who heads the No to Alcoholism and Drug Abuse foundation, estimates there are about 15,000 street children in Moscow alone.

The number of children surrendered to state custody by families has also skyrocketed, doubling over the past five years to some 113,000 annually, according to Human Rights Watch.

More and more youngsters are ending up in state custody only after spending time on the streets.

"Earlier it was easier, a lot of children were coming from their homes," said Natalya Kuryshova, the deputy director of the Saltykov children's home, a 140-bed orphanage in a cheerfully decorated brick building just east of Moscow.

The number of mothers and fathers stripped of parental rights because of child abuse has grown. In Moscow alone, those rights were taken from more than 1,000 parents in 1998.

Some of those children will be placed with relatives. Others will enter the state system, where they're marked for life, often with incorrect diagnoses of mental and physical problems that haunt them into their adult years.

(<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,30012502,00.html>)

## Web sites on Children on the street

Numerous web sites on the issue of street children exist. Some are very comprehensive including both programmes and articles. However, very little is there regarding our region. From Pangea web site the following is taken:

"The United Nations has been attributed as estimating the population of street children worldwide at 150 million, with the number rising daily. These young people are more appropriately known as community children, as they are the offspring of our communal world. Ranging in age from three to eighteen, about 40 percent of those are homeless--as a percentage of world population, unprecedented in the history of civilization. The other 60 percent work on the streets to support their families. They are unable to attend school and are considered to live in "especially difficult circumstances."

Increasingly, these children are the defenceless victims of brutal violence, sexual exploitation, abject neglect, chemical addiction, and human rights violations." [http://pangaea.org/street\\_children/kids.htm](http://pangaea.org/street_children/kids.htm)

From the WHO site, the following is taken:

"The WHO Street Children Project aims at improving the health, welfare and quality of life of street children. The focus of the project is on developing the capacity of local organizations to **prevent, assess and manage psychoactive substance use problems among street children**. Through extensive research and training activities and as a contribution to local capacity building, WHO developed a training package for street educators. The contents of the package constitute an inventory of basic factors that are key in implementing interven-

tions targeting street children in relation to substance use, sexual reproductive health and HIV/AIDS and STDs”.

The Street Children Training Package and other draft materials can be found via the link: [http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/topic\\_prevention2.htm](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/topic_prevention2.htm)

On the web there is also a discussion forum on street children at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/STREETKIDS/>

They describe themselves as follows:

“ENYA STREETKIDS is a dynamic international ecumenical discussion forum and resources centre. There are over 3,000,000 children and youth trying to survive on our community streets around the world. Take time to care and join us in making the world a safer and more just place for them to live in. This STREETKIDS Forum is open to current and former street children / youth; and those interested in promoting awareness of the harsh realities of street children/adolescents and other young people at risk world-wide. Primary focuses includes: \* increasing the knowledge of the realities in specific countries; \* the development of inter-active training courses with street youth and streetworkers; \* sharing of experiences and resources in the fields of street youth-led relationship programming, social, justice and peace issues, youth ministries; along with \* highlighting of burning issues and current international developments.

There will also be:

- \* updates on the ENYA streetkids programmes , projects, internships and exchanges;
- \* current developments in inter-active training courses;
- \* announcements of partner organisation's events;
- \* announcements of funding organisations, criteria and deadlines;
- \* information about new resources available for youth - social, justice and peace issues and ministries; and,
- \* commentaries on the burning issues and current youth peer ecumenical developments.

Managed by the Ecumenical Network for Youth Action (ENYA) which is active in 50 countries around the world. Your participation is welcome.”

On the Childcentre web site some material is posted regarding projects focusing on street children. [http://childcentre.baltinfo.org/projects/street\\_children/](http://childcentre.baltinfo.org/projects/street_children/) The ongoing broadening of our network of competence centres should make it possible for us to include organisations and professionals working with street children in order for them to benefit from the expertise existing in the present network, and for the present network to benefit from the added expertise and experience that these professionals and programmes contribute with.



## Issues to consider in the country presentations

At the meeting in Moscow there will be approximately 10 minutes for each country to make a very brief report on how the issue of children in the street is dealt with nationally. Below are some tentative questions that may be taken as a starting point for these presentations. They are by no means exhaustive nor do they cover the entire field of knowledge or experiences that you may have in the different countries. Those of you preparing these short presentations are asked to put them in writing so that we may later on distribute them and make them available as a report from the meeting in Moscow.

1. Are there any estimates of the number of street children in your country?
2. Are children in the street or street children seen as a problem in your country?
3. Is protective legislation in place making it possible for social authorities to take care of children without adequate adult protection?
4. What obstacles are there in your country for children in the street to be cared for?
5. Reports indicate that children in the street are there for different reasons. What main reasons are generally mentioned when this is discussed in your country?
6. What happens to an orphaned child in your country?
7. Reports regularly mention institutions as one major recruitment base for children in the street. How do institutions in your country deal with children running away from institutions? Do you know of any follow up study of children who leave institutions ahead of time?
8. Are there special programmes in place in your country dealing with children in the street? What kind of assistance, care or other services are these programmes trying to address?
9. Are there ongoing policies or lobbying initiatives regarding children in the street in your country? What do these initiatives concentrate on?
10. Do you think there are specific aspects on children in the street that would benefit from closer co-operation between professionals in the Baltic Sea States?

Stockholm on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2003

Lars Lööf  
Senior Advisor  
Children's Unit  
Council of the Baltic Sea States  
Secretariat



**The Russian Ministry of Education and the Centre “Otradnoye” in co-operation with The Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk within the Council of the Baltic Sea States have the honour of inviting you to:**

**A meeting on  
“Children on the streets”  
with the participation of Competence Centres, the National Co-ordinators and members of the Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk in the region of the Baltic Sea States**

**Moscow, Russian Federation 27<sup>th</sup> to –29<sup>th</sup> of April 2003**

## **Programme**

**Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> of April,**

Individual arrival during the days to Hotel “Rossiya”, Moscow.

## Monday the 28<sup>th</sup> of April

9.00 – 9.30

**Transfer** from Hotel “Rossiya” to the Russian State Humanitarian University (Moscow, ul. Miusskaya, 6)

9.30 – 10.00

### **Opening of the meeting:**

Director of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation – **Ms. Galina Kupriyanova**

Senior Advisor to the Children’s Unit, **Mr Lars Lööf**

Chairperson of the WGCC **Ms Inete Ielite**

10.00 – 10.45

**Street children in Russia today:** Presentation of “The situation in the Russian Federation with neglected and homeless children: background, stages of the rehabilitation work development, institutions working in this field, current situation, programmes and projects”

- Director of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation – **Ms. Galina Kupriyanova**
- Director of the “Yaroslavl regional youth informational centre” – **Ms. Svetlana Trifonova**
- Director of the Centre for development of the upbringing systems, Orekhovo-Zuevo, Moscow Region – **Ms. Marina Miroshkina**
- Head of the programming-computer education and development of the Youth Foundation “Street Children” – **Mr. Alexander Poltorak**

10.45. – 11.05

**Coffee break**

11.05 – 11.35

**Presentation from Latvia,** The situation for Children in the street: ”Research, programmes, institutions and recent developments.” **Ms Diana Vasilane, Director Orthodox Shelter for Street Children, Riga, Latvia.**

11.35 – 12.05

**Presentation from Germany** National research on the situation of Children living on the street. **Dr Hannah Permien, Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Munich, Germany**

12.05 – 12.45

Presentations of the different **national experiences** of research and programmes relating to children living in the streets. National co-

ordinators, competence centres or representatives from the WGCC. Three countries 10 min's each

**12.45 – 13.45**

**Transfer** to socio-rehabilitation centre “Otradnoye”

**14.00 – 14.45**

**Lunch**

**15.00 – 18.00**

**Short presentation** of the work of the “Otradnoye” centre: Experiences in different fields of programmes and projects etc.  
Presentation of the project “**The net of social contacts**” Director **Ms Tatiana Barsoukova** together with the School of Social Work at Stockholm University

**18.00 – 19.00**

**Transfer** to hotel

**20.00**

**Dinner**

## **Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup> of April**

**9.00 – 9.30**

**Transfer** from Hotel “Rossiya” to the Russian State Humanitarian University (Moscow, ul. Miuskaya, 6). (For most this means checking out of the Hotel before departure).

**9.30 – 10.30**

Presentations of the different **national experiences** of research and programmes relating to children living in the streets. National coordinators, competence centres or representatives of the WGCC. Five countries 10 min's each

**10.30 – 11.30**

**Discussion** on the use of the Childcentre cooperation in general: How to see the development of the work when new areas are included? Should working groups on the different topics be formed?

**11.30 – 12.00**

**Coffee**

**12.00 – 13.30**

**Discussion** of the presented material

- Legislation based on children living in the streets

- How to use the existing collaboration to improve and increase networking between the countries and professionals in the region.
- Identification of gaps and tentative suggestions for possible programmes for building collaboration and competence on the issue in the region.
- Other questions connected with the co-operation between the Competence Centres and the National Co-ordinators

**13.30 – 14.15**

Continued **discussion**, conclusions and follow up

**14.15 - 15.15**

**Lunch**

**15.15 – 16.00**

**Closing** of the meeting

Individual departure in the evening or the following day.

**Министерство образования Российской Федерации и социально-реабилитационный центр для несовершеннолетних «Отрадное» при сотрудничестве с Рабочей группой по вопросам взаимодействия по проблемам детей группы риска Совета государств Балтийского региона имеют честь пригласить Вас на**

**Встречу  
“Дети на улицах”  
с участием Компетентных центров, Национальных координаторов и членов Рабочей группы по вопросам взаимодействия по проблемам детей группы риска Совета государств Балтийского региона**

**Москва, Российская Федерация, 27–29 апреля 2003 года**

## **Программа**

**Воскресенье, 27 апреля**

Индивидуальное прибытие в течение дня в гостиницу “Россия”, Москва.

**День:** Культурная программа, включающая осмотр достопримечательностей.

**Вечер:** Ужин

**Понедельник, 28 апреля**

**9.00 – 9.30** Доставка из гостиницы “Россия” до конференц-зала

**9.30 –10.00** **Открытие встречи:**  
Представитель Министерства образования РФ  
Старший Советник Детского Отдела г-н Ларс Лооф  
Председатель РГДЦ Инете Иелите

<p><b>10.00 – 10.45</b>  <b>улицах в</b>    проблемы, этапы    учреждения    ситуация,</p>	<p><b>Текущая ситуация с детьми на</b>    <b>России:</b> Презентация: истоки    развития реабилитационной работы,    социальной реабилитации, текущая    программы и проекты.</p>
<p><b>10.45. – 11.15</b></p>	<p><b>Перерыв на кофе</b></p>
<p><b>11.15 – 12.00</b></p>	<p><b>Презентация Латвии, Эстонии или</b>  <b>Литвы</b> (требуется подтверждение) по  ситуации с детьми на улицах  “Исследования, программы,  учреждения и текущие развитие  ситуации”.</p>
<p><b>12.00 – 12.45</b></p>	<p><b>Презентация Германии или Дании</b>  (требуется подтверждение) по вопросу  национального исследования ситуации  с детьми, живущими на улицах.</p>
<p><b>12.45 – 13.30</b></p>	<p><b>Обед</b></p>
<p><b>13.30 – 14.30</b></p>	<p><b>Доставка</b> в социально-  реабилитационный центр «Отрадное»</p>
<p><b>14.30 – 18.00</b>    учреждением, опыт    проектов.        социальной</p>	<p><b>Короткая презентация</b> работы центра  «Отрадное»: Знакомство с    работы в сфере различных программ и    Презентация проекта «Сеть социальных  контактов» (совместно с Высшей    школой Стокгольмского Университета)</p>
<p><b>18.00 – 19.00</b></p>	<p><b>Доставка</b> до отеля</p>

**20.00**

**Ужин**



## Вторник, 29 апреля

9.00 – 9.30 конференц-	Доставка из гостиницы «Россия» до зала
9.30 – 10.30 стран на других	Презентации представителей РГДЦ Балтийского региона по проблеме детей улице (опыт работы и исследования в странах) - 4 страны по 10 мин. каждая.
10.30 – 11.00	<b>Перерыв на кофе</b>
11.00 – 12.00 тематике	Продолжение выступлений по данной теме 4 страны по 10 мин. каждая.
12.00 – 13.00	<b>Обед</b>
13.00 – 14.30 представленного на	<b>Обсуждение</b> материала, встрече <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Существующая законодательная база по детям, живущим на улице</li><li>• Как использовать существующее взаимодействие для совершенствования и увеличения объема работы с данной категорией детей среди профессионалов стран Балтийского региона</li><li>• Определение пробелов и пробные предложения по возможным программам для установления взаимодействия и компетентности между странами Балтийского региона по этой тематике</li><li>• другие вопросы, связанные со взаимодействием между</li></ul>

Компетентными Центрами и  
Национальными Координаторами

**14.30 – 15.00**

**Перерыв на кофе**

**15.00 – 15.45**

заклучения и

**Продолжение обсуждений,**

окончание встречи

**15.45 – 16.00**

**Закрытие встречи**

Индивидуальный отъезд вечером или на следующий день.

## **Presentations and interventions**

### **Children on the Street –**

Senior Advisor Lars Lööf

**A priority within the  
Co-operation on Children at Risk  
Council of the Baltic Sea States**

**Senior Advisor**

**Lars Lööf**

**Children's Unit**

[lars.loof@cbss.st](mailto:lars.loof@cbss.st)

<http://childcentre.baltinfo.org>

### **Children at Risk**

**Priorities:**

**Sexual exploitation in all its forms**

**Children living in the street**

**Children in institutions**

**Young offenders and self destructive behaviour in children**

### **The situation for Children at Risk in the Baltic Sea Region**

**Officials in some countries in the region describe the situation as catastrophic:**

### **Russian State prosecutor Vladimir Ustenov during parliamentary hearings Feb 13, 2002:**

**Approximately 300 000 children were found during January 2002 living in railway stations, at airports and in the cellar of buildings.**

## **The Children's Unit**

**An opportunity to counteract the suffering of children victimised by extremely harmful circumstances**

**A possibility for governments to act, not just react.**

**An opportunity for NGOs to interface with other organisations**

**An opportunity to implement and promote international conventions, action plans and agreements.**

**<http://childcentre.baltinfo.org>**

## **Why is Dissemination of information important?**

**Making initiatives known**

**Calendar of events**

**Easily accessible information on children at risk in the region**

**Information on NGOs in the region**

**Possibility to publish material in different languages**

## **The issue of Children on the Streets is connected to other priorities**

**Sexual Exploitation**

**Commercial Sexual Exploitation**

**Children in Institutions**

**Children that commit crimes**

## **Importance of Professional Networking to diminish the effects of exploitation and abuse in a child**

**Abuse diminishes the child's capacity to be the agent of her/his life.**

**May result in longlasting cognitive distortions**

**Produces emotional distress and linked acting out behaviour**

**Makes the child loose trust in adults and in the world**

**Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation**  
**Ministry of labour and social development of the Russian Fed-  
eration**

**The information of The Department on Youth Policy of  
Ministry of Education of Russia  
and Ministry of labour and social development of  
the Russian Federation about a situation in the  
Russian Federation with children and youth of  
group of risk: a history, development of rehabili-  
tation work, the establishments working in this  
sphere, the current situation, programs and pro-  
jects**

Paper delivered by **Ms. Galina Kupriyanova**, Director of the Department on Youth Policy of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation

## **Moscow**

**2003**

Problems of the childhood, questions of protection of the rights and interests of children are becoming priority for the world community as a whole, and for Russia in particular. In Russia, after its connection to the Convention on the rights of the child in 1990, a number of significant program documents and laws fixing principles and norms of the Convention has been accepted. Within 90th the complex of measures on support of families with children conformably to new social and economic conditions was developing. The new Family code of the Russian Federation is accepted, the basic directions of the state family politics are authorized.

Children's homelessness and neglect is direct result of contemporary social and economic destabilization, decreasing of a cultural and moral potential.

The problem of neglected children is a complex social problem. Children rejected by society, require various kinds and forms of help and support. We believe, that the main decision of the problem of neglect is the organization of system of preventive measures. They should include measures of help of social (material), psychological, pedagogical and legal character.

Homeless children, children of streets, street children, children of group of risk are synonyms of the name of the same category of children for which the street became the house in a broad sense of this word. They are teenagers who by virtue of the certain circumstances of their life are subjected to negative external influences on the part of a society and its criminal elements.

In Russia " Children of streets " can be divided into some categories:

1) Neglected or homeless children;

- Neglected children - the minors, who are out of control or attention from the part of adults;

- Homeless children - neglected children, not having place of living;
- 2) Children engaged in vagrancy or begging;
- 3) Children using drugs or psychotropic substances;
- 3) Children breaking the law.

These disturbing evidences speak about necessity of perfection of the state system of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors, protection of their rights.

The decree of the President of the Russian Federation from June, 1, 1992 №543 “About measures on realization of the World Declaration on maintenance of a survival, protection and development of children in 90th” in 1992 is recommended to bodies of executive power of the Russian Federation “to promote the creation and strengthening of a territorial network of establishments of new type of the social help to family and children”.

One of the most significant and effective elements of a current politics is the creation in Russia essentially new, personal-guided system of establishments of social service of family and children. Their primary goal is social support, rendering of social-medical, psychological, pedagogical, social-legal services and material aid, carrying out of social adaptation and rehabilitation of the citizens who are taking place in a difficult vital situation, preventive maintenance of family trouble, homelessness, neglect of children, the individual help to family and children who have appeared in crisis vital situations.

Dynamical development of system of establishments of social service of family and children was promoted by acceptance in 1995 of the Federal law “About bases of social service of the population in the Russian Federation” which had created legal base of their functioning.

Bodies and organizations of system of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors have to provide within the limits of their competence observance of the rights and legitimate interests of minors, to carry out their protection against all forms of discrimination, physical or mental violence, insult, rough manipulation, sexual and other operations, to reveal minors and families which are taking place in socially dangerous situations, and also immediately to inform the following bodies:

- 1) **Office of Public Prosecutor** - about infringement of the rights and freedom of minors;
- 2) **The commission on affairs of minors and protection of their rights** - about

the revealed cases of infringement of the rights of minors on education, work, rest and other rights;

3) **Trusteeship and guardianship authority**- about revealing the minors who are staying without care of parents or lawful representatives or taking place in conditions, their life representing treat, to health or interfering their education;

4) **Social welfare authority** - about revealing the minors requiring for the help of the state in connection with neglect or homelessness, and also about revealing the families which are taking place in socially dangerous position;

5) **Police office** - about revealing parents of minors or their lawful representatives and other persons severely addressing with minors and (or) involving them in fulfilment of a crime or antisocial actions or making in relation to them other illegal acts, and also about the minors who have made an offence or antisocial actions;

6) **Healthcare authority** - about revealing the minors requiring for inspection, supervision or treatment in connection with the use of alcoholic drinks, narcotics, psychotropic or stupefying substances;

7) **Educational authority** - about revealing the minors requiring for the assistance of the state in connection with autocratic leaving from children's homes, boarding schools and other children's establishments or in connection with the termination for the disrespectful reasons of occupations in educational establishments;

8) **Authority for youth affairs** - about revealing the minors taking place in socially dangerous position and requiring in this connection in rendering assistance in the organization of rest, leisure, employment.

For last 8 years number of establishments of social service of family and children has increased in 25,6 times. As of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2002 the quantity of establishments of social service of family and children on the territory of the Russian Federation is 2744. Among establishments of social service of family and children are:

- 490 social shelters for children and teenagers;
- 437 territorial centres of the social help to family and children;
- 396 social - rehabilitation centres for minors;
- 237 rehabilitation centres for minors with limited opportunities;
- 42 centres of the psychological and pedagogical help to the population,
- 25 centres of the help to children who have stayed without care of parents,
- 19 centres of the emergency psychological help by phone, etc.

The greatest development have received such establishments, as the social-



rehabilitation centres for minors, the rehabilitation centres for children and teenagers with the limited opportunities, the centres of the social help to family and children, social shelters for children and teenagers.

As structural divisions of establishments of social service of family and children function 754 stationary branches for minors, 296 branches of rehabilitation for children - invalids, 430 branches of preventive maintenance of neglect of minors, 298 "telephone hotlines".

Number of the citizens who have received help in establishments of social service of family and children, have made in 2002 about 9 million person, that on 11 % has exceeded parameters of the last year, including more 4 million minors (in 1999 - 3,2 million, in 2000 - 2,5 million).

Number of children directed on adoption, under trusteeship, on care in 2002 has made about 4000 person; about 90000 children and teenagers have returned to native families. In state boarding school establishments about 17 thousand children is determined. Thus more than 80 thousand children were in establishments of social service of family and children till 3 months, over 25 thousand children - till 6 months, about 20 thousand minors - from 6 months till 1 year.

In 2002 in establishments of social service of family and children the help have received about 3 thousand families.

Social services were given various categories of families, among them 400 thousand families with children having limited opportunities of health; 350 thousand needy families; 700 thousand incomplete families; 400 thousand large families; 15 thousand families of refugees and the compelled immigrants.

Social home nursing unsuccessful families has become one of kinds of social service of family and children, it is defined by individual address social support and granting of a complex of necessary services on a long basis. In 2002 of establishments of social service carried out home nursing about 500 thousand families requiring for the social help, rehabilitation and support.

Number of all workers of the social services rendering help to families, women and children by the beginning of 2002 made 90,5 thousand person, including 50,7 thousand experts and 6,3 thousand working under the contract.

Within the frameworks of federal target programs " The development of social service of family and children ", " The preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors ", "Children - invalids" which state customer is Ministry of Labour

of Russia, establishments of social service of family and children were assisted in equipment by the rehabilitation, physical-improving, household equipment, technical equipment and motor transport, means of individual rehabilitation.

For today formation of a healthy way of life, preventive maintenance of the psychosocial phenomena in the youth environment is a priority direction of the state youth politics, the major factor of a safety of the Russian Federation.

**Authority for youth affairs competence:**

1) Participate in development and realization of target programs on preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors;

2) Carry out organizational-methodical maintenance and coordination of activity on preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors of social establishments, clubs on a residence and other establishments taking place in their conducting;

3) Assist children's and youth public associations, social establishments, funds and other organizations which activity is connected with realization of measures on preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors;

4) participate in financial support on a competitive basis of the public associations which are carrying out measures on preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors;

5) participate in the organization of rest, leisure and employment of minors.

Socially-rehabilitation centres for teenagers and youth, the centres socially psychological help of youth, the centres of vocational counselling and employment of youth, youth clubs and other establishments of authority for youth affairs:

1) give social, legal and other services by the minor free-of-charge;

2) take part within the limits of the competence in individual preventive work with the minors who are taking place in socially dangerous position, including by the organization of their leisure and employment, realization of informative, educational and other measures;

3) develop and realize programs of social rehabilitation of the minors who are taking place in socially dangerous position.

The state policy on preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors is possible for effective carrying out only at active interaction with public, private and other organizations, and also with separate citizens.

The system of social services for youth has received additional stimulus to development after acceptance of the Federal law "About bases of system of preventive maintenance

nance of neglect and offences of minors" from 24.06.99 № 120-FL. The analysis of the facts of regional questioning has shown, that for March, 2003 in subjects of the Russian Federation function more than 1694 establishments of social service of youth (subordinated to authority for youth affairs), carrying out the activity more than on 45 directions. Their number includes the centres of preventive maintenance of alcoholic and narcotic addiction, the centres of the social-psychological help of youth, the complex centres of social service of youth, the social- rehabilitation centres for minors, services of the emergency psychological help by phone, the centres of support of young family, the centres of legal aid of youth, youth labour exchanges.

The successful decision of questions of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors is possible only on the basis of interdepartmental interaction. According to this The Department on Youth Policy coordinates activity of authorities for youth affairs of regions of the Russian Federation and regional subordinated establishments of social service of youth, teenage-youth clubs, and public organizations on overcoming teenage neglect.

Department on Youth Policy of Ministry of Education of Russia according to the current legislation has worked out the system of competitive selection of regional programs and projects on realization of the federal target program "Youth of Russia (2001-2005)" which allows to reveal the most effective and innovative social technologies. On results of Competition of 2003, 15 establishments of social service the have got special status "the Experimental centre on social work" , 7 clubs on a residence have received the status "the Experimental centre on social-club work". They work in 7 federal districts of the Russian Federation.

One of the priority directions of activity of The Department on Youth Policy is support at a federal level of a network of the basic and experimental centres in regions which primary goal is generalization and distribution of the saved up experience, carrying out of actions on improvement of professional skill of the experts working in the given sphere, the organizational and methodical help on creation of social services for youth. The important directions of activity of social services for youth become therapy of crisis conditions of young people and the prevention of deviant behaviour. In these purposes preventive maintenance of neglect and homelessness, offences among teenagers is consistently supplemented with medical-psychological and social - pedagogical receptions of correction of deviating behaviour, rendering of corresponding social services. Work on creation of the environment of dialogue of teenagers, youth on a residence is conducted

by the organization of clubs of dialogue, including for young people with the limited opportunities.

Active preventive work conducts: Service of street social work at psychological-pedagogical service for children and youth "Serdesh" (The Republic of Tatarstan), the Republican centre of the complex social - psychological help "Psychologist - plus" (The Republic of Udmurtiya), Committee on a youth politics and patriotic work of administration of the Volgograd area, the Centre of the social-psychological help to teenagers and their families "Phenix" (Novosibirsk area), the Independent non-commercial organization " the Chelyabinsk area without drugs " (Chelyabinsk), etc.

In the Kirov area social services fulfil technologies on work with family that is of great importance in social preventive maintenance. "The centre of the social-psychological help to children, teenagers and youth" realizes innovative programs "I choose a life", "Its majesty the family" and carries out consulting, correctional and rehabilitation services.

In the Republic of Bashkortostan the republican network of services of social adaptation and rehabilitation of youth with three-level structure is generated. The base establishment the City centre "Teenager" (the experimental centre of social work of The youth politics department) is the main developer of programs of the social help of the youth, determining together with the State Committee of the Republic of Bashkortostan on a youth politics the basic directions of activity of social services. The regional centres carry out methodical support of nearby services and provide their communication with the Republican centre.

Interesting experience on work with youth is approved in Saint- Petersburg on the basis of Official establishment "The City centre of preventive maintenance of neglect and dependence from drugs of minors". Within the frameworks of the program operates daily "social patrol" during which social problems of youth come to light and already with participation of experts (psychologists, doctors, social workers) difficult vital situations of young people operatively are solved. In the Centre the uniform dispatching service for youth works, it serves about 3000 people in a month.

During five years the Centre for teenagers "Most" works In Kaliningrad. It provides the organization of labour rehabilitation, vocational counselling, the social, psychological help and the organization of leisure for teenagers from antisocial and large families, and also for teenagers from the street, taking place in a crisis vital situation. Own farm is created, the technology of "Agro-centre" providing labour rehabilitation of teen-

agers is developed: on the area of 36-hectare vegetables, grain crops are raised. There is a mini-farm that allows the Centre "Most" to proceed on partial self-maintenance with agricultural products. Experience of Committee on affairs of youth of the Kaliningrad area allows to fulfil experimental model of the rehabilitation centre for teenagers who after re-socialisation receive the professional skills necessary for them further.

Various forms of such employment practice in the Perm area: labour brigades, groups, "labour landings", labour platforms, and labour camps. The total amount of camps in the territory of area has made 809. Also at comprehensive schools it is planned to organize 520 repair brigades of 22666 person.

The regional centre " Society plus " conducts the activity in close cooperation with structural divisions of administration of the Perm area, the regional Municipal Departments of Internal Affairs, narcological clinic, the Centre on preventive maintenance AIDS. Activity of the centre " Society plus " was carried out within the frameworks of realization of working social - significant programs:

" The life after war " - social-psychological adaptation and rehabilitation of participants of operations;

" To sit on a needle it is inconvenient " - complex preventive maintenance of a drug addiction, social-psychological rehabilitation drug addicts teenagers and their relatives;

"Accord" - the informative-consulting and psychological-pedagogical help to young family;

" Tourism against criminality " - creation of system of social - psychological rehabilitation of teenagers - offenders through employment by tourism, etc.

This direction of activity in the Republic of Komi is realized through attraction of teenagers to social-significant useful activity during the summer period. In 2002 in republican profile camps "Spartans" (sports camp), "Pilgrim" (tent tourist camp), "Learn yourself" (tent tourist camp), "Defender" (military - sports camp), "On traces of ancestor " (historic-archaeological camp), "the Young rescuer" (sports tent camp) has taken part 1120 person, from them of 40 % (488 person) from needy families. Similar programs are realized in many areas of Russia.

The big contribution to education of "difficult teenagers" the Republic of Kalmykia brings student's pedagogical groups. Student's group "Solng" most effectively works. By results of the similar specialized sessions many guys have changed valuable orientations and vital installations.

Experience of the organization of camps for "difficult teenagers" on the basis of

military units in the Astrakhan area is distributed since 1998. The Astrakhan regional public youth organization of the legal and social - psychological help "Trust" on base of Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, annually spends military-sports improving labour camp "Trust" for children consisting on the account in militia, suffering dependence from psychoactive substances, taking place under court, consequence, homeless and neglected children, including from a countryside. Similar military-sports camp for "difficult teenagers" is distributed in the Irkutsk, Amur, Tula, Sverdlovsk, Kostroma and Oryol areas.

In many regions regional target programs of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of minors are carried out, according to which target operations with the purpose of revealing and the device of children who have appeared in a difficult vital situation, rendering of the psychological-pedagogical and medical-social help; involving in educational process of teenagers in the age of till 15 years which are not having the basic education; preventive maintenance of children's neglect, criminality, a drug addiction are realized

The operational experience of Stavropol where the decision of the Head of the city in all general educational establishments rates of school district militia officers lita are entered. Similar work is carried out in Georgievsk, Saransk, Chelyabinsk.

In purposes of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences of children and teenagers The Department on Youth Policy counts advisable carrying out of the following measures:

- Realization of interdepartmental way of looking to rehabilitative process on the base of social-legal support of youth;
- Enlargement of a network of a social- rehabilitation centres for minors;
- Support of a network of specialized establishments for minors who have appeared in crisis vital situations;
- To recommend the federal bodies of executive power, bodies of executive power of regions of the Russian Federation to promote the creation of youth public organizations on preventive maintenance of offences, unions of anti-drug direction, give all-round assistance and support of organizations, unions and funds on problems of preventive maintenance of offences;
- Development of a network of clubs on a residence and teenage-youth clubs;
- Organization of purposeful rest, recovery and employment of children and teenagers requiring for the special protection of the state;

- Realization of close interaction with public, charitable establishments, funds, associations with the purpose of creation of common public-state system of preventive maintenance of neglect and offences minors.

From timeliness and adequacy of measures of preventive maintenance of neglect depends our future, safety of our children, fate of new generations.

## **The information about the activity of “Yaroslavl Region Youth Information Centre”**

We introduce the activity of state establishment of Yaroslavl region “Yaroslavl Region Youth Information Centre”.

The establishment was founded in 1995 in accordance with Yaroslavl Region Governor’s Resolution with the object of social protection and provision of information service to teenagers, young people and young families.

Information center works under control of Department of Youth Policy of Yaroslavl Region Administration.

The establishment is Yaroslavl Region basic center of social work in the sphere of youth policy. In 2003 the establishment was given the status of experimental center of Education Ministry Department of Youth Policy Russian Federation. In 2003, the establishment became a resource center of social work in the Central District of Russia.

The information Centre works out, helps in adapting and carrying out innovation activity programs of social services dealing with teenagers, young people and young families.

17 municipal establishments of social work with young people function on the territory of Yaroslavl Region. The main directions of activity are:

- preventing measures against antisocial phenomena, alcohol and drug addiction and AIDS;
- work with young families;
- teenage and youth job placement.

The Information Centre carries out the training and methodical support for specialists of social youth services and youth centers of municipal districts within Yaroslavl region united in a single web.

The establishment’s main directions of activity are:

- information/methodical work;
- assistance in social adaptation of teenagers, young people and young families;
- assistance in temporary and permanent job placement of young people;
- assistance in professional skills development of specialists working with young people.



The information/methodical direction include:

- data bank creating of basic trends of youth policy, as well as activity programs of Yaroslavl region and other regions of Russia;
- exploring processes occurring in youth environment, social research work;
- carrying out information interaction with organizations and establishments on municipal, regional and federal levels;
- working out and publishing information/analytical and methodical stuff concerning youth policy.

Assistance in social adaptation of young people and young families includes social/pedagogical and psychological help programs for teenagers, young people and young families.

The regional program “Dialogue of Individuals” is carrying out within the framework of the international program “Big Brothers/ Big Sisters”. The basic of the program is the idea of building relationship between an adult and an orphan child or a child from a socially unsuccessful family. The aim of the program is providing help to a child in communication with children of his age and parents, studies, settling conflicts with teachers, involving children and young people in creative activity.

In Yaroslavl region the program is realized on the basis of interaction between governmental structures and public organizations. The establishment is carrying out this program in cooperation with Russian public organization “Child Youth Social Initiatives” supported by Department of Youth Affairs of Yaroslavl Region Administration.

In 2002 the program was met with approval by leading specialists of the International program “Big Brothers/ Big Sisters” and was recommended for spreading in municipal structures of Yaroslavl Region.

The regional program “My Choice” is carried out within the framework of all-Russian program “No, thanks!” The aim of the program is creation of teenage volunteer organization devoted to preventive measures against use psychotropic agents. The peculiar features of the project is carrying out educational and creative activities by volunteer teenagers for children of the same age. One of the main activities of the project is “No, thanks!” actions, organized and held by senior students within the framework of international day against AIDS and aiming at preventive work with various youth groups. As a result of the program teenagers and young people are

meant to obtain a skill of making a conscious choice; to deliberately refuse using psychotropic agents and to build a self-attitude as to value their life and health.

On the basis of the state institution there works “Youth and Family” Service which offers the following services for young families of Yaroslavl Region:

- consulting young people intending to get married on the problems of future family life;
- consulting young spouses awaiting a child;
- psychological/pedagogical consulting young parents on the problems of children upbringing;
- work with problem young families;
- developing pre-school lessons for children/

In 2000 “Ties of Marriage” program won 1<sup>st</sup> degree grant of State Committee of Russian Federation for Youth Policy.

Within the framework “Ties of Marriage” program the following methods were elaborated and published:

- “Family Upbringing”;
- “Conscientious attitude towards parent duties”;
- “Pre-marriage consulting”;
- “Organizing acquaintance services”;
- “Teaching non-conflict family life”;
- “Work with a young family by means of organizing programs for a child”;
- “Parent clubs and family associations work”.

In the establishment the best home and foreign experience of working with young families is being summarized.

#### Parent clubs and family associations work

The aim of this program is establishing young family clubs which will allow not only to extend the range of providing services to families, but also create conditions for preventive and correcting work with a young family in the course of its forming and development.

On the basis of “Youth and Family” Service a young family club “Beehive” has been functioning for several years. As a result of its work an experience of organizing psychological, pedagogical and legal support for young families has been accumulated.

This program is being adapted for conditions of small towns and settlements of the region.

### Assistance in temporary and permanent job placement of young people

Since 1999 on the basis of the establishment a Youth Government project “Interuniversity Centre of Assistance in Job Placement of Students” is being held. Within the project data bank of job vacancies for young people and data bank of those who wish to get a job are being kept. Twice a year temporary and permanent job vacancy fairs for students and young people are held. The visitors of the establishment receive information/methodical consulting on effective behavior in the labor market.

### Professional skill development of specialists working with young people.

In this direction the system of regional educational seminars and consultations for specialists of social youth establishments is organized. On the basis of “Youth and Family” service a year-round training courses was organized. Interregional conferences on the urgent problems of working with youth became a tradition.

### Volunteer movement development

The programs carried out by Yaroslavl Regional Youth Information Centre achieve their utmost efficiency thanks to involving volunteers out of young activists. Socially positive effect is increased by the fact that the children are of the same age, by their successfulness, attractive image, good knowledge of the subject and approachability.

The system of the establishment’s work allows to adapt new programs and methods of working with youth to conditions of municipal districts. The system includes the following stages:

- exploring situations in youth environment, making social researches;
- revealing problems in youth environment and development of basic thematical programs;
- approbation of the development programs on the basis of “Youth and Family” Service;
- teaching specialists of social youth establishments of the region;
- adaptation of programs to conditions of municipal districts;
- help in carrying out the programs given by “Youth and Family” Service specialists, summarizing positive experience of carrying out the programs in municipal districts;
- providing access of methodical stuff to other regions of Russian Federation, on the basis of experience.

This system of work allows providing directed effective help in solving social problems for teenagers, young people and young families of Yaroslavl region.

## **Информация о деятельности фонда "Дети улиц"**

Фонд «Дети улиц» является некоммерческой организацией, созданной в 1999 году и занимающейся решением социальных задач. Основной целью создания Фонда было ведение работы по профилактике правонарушений, безнадзорности, наркомании, алкоголизма, табакокурения и СПИДа среди подростков и молодежи города Москвы, прежде всего относящихся к «группе риска» и «группе социального риска». Кроме того, фонд ведет просветительскую работу и работу по повышению квалификации практических специалистов, работающих с молодежью в профилактической области.

Фонд «Дети улиц» динамично развивается и решает социально значимые вопросы для города Москвы. В 1999 году Фонд, начав работу, охватил своей деятельностью свыше двух тысяч подростков «группы риска» и «группы социального риска», тогда Фонд начал реализацию Московской городской благотворительной программы «Дети улиц». К концу 2002 года были реализованы такие программы как Московская городская благотворительная программа «Дети улиц», Московская городская благотворительная программа «Реабилитация и поддержка», Фонд стал одним из исполнителей соглашения между Правительством Москвы и Детским Фондом ООН ЮНИСЕФ. Благодаря Фонду «Дети улиц» около девяти тысяч подростков, состоящих на учете в Комиссиях по делам несовершеннолетних и защите их прав Москвы бесплатно получили широкий спектр дополнительных медицинских услуг; свыше двух тысяч подростков бесплатно побывали в выездных профилактических лагерях; более пятнадцати тысяч подростков получили гуманитарную помощь; был открыт бесплатный центр компьютерного просвещения и развития молодежи; создан регулярно выходящий популярный молодежный

журнал «Твое время» (сейчас он издается по программе Молодежь Москвы и со второго полугодия 2003 г. в подписке по СНГ и РФ); проведены такие профилактические массовые мероприятия как акция «Формула жизни», охватившая более десяти тысяч человек (ДК им. Горбунова, ДК ЗИЛ, Авангард, сорока восьми часовой музыкально-профилактический марафон на Старом Арбате) и многие, многие другие мероприятия.

У Благотворительного Фонда «Дети улиц» налажены рабочие контакты с различными организациями и ведомствами, как города Москвы, так и субъектов Федерации. В Москве наши партнеры это Городская межведомственная Комиссия по делам несовершеннолетних и защите их прав, окружные и районные комиссии, НИИ МВД, Комитет по делам семьи и молодежи г. Москвы, Комитет социальной защиты г. Москвы, различные Префектуры и Управы города, мы проводили совместные мероприятия с Московской городской Думой, отделом по связям с общественностью управления по Москве и Московской области ФСБ РФ, ГУВД, мы работаем со многими общественными некоммерческими организациями. У Фонда «Дети улиц» налажены рабочие контакты с администрациями и общественными организациями таких субъектов Федерации, как Санкт Петербург, Самарская область, Астраханская область, Республика Татарстан, Костромская область, Чувашия и рядом других регионов. Наша организация работает с такими международными организациями, как Информационный Центр ООН в Москве UNIC, Детский Фонд ООН UNICEF, Программа Развития ООН UNDP, Международная Организация Здравоохранения, Фондом ООН АнтиСПИД, DCSI и рядом других организаций. Фонд «Дети улиц» реализует различные социальные программы. Фондом «Дети улиц» выполняется Московская городская благотворительная программа «Программа обеспечения

компьютерного просвещения и развития молодежи». Фонд «Дети улиц» участвует в реализации нового соглашения между Правительством Москвы и Детским Фондом ООН ЮНИСЕФ. Фонд «Дети улиц» так же постоянно издает различную методическую и профилактическую литературу, буклеты, плакаты, другую печатную продукцию, ориентированную как на подростков, так и на специалистов. Проводятся профилактические массовые мероприятия, организуются выездные профилактические лагеря для подростков «группы риска» и «группы социального риска». Подросткам и молодежи оказывается адресная помощь.

Успехи в работе нашей организации заинтересовали Департамент по молодежной политике Министерства образования России. Мы рады возможности участвовать в проекте «Детский и молодежный центр». Фонд «Дети улиц» благодарит Департамент по Молодежной политике Министерства образования России за оказанное доверие и методическую поддержку. Обмен опытом в области работы с детьми «группы риска» и «группы социального риска» является необходимым фактором успешной работы. Проект «Детский и молодежный центр» позволит существенно повысить эффективность работы организаций, работающих с подростками и молодежью «группы риска».

Сегодня, в стремительно развивающемся обществе стало невозможным ведение эффективной профилактической работы без использования современных технологий. Современные технологии профилактической работы с детьми и подростками направлены на создание возможностей и предоставление различных услуг, интересных и полезных молодежи. Одним из таких предложений является реализуемая нашей организацией «Программа обеспечения компьютерного просвещения и развития молодежи». В отличие от ряда других подобных проектов предлагаемая программа включает не только

овладение навыками работы на персональном компьютере, но и некий комплекс социально-воспитательных и информационно-юридических компонентов развития подростков «группы риска» и «группы социального риска». Поэтому особенно актуальным стало для нас создание ресурсного центра по проекту «Детский и молодежный центр». Это позволит заметно повысить эффективность нашей работы. Кроме того, мы надеемся, что наш собственный опыт будет небезынтересен нашим коллегам в России и за ее пределами. Только скоординированные общие усилия всех позитивных сил общества могут изменить к лучшему сложную социальную ситуацию в нашей стране. Я надеюсь, что при поддержке Департамента по Молодежной политике Министерства образования РФ мы можем наиболее успешно адаптировать технологии наших зарубежных коллег для их использования в России и в частности в Москве. Мы обязаны сделать все от нас зависящее, чтобы способствовать ресоциализации подростков и молодежи «группы риска» и «группы социального риска».

Приведем немного информации о проделанной в ресурсном центре работе. Целью реализуемой Фондом «Дети улиц» программы является привлечение молодежи к изучению основ работы на персональном компьютере, использованию позитивных информационных ресурсов в сети Интернет и отвлечение молодежи от деструктивно влияющих на психику и морально-нравственный облик человека программных продуктов и спекулятивных явлений в сети Интернет. Повышение эффективности работы компьютерных классов школ, общественных и государственных организаций, работающих с подростками и молодежью Фонда «Дети улиц» и наиболее успешно освоившими курс обучения волонтерами из числа подростков, занимавшихся в нашем ресурсном центре, создают программную продукцию высокого уровня, сайты, несущие профилактическую и



образовательную информацию. Осуществляется бесплатное обеспечение развивающими и обучающими компьютерными программами молодежь, компьютерные классы школ, общественные и государственные организации, работающие с подростками и молодежью. Обучение подростков работе на персональном компьютере и использовании информационных ресурсов сети Интернет. Предоставление подросткам из малообеспеченных семей возможности бесплатно работать в сети Интернет и пользоваться ПК.

Центр начал принимать подростков с ноября 2002 года. По настоящее время просветительские курсы в Центре компьютерного просвещения и развития молодежи посетили около пятисот человек. Курс рассчитан на десять занятий продолжительностью по полтора часа. Данный курс направлен на получение слушателями базовых знаний по работе на персональном компьютере и представляет собой комплекс занятий по работе с наиболее распространенным программным пакетом, предназначенным для работы с различными видами документов. Курс является достаточным для выполнения большинства работ обычным пользователем (не работающим со сложной графикой или различными специализированными программами). Слушатель получает навыки, требуемые потенциальными работодателями или необходимыми для учебы.

Приведем схему распределения квот на прохождение курсов в центре.



Кроме того, хотелось бы еще раз поблагодарить Департамент по молодежной политике министерства образования России и всех участников проекта «Детский и молодежный центр» и выразить надежду на дальнейшее плодотворное сотрудничество. Проект позволит участникам увеличить свой интеллектуальный потенциал и добиться больших результатов в общей трудной и важной работе.

## **Union For Children, Youth and Family Rights (BE-JATA).**

**Diana Vasilane, Riga, Latvia.**

Ms Vasilane started by looking at the different groups of street children: It is important to recognise that the term “children in the street” or “street children” is used in many different ways. In Latvia you cannot spend the entire year on the streets, the climate forces you to find other places to stay. The children we talk about have their social life in the street. The value system of these children however, is formed by the street community.

For a child to choose a life in the street is usually a choice between what a family can give to a child and what the child thinks that the street may have to offer. The street environment may for a child be perceived as more supportive and less demanding than an abusive or violent family context.

A number of factors were pointed to as contributing to the estimated rise in the number of street children in Latvia: Poverty, domestic violence and the modernisation of the Latvian society were seen as important factors in this. The modernisation or transition of Latvian society has meant that the norms that used to govern families perceptions and value systems have changed at the same time as families are under more stress and more pressure.

Households with children are on the whole poorer than the average household and one-parent households are more economically disadvantaged. Latvian statistics demonstrate that more and more children experience violence both in their homes and in other places they spend time in.

Ms Vasilane argued that more and more children take to the streets and end up as prostitutes. The very nature of the phenomenon makes it very hard to measure the extent of the problem why it is difficult for government and municipal authorities to adequately respond and co-ordinate their activities. It was argued that this has led to a shortage of educationalists and a lack of social assistance especially noticeable in schools. In the school setting this is alarming as figures show that more and more children drop out of the school system. The transition of society with rapidly changing norms has led to the street environment’s increased attraction to young persons. Other reasons like unemployment, poverty and low assistance from government were also noted as contributing to the incidence of social difficulties. Children find themselves with limited possibilities to establish themselves in society. As in many risk situations, children from families with alcohol and drug dependency problems often seem to put themselves at risk. In families with these problems there is also a high incidence of violence, the presence of which being part of the background history of many children living in the street. In some situations parents force their children into the street to earn some money by begging or selling small articles.

Children in the street constitute a health hazard to themselves as well as to others, since several of them are infected with tuberculosis. Of the children in St. Nicholas

Christian Children's Home of Riga 1/3 is TB infected or dormant TB carriers which gives a good indication to the incidence in the street population.

According to recent Latvian statistics, 150 000 children live in unprotected families, 20 000 children were taken from their parents and 20 000 children suffer from abuse. In the last 10 years there has been a steep decline in the amount of children being born in Latvia. There exists in Latvia a very good law protecting children but the problem is the implementation of this law. In order to eliminate the problem of street children, repressive measures like punishing parents are sometimes used.

On the positive side, there exist in Latvia also a number of advantages and attempts at solutions. A network of NGOs is formed into an association that is co-ordinated with the governmental body of protection of the rights of the child. In 2002 a special child protective body was created: BEJATA formed by 20 organisations, represents some 80 different bodies that give assistance to a vast number of children. The Association of Street Children unites 18 organisations. With the February 11, 2002 ruling by the Cabinet of Ministers, society is now able for the first time to participate in the Cabinet's ruling process. BEJATA was formed to assist NGO's in playing an active role in this process.

## Добрый день уважаемые члены конференции

Прежде чем начать свою речь хочу сказать, что мне очень приятно, именно сейчас находиться в России - во время Пасхи!

Я от всего сердца поздравляю всех присутствующих здесь православных, с только что происшедшим и таким важным для всего человечества праздником!

Меня зовут Райтис Званитайс и я являюсь руководителем общественной организации « Миссии города Риги» А также участник рабочей группы Службы пробации в Министерстве Юстиции.

Рижская городская миссия уже четвёртый год активно ведёт работу по социальной реабилитации с несовершеннолетними преступниками во время заключения и продолжает её по их возвращению на свободу. В течение четырёх лет организации удалось сформировать комплексную программу по социальной реабилитации. Она включает в себя образовательную работу в тюрьме. И восьмидневный отпуск – летний лагерь – вне тюремных стен.

А также предложение помощи молодым людям по прошествии наказания, которую можно получить в службе помощи для молодёжи, бывшей в тюремном заключении.

В связи с тем, что мне отведено только 10 минут, я больше буду говорить в целом обо всей ситуации по несовершеннолетним преступникам в Латвии.

Мне бы хотелось начать с общей характеристики ситуации

И для начала я немного задержусь на статических данных:

В соответствии с данными государственной полиции, количество преступлений, совершенных детьми в Латвии на данный момент сравнительно неизменно. Однако это не означает, что оно низкое.

Так, в 1999 году зарегистрировано 3757, в 2000 году 3923 и в 2001 году 3987 преступных происшествий.

К сожалению, стремительно увеличилось количество преступлений, совершённых под воздействием наркотического опьянения.

Так, в 1999 году совершено 22, в 2000 году 58, а в 2001 году уже 132 преступлений, совершённых под воздействием наркотического опьянения.

Значительное количество преступлений совершено также такими детьми, которые нигде не работают и не учатся.

Соответственно в 1999 году 2087, в 2000 году 1992, а в 2001 году ещё меньше – 1945. Следовательно, количество данных преступлений в процентном соотношении уменьшается.

К сожалению, при отъезде сюда, к вам мне ещё не были доступны статические данные за 2002 год.

К детям, совершившим преступления в соответствии с

Уголовным кодексом Латвии можно применить следующие

- ~~Основные~~ свободы.

- Принудительные работы.
- Арест.
- Денежный штраф.
- А также другие дополнительные штрафы.
- Виновных можно осудить также условно.

В государственных тюрьмах постоянно находятся от 350 до 380 несовершеннолетних заключённых.

В тюрьме города Цсиса, которая является единственным местом отбывания наказания для несовершеннолетних, регулярно находятся 150 – 160 осуждённых.

В соответствии с данными Министерства Юстиции, в 2001 году в стране всего было осуждено 1754 несовершеннолетних.

1157 человека осуждены условно.

У 395-человек была отнята свобода.

19 – человек приговорено к денежному штрафу.

67-человек осуждено на принудительные работы.

И 80 человек освобождены от наказания.

К сожалению данные Министерства Внутренних Дел указывают на то, что в последние годы уменьшается количество тех случаев, когда криминальные дела отсылаются для применения принудительных средств воспитательного характера.

Если в 1998.таких случаев было 754, то в 2001.году уже только 338.

### **Какими же являются те главные проблемы, которые создают данную ситуацию?**

- Не ведётся достаточная работа с семьёй.
- Существует нехватка возможностей свободного время проведения для подростков.
- Недостаточно лечение от алкогольной и наркотической зависимости.
- Не хватает альтернативных средств для Уголовного процесса и, в частности, для наказания отнятия свободы.
- В государстве нет целостной позиции о проведении работы по предотвращению преступлений.

- Проводится недостаточная работа с теми детьми из группы криминального риска, которые продолжают оставаться в обществе.
- Недостаточна подготовка по работе с детьми у судей, прокуроров и полицейских особенно в сфере детской психологии.
- Время заключения длится достаточно долго, чтобы находясь в условиях отсутствия образовательных, спортивных и общественных контактов, дети могли присвоить себе элементы тюремной субкультуры, сохранить мотивацию для преступной деятельности в результате данной ситуации становится под угрозу позитивное развитие личности детей.
- Недостаточна подготовка персонала мест заключений по работе с детьми.
- Слишком мало происходит вмешательств общества по ликвидации негативных последствий от преступлений и изоляций виновных от общества

В завершении своего обращения, наконец, я подошёл к месту, когда хотелось бы рассмотреть хорошие и многообещающие моменты... которые в данный момент в Латвии, слава Богу, потихоньку начали происходить.

- И так, с 2002 года 1 ноября время расследования до суда для несовершеннолетних, наконец, сократилось до шести месяцев. В это время, правовая система обязательно должна вести расследование дела и вынести заключение об осуждении в суде первой инстанции.

- Несовершеннолетние, которые находятся на расследовании до суда, за пять месяцев переводятся из тюрьмы Брасы, которая находится в катастрофическом положении в тюрьму Матиса. В тюрьме Матиса более или менее нормальные условия быта. Это произошло только после вмешательства Президента Страны в проблемы несовершеннолетних заключённых, и подтверждённой позже, инициативы нового министра юстиции.

Как ещё одно позитивное обстоятельство хочу упомянуть, что в государстве выработана концепция Службы пробации и её законопроект. Служба пробации предложит долгосрочные решения, связанные с проблемами по преступности во всём государстве. *Как уже сказано концепция службы пробации: “В результате совершения многочисленных преступлений общество вынуждено платить **три раза**: первый раз, когда совершается преступление; второй раз, когда виновный попадает в тюрьму, где не у всех есть возможность работать и компенсировать пострадавшим причинённый ущерб; третий раз, после прошествия срока заключения осуждённый освобождается, возвращается в общество и нужно устранить вредные последствия в результате исполнения приговора.*

Официально свою работу Служба пробации начнёт с 1-го ноября этого года. Её деятельность будет развиваться в Риги и шести районах по всей стране. В основе Службы пробации “философия” надзор за преступниками ..... и предложение помощи. Главными функциями службы надзора будут считаться:

- Работа с личностями, осуждёнными на лишение свободы..
- Координирование уголовного наказания – принудительных работ.
  - ***Присмотр в обществе над условно осуждёнными личностями.***
- **Организация примирения между преступником и пострадавшим.**
- Подготовка для суда оценочных заявлений.

- Предложение помощи бывшим заключённым.

Дополнительно к этому, в стране проводятся отдельные мероприятия, связанные с введением программы надзора во время досудебного расследования. И формированием альтернативных программ для надзора для условно осуждённых в обществе. Самые существенные факторы того, почему всё это развивается сравнительно медленно.

- Волнения о финансовой поддержке данных программ в будущем
- Нехватка людей с соответствующими знаниями и опытом
- А также недостаточное понимание общества эффективности данных программ.

Инициатива по формированию данных программ исходит главным образом со стороны общественных организаций. Активность латвийских общественных организаций очень большая, ... они являются также очень важным инструментом для уменьшения детской преступности. На данный момент в Латвии действуют более 200 общественных организаций, которые работают с детьми. Это приюты, дневные центры, кризисные центры, спортивные клубы, объединения и т. п. Общественные организации, может быть, не всегда являются теми, кто единственные знают как правильно нужно работать с детьми, однако это один очень большой ресурс, который в государстве при правильном хозяйстве, можно использовать, чтобы эффективно решать разные неблагоприятные проблемы и экономить государственные средства.

В самом конце своего обращения хочу упомянуть об очень удачном предприятии – это проект латвийской государственной полиции “Инспектор бобёр”. Главной целью проекта является установление диалога между детьми и полицейскими. В проекте используются детские рисунки на тему бобра. Вы определённо все видели рекламу на телевидении “Ахой господин бобёр, откуда у вас такие белые зубы?”. Работники полиции посещают школы с рисунками на данную тему и другими методическими материалами. Таким образом, они пытаются сформировать основанные на доверии отношения с детьми. У проекта в Латвии очень хорошие результаты.

Это всё что я вкратце хотел вам рассказать.

Благодарю всех за внимание



# **CHILDREN AND JUVENILES BETWEEN FAMILY, STREET AND YOUTH AID IN GERMANY**

**Dr. Hanna Permien, German Youth Institute**

## **Street children – In the middle of Germany?**

'Street children in Germany' has been one of the favourite topics in the media in the nineties of the last century. They really exist, even though they ought not to exist at all. For in Germany, all minors who cannot or do not want to live in their families have the right to be looked after by youth welfare services – and these services are obliged to look after these youngsters.

Nevertheless, there have always been children and juveniles who withdraw from the institutions of socialisation, namely family and school, and focus their lives on the streets. But since the beginning of the nineties, their number seems to have increased and they seem to have become more endangered by alcohol, drugs, prostitution, criminality and permanent homelessness. So, there were a lot of questions: Why do these youngsters leave their families or the community homes and prefer a life on the streets? Is the inner city'scenes' around the main railway stations really the end of the line for these youngsters – scenes, where the dream of freedom and wretchedness converge for everyone to see? And, another main question: What can the youth welfare services do to prevent such “street-careers” on one hand, and to support the young people during their time on the streets and at especially, when they try to get out of that sort of life?

## **Research on “street children” in Germany**

The public discussions in the early nineties were the starting-point for some research. In the late nineties the German Youth Institute carried out the study 'Careers on the Streets for Children and Juveniles', funded by the Central Deapar We interviewed more than 40 experts from youth aid, the police, and psychiatric institutions. In the interviews with more than 50 young persons with experience in living on the streets we heard their own side of the story.. At the same time, another research group tried to identify the willingness and the possibilities of the youth welfare services in 5 different cities to give support to these youngsters (Hansbauer 1998). Around this, there are

some more studies done, some concentrating on the situation in different cities (e.g. ISIS Berlin 2001; Bodenmüller/Piepel 2003) or on different aspects of the problem, as gender or health or the problem of drugs, delinquency, sexual abuse and the role of youth welfare services in the development of deviant careers (e.g. Bodenmüller 1995; Langhanky 1993; Pfennig 1996, Permien 2002, Retza/Weber 2001). Bodenmüller/Piepel (2003) worked as street workers and they tried to follow the careers of more than 300 of their clients over years. And they tried to find out what happened to them after leaving the city-scenes. Nowadays, “street children” are no longer a topic of the mass media and the police had banned them from central places and tried to drive them out of sight of the “normal” people – but they are still there! In the following sections I will summarize the results of these studies and what youth aid in Germany has to offer these youngsters.

### **How to define “street children” in Germany**

In Germany the term 'street children' is often used – even by experts. But the term is misleading:

1. It has to be stressed that in the city-scenes there are hardly ever children under 12 years, but usually juveniles and – to a great extent - young adults between 18-27 years of age.
2. Unlike in South America or other countries, in Germany there is no legal work offered for youngsters in the streets, so they have to get money for food, alcohol and drugs by begging, stealing, mugging and robbery, prostitution and selling drugs.
3. The term ‚street children‘ in Germany does not imply that these youth have no contact any more with their parents or with the youth welfare services. The latter is only true for a minority (“the hard core”), mostly among the older ones. The majority of others, and especially the younger ones, change – sometimes several times a year – between living on the street and trying to live with their family or in a community home again, or they try to live a sort of ‚double life‘, e.g. staying with their family or in a home or a flat, organized by youth welfare services, but spending a lot of time in the streets. When the conflicts about the deviant behav-

their (e.g. using drugs, stealing money) of the youngsters escalate, they are often thrown out again and become homeless. So *homelessness* is often a shorter stage in street life, followed by a longer stage of having a more or less stable place to live, perhaps followed by a new loss of this place. (Permien/Zink 1998; Bodenmüller/Piepel 2003).

### **Figures about 'street children'**

Because the term 'street children' covers youngsters in different and often changing situations, it is not possible to give exact figures of how many youngsters live on the streets. There is only an estimation from the year 1998: At that time, about 6-7000 youngsters seemed to be homeless for more than 3 months and having no contact with their families or with youth welfare services. Another Estimation (ISIS 2001) says that about 3-5000 youngsters live in the streets of the capital Berlin (not all of them homeless), and that about half of them come from other regions of Germany. But meanwhile even smaller cities have their „city-scenes“!

If we look on the **percentages of males and females** among the youngsters in the central city-scenes, a lot of street workers and social workers in shelters and sleep-ins found out, that among the German youngsters, there are a lot of girls. Especially among the younger ones between 14-16 years of age, girls may be up to 70%. But among the older ones, the opposite is true: Girls seem to leave the scenes earlier, so there are more young men left. Girls are more successful in maintaining a flat of their own, and they are much less imprisoned than the young men (Bodenmüller/Piepel 2003). So when they once have gotten a flat of their own, they lose it less often than the boys. Some manage to return to their families or they start to live with a partner. But of course, some of the girls end up in prostitution and drug addiction.

### **Street careers may develop and end in different ways**

Because there is neither a clear definition nor a reliable estimation of their number, we and other researchers prefer to refer not to 'street children', but to the term '*street career*'. That term fits much better to describe the ups and downs of living in the street.

If we look at the conditions that lead to a *career in the streets* and the prehistories of 'street children', it becomes obvious, that the danger of a street career frequently shows up very early, at a stage when nobody talks of 'street children' yet, but of „*endangered children*“ (Hansbauer 1998). This applies to a growing number children in socially deprived residential quarters, who still live at home to the extent that they sleep and eat there; but from the age of six or eight, the focal point of their lives is shifting slowly but surely away from school and family into the streets, because their families and school offer them too little stability, approval and support. This often is ignored or tolerated helplessly by their parents or single mothers, and sometimes even by their schools.

When they are getting older, some escape from home and join the central city-scenes, leaving their well-known background behind. That is true especially for youngsters fleeing from community homes and for girls, because in the city-scenes there is less social control than in their residential areas.

Boys and young men, quite often with a background of migration, often start a „**street career in their residential quarters**“ while staying in their families. Often they do not succeed in getting one of the rare places for a vocational training or they give up very soon and continue hanging around in their street-gang nearly the whole night, sometimes stealing or robbing. Some are thrown out of their family at last and end up in the inner-city scenes. They deserve far more attention than has been paid to them hitherto, because many of them are in danger of losing all chances for social integration. Above all, they need employment programs and legal jobs – but these are lacking!

#### **Example.**

*Tobias is thirteen years old. He lives with his mother and her boy friend in a big city. Since his parents' divorce he has lost all contact to his father. At eleven Tobias started to miss school more and more frequently, now he is regarded as a persistent truant. His mother sends him to school every morning, but he never reaches the classroom. Tobias spends his days in the streets with older friends, who are also playing truant or are not of school age any more. Often all he eats during the day is a bag of potato crisps. He frequently stays away from home for days. Then he sleeps in cellars or empty houses in his neighbourhood – together with other people. These periods usually end with the police returning him to his family. His mother has got used to the situation. Tobias regards his life in the 'streets'*

- away from family and school - as a time of 'peace and quietness'. He lives life from one day to the next; he prefers not to think of the future.

If we look at the end of street careers, again, there is a lot of difference:

- Some of the youngsters succeed to get back in a more „normal“ life very soon, they often get support from their families and from youth aid,
- Some try to get out of the scenes again and again and at last they succeed step by step,
- Some (apparently more young men than women) stay in the streets for years. Some If they succeed to get out of their street-life after such a long period, most of them are marginalized, often sick, psychological degraded and indebted, sometimes depending on drugs, often having big criminal records. So they need a lot of help during their reintegration process.
- For some young people (as one study (Bodenmüller/Piepel 2003) suggests, about 20 – 30 %) the only place left to them is the scene, which does not offer them any opportunities for the future. So at last they turn from „street children“ into permanently homeless young adults. Their number is growing, but for them it is often quite difficult to get any support.

What drives children and juveniles into the streets?

The *explanations* of experts and the young people themselves for starting a street career usually comprise whole packages of reasons, which are frequently seen as mutually reinforcing and complementary. These reasons are to be encountered above all in problematic situations and conditions of socialisation in the young peoples' families, in problems of youth welfare services, and in general social developments.

In some cases the **conditions in the family** were so bad that the children were *placed in care* at a very early age. But the *alternative upbringing by youth aid* was not successful with all children. So there is a smooth transition from *careers in youth aid* to *careers in the streets* above all with those children who have been 'shunted' from one Institution to another and never felt at home in any home. Some of these youth have also repeatedly been in psychiatric care.

So in Germany it is *not the lack of institutions and services* that may lead to street careers, but the specialisation and differentiation of the various types of them as well as the lack of coordination between different youth welfare services and between clinics and Youth aid in regard of treatment concepts. But where the coordination has been improved, the number of 'refugees' from clinics and community homes has decreased. And there is another reason, why a special group of *young adults* ends up in the streets: These are mostly *young men grown up in youth welfare services, who are not able to manage their lives*, after the support of youth aid is ended. They may first lose their job and then they lose their flat and they have great difficulties in finding either a new flat without having a job or in finding a new job without having a flat.

More and more young people however are escaping *directly from their families* or quite often, from their stepfamilies, and some from foster or adoptive families. Reasons for this can be found above all in *physical and psychological violence, in sexual abuse* (above all with girls), rejection and humiliation. Often unemployment, poverty, the addiction to alcohol or drugs or a psychiatric disease of at least one parent plays an important role, and they result in heavy conflicts in the family. For these youngsters leaving their family seems to be the only possible active solution, often before their parents threw them out. Conversely, young people's violence towards their parents may occasionally become the reason for a radical break. Sometimes parents tend to 'turn over' their problem-causing children to youth aid. So young people who arrive in the streets directly from their (problematic) families often had already some unsuccessful experiences with non-residential provisions of youth aid

But 'street children' do not only come from especially endangered families. Some of them are leaving their 'quite normal' families, because they receive *too little time and attention* by their hard working parents or single mothers, or because they experience *too much pressure for achievement*. And sometimes, the conflicts rising from adolescence seem to be the only reason for the break. So some of the youngsters, namely girls, just *strive for more freedom*. Often the relationships between the youngsters and their families are quite ambivalent: The youngsters cannot live with their families and they cannot live without them – and this ambivalence may explain for the ups and downs, ins and outs in their careers.

*Material poverty, both actual and threatening* seems to be only one, but not the main reason for starting a street career. But of course the frequent lack of sufficient living space for poor families, the social isolation and other problems which may come

along with poverty, the resulting conflicts and the slim chances of juveniles and young adults to obtain an affordable home of their own may drive them to the streets or let them stay there. In the first years after reunification young people in eastern German cities could frequently use old houses still standing empty as a means of survival. But such niches have steadily disappeared; in the west they did never exist.

**Changes caused in society** in the last ten or twelve years also play a significant role in the development of careers in the streets. Most important is the growing unemployment. In addition, since reunification especially parents in East Germany got a far more comprehensive responsibility for the care of their children and for securing their future opportunities. But simultaneously *occupational opportunities* were *dwindling* especially for young people without higher education. This is seen as a major factor why many juveniles run away and turn their back on school.

Some studies show that **schools** do not play a sufficient part in preventing careers in the streets. Schools seem to concentrate too much on their instruction tasks, they frequently do not bother about children who play truant, or even exclude 'troublemakers' from class – and they do not inform the youth welfare services.

Frequently several of the reasons mentioned above combine to explain why children of *migrant* workers may become and remain 'street children'. And there are even more problems. Many young Turks, for example, suffer from bi-cultural conflicts and the lack of acceptance by the Germans. Especially the girls often miss the freedom, German girls enjoy, and some of them suffer from a lot of violence in their families, or they are forced to marry a man whom they do not even know.

The young migrants, especially the young men, are living more often than the Germans in cramped living conditions and are missing occupational opportunities. So some of them start selling drugs in the streets or become delinquent – sometimes in the city scenes, sometimes in their residential quarters. Even harder is the situation for young, often unaccompanied asylum-seekers or for young people from Eastern Europe or from Islamic countries. Some of them are sent to Germany with the explicit intention of earning money in the streets by selling drugs or by prostitution. For street workers it is extremely difficult to reach these youngsters.

Finally it is the *opportunity structures in the inner-city scenes* themselves that have an attraction for juveniles who have already more or less lost their bearings; they hope for freedom, adventure and the solidarity to other youngsters in the same situation.

In each case the mentioned explanations for a street career combine in a different way. That means: There is no *uniform pattern of explanation* as to why young people become and remain 'street children'. What is more important, however, is that taken as a whole the explanations for street careers *indicate problems in all important fields of life* for children and juveniles. This is a sign which society should take seriously, because it seems to become increasingly rare that deficits in one area of children's life can be compensated for by opportunities in another one, e.g. a good neighbourhood compensating bad family conditions.

### **Survival of youth in the city-scenes and duration of careers**

As mentioned before, the scenes of the inner cities have an attraction by themselves – at least in the beginning of a street career. But most of the youngsters learn quite soon, that the living conditions are very tough in the streets: Some of them have to look every night for a place to stay overnight. And because there are only illegal ways to survive, the youngsters often become criminalized, and nearly all of them use drugs or of alcohol, because these are important to stand the hard conditions and to have fun together. And the youngsters learn quite soon, that their so called ‚friends‘ often may help them, but they also sometimes betray and exploit them – just to enhance their own chances to survive.

### **Street careers – an example**

Sometimes, street careers start with a dramatic escape of youngsters from their families or from homes after repeated and escalating conflicts – and they sometimes never come back. More often, the 'runaways' disappear for a single night to begin with, then for a weekend: They often want to give a signal to their family or the social workers in the community home. But if conditions at home do not change, finally they stay away for weeks and months and start a street career. One example of this is



**Sylvie:**

*We met this fifteen-year-old girl in the emergency services for juveniles in her hometown. Before, she had lived for three weeks on the streets after running away from her family. For years Sylvie had had constantly major problems with her stepfather, whom she describes as very strict. When she was 14, he began harassing her sexually. Her mother did not believe her and was no help to Sylvie at all. The first time Sylvie did not come home at night was when she was fourteen. She spent the night with an older girlfriend. Some weeks later Sylvie ran away again, this time staying out longer. Because her parents reported her as a missing person, she could not go to school or stay with her friends in the neighbourhood, or stay somewhere overnight, because everybody is obliged to tell the police, where she stays.*

*So Sylvie decided to join a friend in one of the city scenes, where she met both adults and juveniles in similar situations. During the following three weeks she spent the night around the main station (to stay in the station is forbidden), in bus shelters, or in the cellars or attics of houses under construction. These nights were bearable only when she consumed lots of alcohol or other sedating drugs. In the end she came in contact with street workers, who advised her to consult the emergency services for juveniles.*

*The social workers there tried to find out with her, what could be a good place for her further life. After two weeks in this permanently overcrowded institution Sylvie is prepared to give life at home another try. At least this seems better to her than continuing to live in the streets. And her mother does not want at all Sylvie going to a community home and would not agree to that.*

*But things did not work out at home and in that crisis, Sylvie got bad marks in her grammar school because she could not concentrate on her studies any more and she lost touch with her girl friends. She had planned to study law after graduation. But now she decided to become financially independent as quickly as possible, so she changed to a school, where she could get a school leaving certificate of a lower level in a shorter time. But after a time, Sylvie could not stand the humiliating behaviour of her stepfather any longer. Again she left home and lived in the city scenes for some*

*month, becoming used to drinking alcohol, using drugs and spending the nights with her clique. But when she was cheated and robbed by a so-called „friend“, she wanted to leave the streets.*

*This time the street workers helped her to find a place to live in a small community home. But since Sylvie was not mature yet, her mother first had to agree to that placement. It was not easy to convince her, that Sylvie really refused to return to her family. Eventually Sylvie could move to the community home. In the beginning, she had a lot of problems to attend to the rules of that home and not to drink alcohol any more. And it needed some time, till the other members of the group accepted her, so Sylvie felt lost and lonely in the first time. Only her decision to avoid any further experiences of life in the streets helped her to overcome the hard time in the beginning. After a while she started to attend school again to get at least a lower level graduation and got in contact with her mother again, but Sylvie could not imagine living in her family again. She was too disappointed*

Sylvie's story is evidence not so much of a hardened 'street career ' as of bitter but so far episodic experience of life in the streets with decisive consequences for Sylvie's plans for her future life. And her story shows the problems she had to face, when she tried to start a more „normal“ life again.

### **What help youth aid can offer to avoid or to stop a street career?**

At the moment, there is no central program in Germany dealing especially with street children. Every community is responsible for the support of juveniles on the street. But there are central associations of street workers and regular central meetings of persons working with street children. After establishment of special services for street children in the nineties the public interest has shifted to young offenders and to rightist extremists – and to early school leavers. For them, many different programs are installed, and that may be helpful to prevent street careers.

Before or at the beginning of a career

1. Once youngsters have embarked on street careers, the psychological and material costs of reintegrating them socially are considerable high – if it can be achieved at all. For this reason it is the task of youth aid to do much more than

has been done hitherto to prevent these careers. But in these times of high unemployment and reduced public spending there are little chances for establishing more of the necessary services - although it is precisely in such times that families would need them most urgently!

2. When a girl or boy has left his home already, she or he can stay for some weeks in an *emergency centre*. These centres aim at clearing the perspectives of runaways and preventing street careers – but they are not always successful! The case of Sylvie shows clearly how important it is for children and juveniles to be offered an acceptable solution soon after they first have run away from home. And her story indicates that it usually takes much more than just a willingness to change on the part of the children or their parents to create the improved conditions that make it unnecessary for the young people to run away from home again: Often, an extensive counselling seems necessary for the family or at least a sort of contract between the children and their parents about necessary changes and an intensive monitoring from outside. But sometimes parents are not willing to accept the involvement of youth welfare services at all. And because only the parents are allowed to apply for youth welfare provisions for their children, it happens that youngsters want to leave home and to live in residential care, but their parents bar them from doing so and youth aid is sometimes not able to support the youngsters. For that reason, a lot of experts plead for the right of adolescents to apply for youth welfare services by themselves, independent from their parents. Because in the time of uncertainty about their future lives, completely depending on the decisions by their parents, youngsters may very quickly lose their faith in their families and in youth aid. 'The 'street' with all its temptations frequently appears to them as an alternative and there is a great danger that juveniles may take further steps towards the streets.

### **Support in the street, in the scenes**

A lot of youth welfare services aimed specifically at runaways and youngsters on the street were established in the last ten years, first in big cities like Berlin, but afterwards even in small cities. The *low profile-services* near the scenes aim at stabilisation of the youngsters while living in the streets and supporting them if they try to

stop their street career. First there is *city street work*, which you will find in nearly every city, and often there is street work in the residential areas. A lot of cities also have some *shelters* for youth on the street, open for some hours every day. There the youngsters can stay anonymous, they have a place to rest or talk with others, and they can take a shower and give their clothes a wash. Sometimes they can get medical care and the social workers will give support when the young persons have got a letter from the police or from the court and do not know what to do with it. Sometimes, if a youngster wants that, the social workers call up the parents or persons in different departments, e.g. the employment or housing office. In some cities, there are special shelters for young women or – more rare – for boys living on prostitution and being drug addicted. In many cities there are *accommodation units for an overnight* stay – but only for some nights per month, because the youngsters should be forced a little bit to look for a more stable place to live.

### **Support to leave the street behind**

Knowing that a lot of youngsters are not able to leave the scenes and to normalize all at once some cities have *low profile housing projects* where the youngsters first can learn to live alone or together with others and manage to pay the rent etc, before they move into a „normal“ flat. If there are no possibilities to „return“ from the scenes step by step, the young people are often excluded again from „normal life“ very soon. And there are some more problems for the return process: A lot of the youngsters have one or two dogs, which are their best friends and are very important to them. That makes it even harder to find a stable place to live and eventually a job. And even if they find both, as soon as they have a stable address, they have to start paying back their debts – so they often need help not to give up.

As mentioned earlier, an insufficient cooperation between different institutions can force a street career – and it can create difficulties for the youngsters to stop their careers. This is especially true for the cooperation between youth aid and drug aid, which is not as good as it should be. Drug aid is designed for adults with drug addiction, and youth aid is designed for minors without heavy drug problems – but both sides have to realize the growing group of drug- or alcohol addicted minors!

## **Conclusion**

To prevent street careers and to give youngsters a chance to „come back to a more humane life“ both parents and youth aid should be aware that what they have to offer is competing with the attractions of the streets. To be successful, the offered support should be more attractive than what the street scenes, the drugs; the sexual customers have to offer!

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# Other country reports on Children in the Street

## DENMARK

### Street work amongst the disadvantaged youth of Copenhagen

#### Purpose

The purpose of this project is to establish, in some cases re-establish, a useful link between the socially most disadvantaged juveniles under the age of twenty and the social welfare system. The target group consists of socially vulnerable teenagers who:

- have major family problems;
- have no positive contact with their parents or the social services;
- do not have a positive social net work;
- have a long history of being placed in-or run away from institutional care;
- are involved in prostitution, drug, abuse and crime.

#### The personal group

The staff consists of seven full-time employees: a project leader, a deputy for the leader, and five social pedagogues. There are also two volunteer workers: a lawyer and a local doctor.

#### How does Tjek-Punkt operate?

Our work consists mainly in reaching out to the disadvantaged young people through street work, in the drugs- and prostitution area (in the centre of Copenhagen) and on the Freetown Christiania ([www.christiania.org/](http://www.christiania.org/))

The juveniles can be counselled in the street and be given basis care; food, condoms, needles etc. Should the young person in question be willing to co-operate, the situation can be handled as an urgent social case.

Our point of departure consists of those juveniles we encounter irrespective of whether they are registered at the Copenhagen branch of the National Registration Office. Approximately half the young people we work with are registered in Copenhagen, the rest come from all over the country.

Tjek-Punkt has an office in a small shop which is open three evenings a week, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., It is open to the young people without prior appointment. They then can get basis care ass; a hot meal, have a talk, watch television, make telephone calls, wash their clothes, get their hair cut and so on.

During the day, with- or whit out an appointment, the young people may visit the office when they want to get in touch with the welfare office or with a given institution- or just for a talk white the staff.

#### Our working principles and attitudes

Free will, anonymity and involvement are the guiding principles in Tjek-Punkt's work. This applies to both street work and case work.

**Free will** means that we never coerce the young person into co-operating with us or the welfare authorities. This means that a lot of time is spent encouraging the young person and strengthening their resolve to do something about their situation.

**Anonymity** means that the young person can receive counselling and care without having to disclose personal data. Experience has shown that most young people wish to retain a certain degree of anonymity only during the initial stages. It is, however, important that the young person sets the pace at which personal information and data is made known to us.

**Involvement** means that the individual teenager is involved in all the work, such as making phone calls, drafting of letters and so on, pertaining to their case. The young person is to be assisted in becoming a direct participant in their own case and not merely kept up to date on the progress of the case in the system.

The implications of Tjek-Punkt's working principles are of signal importance in the work with this particular group of socially disadvantaged youth. They are, or feel that they are let down by their family and the social welfare system. This is why it is crucial that the young person in question is willing, or encouraged to be so, to consider treatment, placing in an institution or some other form of help. It is vitally important that the encountered by the young person, are credible, consistent and have their minds set on maintaining the contact, even when there is resistance from either the young person or the welfare authority. So, two significant aspects of the work are providing care for distressed juveniles on the one hand, and on the other, offering them support by accompanying them to the various instances of health and social authorities. Because of this, the work has two lines of thrust, towards both the young person and the responsible social authorities.

Motivating young people and gradually building up their self-esteem through involvement, requires that we encounter them in their own environment, both physically and mentally. Mentally meaning that we take into account what they are capable of at the time, with a view to what it takes to make them willing and capable to take matters in hand themselves.

### **Structure and financing**

Tjek-Punkt is a partnership of equals consisting of representatives from a private organisation, The Christian Association for the Assistance of Children and Young People, KFBU, and the public administration, Copenhagen Municipal Council, respectively.

The chairman of the board is the administration leader of KFBU. The leader of Tjek-Punkt and a representative of the workers in Tjek-Punkt participant in all meetings. This represent a new type of organisational set-up within Danish social work.

Tjek-Punkt was a three year (September 1993 - September 1996) experimental and development project, financed by both the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and Copenhagen Municipal Council. But since 1996 Tjek-Punkt has been one of the permanent offers to the disadvantaged youth of Copenhagen, and is therefor entirely municipally financed.

### **What can the social system offer now**

Street work is not a multitablet how can solve all social problems.

To support the street work, white the disadvantage juveniles we neat general efforts and strategies in relation to juvenile's, who have drop out and are in risk of choosing the street as an alternative to the established system. Here are some examples:

#### **Street work:**

Street work are in Denmark situated in the whole country but especially in the most disadvantaged/problem filled areas.

### **Spydspidsen (sparrow point):**

Work and educational guarantee for all juveniles between the age 15-18 years old white residence in Copenhagen municipality. Social worker, social adviser and the labour market is co-operating around a specific juvenile.

### **Alternative schooling:**

Small units which consider the juvenile as an individual and make a mix between learning from books and learning from doing.

### **Alternative youth environments:**

"Sjakket" is a place for juveniles from the age 14 until 20 years old. These juveniles do not, can not, or will not use what the established system has to offer. This could be schools, youth clubs, sports clubs etc.

"Sjakket" is only open in the daytime.

"Sjakket" has an activity centre located in an old factory, where they have different workshops.

"Sjakket" is also local working on the street level, and they use earlier street kids to contact youth on the street. On the street they offer to do activities while the juveniles.

"Sjakket" mainly work with juveniles who are in risk for criminals or prostitute activity.

### **Support and contact person:**

This person is employed to support the juveniles who live on their own. The support contains e.g. visiting, helping with everyday problems, finding job, building a positive social network/relationship etc. In a short term you could call this person a second "parent".

### **Future aspects**

General a lot of youth in Denmark tells, that they have a feeling of loneliness. The majority manage the problems, but for the disadvantaged youths the street becomes an open party, where you can just walk out an invitation.

Juveniles under the age of 18 in a drug abuse, we do not now have to treat them, and we do not have any place to place them.

Juveniles with psychiatric problems- there is no co-operation between the social and the psychiatry system. And worst; if the juveniles also have a drug abuse!!!!

The missing spacious in school even that it is written in the government's school announcement.

The Internet, where children and youth are being seduced by grown-ups and it is possible to offer money for- or selling sexual yields.

Moscow on the 28-29. April. 2003

Jeannie Hegstrup, street worker and director.



## **ESTONIA**

### **Street Children and Children at Risk**

ca 100 - 200 Street Children

ca 4000 – 5000 Children At Risk (70% in Tallinn)

Partnership program in Tallinn, “Children at Risk”, connecting 17 different organisations, in 2002 we worked with 3500 children, 10-15% of children were out of Tallinn.

Shelters - every month 30 – 50 children (10-15 % are children from Children’s Home, who are running away)

Tallinn Child Support Centre Shelter: in year 2000 – 548 children; 2001 – 551 children; 2002 – 462 children. Most of children are Russian speakers.

### **Children and drug abuse**

Ca 10000 – 15000 children use drugs

#### **Resources:**

for drug and AIDS prevention - 5 million EEK (ca 360000\$) for Tallinn and 6 million EEK for the whole Estonia

#### **Help:**

- Children Hospital (8 beds)
- Tallinn Centre for Children at Risk (34 beds, child can stay there 6 months, to learn in school, to get medical help and psychological rehabilitation)
- Shelters: 16 beds + 10 beds + 8 beds (small child with mother)

A big problem is alcohol.

### **HIV-positive**

HIV-positive ca 2700 (in reality this number is bigger), ½ of them are in age 14-24. 50 young pregnant mothers are HIV-positive

### **Child abuse**

Prevention and rehabilitation:

Tallinn Child Support Centre (ca 200-250 child abuse cases in year)

Tartu Child Support Centre

**Most important is NETWORKING !**

## FINLAND

About ten years ago In Finland there was quite a lot of discussion about street children. That time the Council of Europe published its survey on Street Children and also a Finnish book on that issue was published. During those days press used to make sensation on the issue as well.

The definition of the Council of Europe was used:

*Street children are children under 18 who, for shorter or longer periods, live in street milieu. they are children who live wandering from place to place and who have their peer groups and contacts in the street. Officially these children may have as their address their parents' home or an institution of social welfare. Most significantly they have very few or no contacts with those adults, parents, school, child welfare institutions, social services with a duty towards them.*

If we think the numbers of street children nowadays, it has to be said that there are some street children in Finland according to the definition above. Those children mostly have been clients in child welfare system but have for some reason or another dropped out of the system. Mostly anyhow periods of being outside contacts to adults are rather short – few months. The estimation of the amount might be some tens children at the time being.

In Finland we still have quite few immigrants. At least in the survey of the Council of Europe it was found out that the risk to become a street child is bigger in immigrant families. A cultural gap between generations is sometimes so deep in families that the only choice for a youngster is to run away.

Appropriate services for street children are shelter houses in bigger towns, run by the Red Cross Finland. Also outreach work is done in the streets in bigger towns.

Now we have programs in our child welfare system to put focus on early intervention. We try to develop working methods and also attitudes among all professionals working with children to start supporting work at an early phase.

## **LITHUANIA**

### **STREET CHILDREN/CHILDREN IN THE STREETS**

Presentation by Zydre Arlauskaite  
**PROGRAMME**

**1998 – 2001**

## **SOROS FOUNDATION**

### **KING BAUDOIN FOUNDATION**

#### **10 CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

#### **TASKS:**

- **To find out situation of street children in Lithuania**
- **To find out needs of street children**
- **To find out services provided for street children**
- **To find out gaps in services for the street children**

#### **TASKS:**

- **To provide financial support:**
- **expertise**
- **sustainability**
- **To provide professional support:**
- **trainings**
- **counselling**

## **TASKS:**

- **To create network of organizations working with street children**
- **To establish resource centre**

## **ISSUES TO CONSIDER:**

- **Description of street children in Lithuania**
- **Need of professional assessment for organizations working with street children**
- **Lack of co-operation**

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## NORWAY

### Some comments on the situation in Norway.

*Information given at the meeting on "Children on the Streets", Moscow, Russian Federation, April 2003.*

*Morten Schau, Senior Advisor, The Royal Ministry of Child and Family Affairs, Oslo, Norway.*

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Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning.

My name is Morten Schau.

I am working as a Senior Advisor at the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Child and Family Affairs, in Oslo.

My experience of this particular conference topic is rather short, since I started my work in the Ministry in February this very year. Up till then, I have been working as a clinical psychologist and a family therapist.

Consequently, some of the topics at this conference are relatively new to me. This implies that what I may convey to you about the status of "children of the street" in Norway is rather limited. I will, however, try to give you a small idea of the situation in Norway.

First, I would like to give a brief and general overview of the situation in Norway as we see it. Then I will give the floor to my colleague Svein Mossige, who will go into this material in some more detail. Finally, I would like to give you some results of a recent study on this topic from a group of Norwegian researchers.

- - -

There are several reasons to believe that, even if we have some of the similar social trends of children at risk, the extent and seriousness is not at the same level as you have here.

Several Norwegian laws are aimed at securing personal and social welfare.

Both the Social welfare and the Child welfare services aim at providing procedures to ensure that no one should be obliged to live in the streets. Neglected children and children at risk without sufficient parental care, will, in most cases, be taken care of by the child welfare authorities.

We also have an Acute Child Welfare Service, which operates in close co-operation with the police, giving immediate assistance to neglected children and youngsters involved in criminality, domestic violence and other social problems.

The school system, both at primary and secondary level, also provides a follow-up-service for school dropouts, to help pupils to get on the right track again.

However, we are aware of that some children and youth in need of social welfare assistance are not taken sufficient care of, and that we need to improve and reinforce our routines in this area, as part of our general child and youth policy.

Compared to the situation in many other countries, it must be fair to say that this is a very limited phenomenon in Norway, occurring mainly in the bigger cities, particularly in Oslo.

Very seldom, if at all, we find homeless children, left totally on their own.

To our knowledge, the “street children” in Norway still live with their families, often in single-parent families, but they spend most of their daily life in the streets of central Oslo, hanging around train stations, supermarkets etc., without adult supervision or control. Some of these are areas also exposed to prostitution, drug sale and addiction, so the risk can be considerable for developing deviant and delinquent behaviour. Vagabondism and school dropout are also found in this group of marginalized children and youth.

A group which has gained considerable attention over the last years are the so-called “Child robbers”, i.e. children or youth robbing other children of cell phones, popular clothing, etc. A recent study reported that 90% of this group are of foreign ethnic origin.

Recently, there have also been signs of a new trend of illegal import of underage children for sexual exploitation or other criminal purposes. So far the authorities have little solid knowledge of this new area of child abuse, but we have reason to believe that, so far, it is of a most moderate occurrence.

But even if this is a relatively small problem in our country, both the authorities and professionals find great challenge in developing better standards in this area. Consequently, the Ministry of Child and Family Affairs has an ongoing process on improving the policy and practice in these matters.

### **Orphans in Russia**

What I also would like to draw your attention to this morning, however, is a recently published scientific report made by three Norwegian researchers on the topic of "ORPHANS IN RUSSIA".

This report was published only one month ago by the "Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research".

The Norwegian team has been working in close collaboration with the following Russian researchers (and please excuse my miserable Russian pronunciation here...):

- Anna B. Fedulova and Larissa S. Malik (both at the Institute for Psychology and Social Work at the Pomor University of Arkhangelsk)
- and Mikhail V. Firsov and Lev V. Mardakhaev from the Moscow Social State University).

The report includes summaries in Russian.

You will find some handout copies of the summaries in the lobby.

This pilot study was financed by a grant from the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Child and Family Affairs, a grant from The Nordic Council of Ministers, and from resources of the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research.

The main objective of the research project was to contribute to the process of facilitating a more family-like childhood for Russian orphans. A central point of interest is to

clarify feasible alternatives to traditional orphanages in Russia, and provide orphans with a more family-like upbringing.

There is an international trend of preferring family-like units instead of big institutions of residential care for children who live without parental care.

Several models may be taken into consideration:

Models of family-like alternatives may be placed on a continuum from traditional adoptions, via patron families and SOS Children's Villages to smaller units of more traditional orphanages.

The report discusses both the reasons why some children become social orphans and what happens to children being left without parental care. There are also considerations on laws and programmes on orphans at both federal, regional and local levels, and the situation in Arkhangelsk is looked into in more detail.

### **Conclusions**

The report registers a considerable shift in the ways Russian authorities plan for and cope with orphans. The main idea is that these children should grow up in a family-like setting.

The report shows that substantial efforts are being made to develop and implement alternatives to the care traditionally offered in the huge institutions of residential care. A wide variety of ministries and public organs take part in this shift.

This whole turning operation, however, is an enormous task. Firstly: The number of children involved is great and increasing. Secondly: The new development is to a large extent dependent upon socio-economic, political, institutional and cultural factors that will need time to consolidate. One example of this factor complexity is the legacy from the Soviet state socialism, represented by a countrywide network of institutionalised orphanages.

Other challenges include the vast area of preventive measures to be taken in order to decrease the number of orphanages in the longer perspective. This is, of course, a



socio-political challenge of substantial dimensions, as well as a preferential task for the Educational, Health , Labour and Social Security Authorities.

The same group of researchers is now engaged in a broader analytical research project on the same topic. This new project will have a practical aim. The two Russian research and teaching institutes involved will be central in developing and implementing alternatives to institutional care for orphans.

Thank you.

## SWEDEN

### Street children in Sweden

In Sweden hardly any children at all would be regarded as street children according to the definitions in the background paper. There are several factors that may be mentioned as reasons for this:

First: The national registration of every Swedish citizen and persons with permanent residence permit together with a nine-year compulsory school makes it possible to keep track of every Swedish child. All authorities concerned are obliged to notify the social services immediately if a child needs care or protection.

Second: Even though there is poverty in Sweden the social welfare system provides for basic survival needs. Nobody in Sweden is poor to that extent that you have to send your children out on the street to beg or to find their own support. Still, there are children begging, I will come back to that.

One can also bear in mind what the street working social workers pointed out to me: If a child runs away from home, living on the streets is an alternative only if there is a community of other street children to join. You don't live on the streets for months or years all by yourself.

**There is a group of approximately 100 children that stay away from home but they are all known by the social services. Some of these children have run away from home because of their family conditions: their parents may have abused them or the parents are abusing drugs or alcohol. Some children claim that their parents have thrown them out and will not let them come home again. Most of these children do not actually live on the streets but stay with friends (or so-called friends).**

Since every child has the right to be cared for and if necessary be placed in another family one may pose the question why these children have to run away. Efforts have been made to solve the problems in the family or to find alternative care for the children but for different reasons this has not worked out. One study shows that the social services in these cases often have a parent-perspective. They try to convince the child to move back home against the child's will.

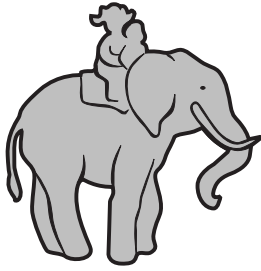
In Sweden, the institutions are not aimed at orphaned children but mainly for children who need to be taken into custody because of their behaviour. They are a risk to themselves or to others. They are placed at the institution by the social services

Every year approximately 500 unaccompanied children, e.g. children without parents or other grown up relatives, seek asylum in Sweden. Some of them run away from the reception centre. The children that arrive the legal way are known to the Migration board and every child that runs away shall be reported to the police and the social services. The reason why they run away may be this: Their parents send them to Sweden to achieve a better life and to stay with relatives. But the relatives are not interested in

having this child staying with them. Annually, some 50 children disappear without any trace or police investigation.

The number of children that stays illegally in Sweden is of course impossible to know. The street working social workers rarely see alien children. One may presume there are two groups of children that stay illegally in Sweden. One group of children – or youngsters - arrive with the purpose of committing crimes. Another group came to join friends or relatives and they do not end up on the streets.

These last two summers Roma children have been found alone begging on the streets. When you approach them their parents turn up from nowhere.



Lena Banck  
BUP-Elefanten  
Child and adolescent psych.  
University Hospital  
S 581 85 Linköping SWEDEN  
tel +46 13 22 50 43  
fax +46 13 22 50 45  
[lena.banck@lio.se](mailto:lana.banck@lio.se)

## Country presentation Sweden

I will comment on some great problems concerning children at risk, which is the term that we often use. It includes all children who are at risk of neglect; sexual, physical and emotional abuse; living with violent parents; living with parents who are alcohol or drug addicts etc.

It also includes children who live dangerous lives out of their own behaviour.

We have **juridical** problems:

Perpetrators who are under suspicion of having abused preschool children are very seldom prosecuted. When it comes to school children the number of prosecutions rises but still far too many children do not have their cases tried in court. The forensic interviews are too often not good enough to be the strong evidence that is necessary for the court trial.

We have **social** problems:

There is a dramatic increase of children calling the Children's Helpline "BRIS", (Children's Rights in Society). They want to talk about bullying, family conflicts, love/relationship problems, sexual development, sexuality and pregnancy, sexual and physical abuse. There is also an increasing number and children reporting sexual and physical abuse, that doesn't mean that the number of abuse incidents have increased. Instead there is a greater awareness in the society.

We have **psychological** problems:

More children describe their feelings of loneliness, more and more children are depressed and need medication, and more parents have too little time together with their children. More children are seduced by the Internet possibilities. More children do not get appropriate help in the child and adolescent psychiatric clinics, due to increasing number of children and families seeking help.

We have **societal** problems:

The social services meet with damaged children who need support from society to get good enough living circumstances, and at the same time society is cutting down money for those who need it the most. As far as I know there is not a lack of money in Sweden, but the last decade there has been a great lack of resources in the welfare system. There is a tendency in society to move from solidarity to individuality. This is a very dangerous, and we need to fight for the children's rights!

## Discussion

The group discussion during the meeting benefited greatly from having had interventions on the broad phenomenon of children living in the street. The sometimes-confusing use of terms was addressed by several of the speakers. Children **in** the street, Children **on** the street, **Homeless** children, **Vagrant** children, and other descriptions are used trying to capture the essence of the phenomenon. Several of the interventions pointed to the fact that we are talking about a group of children that for often complex reasons cannot stay with their parents or initial carers and end up fend-ing for themselves, taking care of their own lives, at an age when they should be cared for by adults.

Several participants stressed the close relationship between abuse and exploitation of children and children in the street. Domestic abuse of children, including sexual abuse of children, is often part of the background of children living in the street. This is especially true for girls living in the street, but physical, sexual and psychological abuse form a major part of boys' experiences too. There is a need to understand how much of a factor this is in the recruitment of children to a street life

Latvia reported from the institution run by the Orthodox church that it was their belief and experience that many of the children that decide on living on the street, do so as they have been abused and exploited in their homes. The lack of legal recognition of these children as victims of a crime leaves them few alternatives. Criminal cases have been pursued by the organisation in Latvia in order to assist children in receiving adequate support, but these attempts have so far proved futile. To ensure that cases of domestic violence, abuse and exploitation lead to public recognition of the child as a victim of a crime would be preventive in regards to children in the street.

In the report from Latvia on Children in the street, the prevalence of dysfunctional families is taken as one of the indications that the number of children taking to a life in the street is increasing. This approach is interesting since it points to the back-ground factors.

Another interesting information from Latvia is the number of children not attending school. The report also states that children in the street have learned more about keep-ing out of the way of the police and other authorities in order to pursue their lives. Obviously life in the street to many of these boys and girls are more attractive than what social welfare agencies or shelters can offer. This also points to an issue put forward in the presentation mad by the Russian NGO, Street children. They empha-sised the fact that any assistance or offer of alternative life style must take into ac-count that children in the street often experience their life style as a choice. Thus, the conceived freedom of life in the street must be recognised, and the alternative life style must be perceived as rewarding and exciting enough. The abuse and exploitation may be there in the life history of these children, but their lifestyle is perceived as a free choice. The limitation to their freedom that most institutions or shelters offer is thus sometimes not seen as a preferable change from the life the street offers. The Russian participants described a systematic approach whereby the authorities respon-sible for children's issues in the different regional, national and municipal authorities are involved. The Russian emphasis is on preventing children from ending up living

in the street. Some regional programmes have an elaborated approach with quite extensive content including support to young persons getting married and young persons expecting their first child.

Children in the street as a phenomenon is closely connected to juvenile delinquency and the way you deal with the latter will have bearing on the former. This was emphasised in the presentations and in the discussions. Individual approaches to the problem of juvenile delinquency and how this is dealt with have proven effective in some countries, whereas other countries in the discussion expressed experiences where young persons committing crimes end up in the street after having served time in institutions. On the whole, most participants emphasised the fact that young persons leaving institutions seem to do so with insufficient preparation to fend for themselves in the regular societal context. Thus many of these young persons resort to a criminal lifestyle and form, in many cities, the core group of the street community. The existence of such a community of street children was described as a prerequisite for other children to choose life on the street in Sweden.

A number of factors were pointed to as contributing to the estimated growth in the number of street children in some countries: Poverty, domestic violence and the modernisation of society have put families under more stress and more pressure. Households with children are on the whole poorer and one-parent households are under most financial pressure. Existing country statistics also demonstrate that more and more children experience violence.

Some participants argued that more and more children take to the streets and end up as prostitutes. The very nature of the phenomenon makes it very hard to measure in any secure way why it is difficult for government and municipal authorities to adequately respond to the problem and co-ordinate their activities accordingly. It was argued that this has in some countries led to a shortage of educationalists and special teachers and a lack of social assistance especially noticeable in schools. In the school setting this is alarming as figures in some countries show that more and more children drop out of the school system. The transition of society with rapidly changing norms has led to the street environment's increased attraction to young persons. Other reasons like unemployment, poverty and low assistance from government were also noted as contributing to the incidence of social difficulties. Children find themselves with limited possibilities to establish themselves in society. As in many risk situations, children from families with alcohol and drug dependency problems often seem to put themselves at risk. In families with these problems there is also a high incidence of violence, the presence of which being part of the background history of many children living in the street. In some situations parents make their children go to the street to earn some money.

Achievements have been made however: In November 2002 there was a cut in the time of imprisonment for juveniles in Latvia which is now a maximum of 6 months within which time a verdict should be taken so the child can be sent to prison or be free. Alternative programmes for young offenders in Latvia are formed but the dynamics are slow, the support is slow and there is a lack of understanding of the importance of the projects and programmes.

Council of Europe have set up an expert group on the rights of children in institutions. This is a positive step also to improve the situation for children in the street as many of these have been previously institutionalised and if standards in institutions are improved, fewer children will take to a life in the street.

A need to understand legislation in the different countries was expressed during the discussion. A child sentenced for a crime may in some countries stay on in an experimental shelter provided he is not committed for a violent crime. In other countries, the entry of a police investigation or a prosecutor will stop all other social work with a child. The latter is true for Latvia where a child that is sentenced to prison will no longer be eligible for support or attention by rehabilitation services.

In Iceland children are hardly ever put in jail. The cooperation between the social, legal and psychiatric professions makes the placement of a child in prison very rare. About one or two children under 18 are sentenced to jail in Iceland. The situation in Sweden and Norway is much the same.

The German researcher spoke of the inclusion of children that commit crimes, as this is their only means of survival on the street. She meant that the fact that there exists no legal way for children to support themselves once on the street, children would quite naturally get involved in criminality. A common “career” for a street child thus being to commit crimes, and being brought to court. The German system allows for courts to sentence children to sentences on probation. The execution of a sentence will be on hold should the young person lead a non-criminal life after the first sentencing. However, the children that will not receive any assistance in finding alternative life choices will revert to a life on the street, commit new crimes and in the end they will come into the prison system, since the law does not allow for several of these probation sentencing. The creation of a group of young adults that have started their “street career” in adolescence and have since been in prison is then a fact.

In most countries there is a gap between the way abused children are protected by the law and the implementation of such a law. The procedures do not allow for any other actions to be taken and it is still difficult, in some countries impossible, for a child victim of abuse to get sufficient support from the legal system.

In other countries in the cooperation the law does provide children with support and legal protection. In Iceland for example, the law may make the accused leave the house during the investigation. Such examples are however rare in the region. The presence of abusive experiences is common among street children.

In Sweden children in the street do not exist. The children that exist on the street do so in very short periods. The Swedish social legislation provides basic support for all families and a child should never have to resort to begging or other street activities.

In Denmark, the situation is somewhat different. Children in the streets are mainly children living in an environment where drug abuse and other forms of self-destructive behaviour prevail. In Christiania, the freetown, in Copenhagen, young persons are able to buy hashish and this is a common drug used by adolescents who feel they have no foothold in society. The starting point is often the fact that children are dropping out of school. In Denmark it is important to work with school dropouts.



Prostitution and drug and alcohol abuse are the most important parts of street life. It was also pointed out from the Danish participants that children on the whole claim they are lonely, and they describe the street life as a party to which you don't need an invitation.

The legal information that exists on the Childcentre web site (<http://childcentre.baltinfo.org>) was often called for during the discussions.

The importance of changing and influencing the way societies view a child was often stressed. Important to recognise that violence becomes a way of life for many children through media.

The difficulty in coordinating the activities on a national level with all actors working with children on the street was mentioned. A project carried out a few years back had this as one of its goals but this was not achieved. Coordination is something that needs to come out of a joint wish to improve the situation of young persons choosing to live on the streets. The lack of co-ordination is also an effect of the difficulty in finding funding for the activities of organisations working with children in the street. The meeting identified a number of studies but little support is given to maintaining capacity in the organisations that do carry out work targeting this group of children.

The structures of social support to families and to children are often meant to deal also with the issue of children in the street. These structures and public systems do not in any country deal with the specifics that follow a life on the street and that any support must focus on. A child that live in the street for some time acquires a specific street life and a culture that does in a sense make him addicted to the life on the street. The longer a child stays on the street, the more addicted he becomes since the common understanding of professionals working with this group of children is that if a child continues a life in the street for some time, he or she acquires a status and position in the subculture that may prove difficult to abandon. It was thus specifically pointed out by the Russian NGO that children in the street must be given attractive alternatives that carry some form of status in the community of street children. Computer classes have been seen as attractive to young persons in this sense, and acquiring skills in computing will thus assist the child in maintaining his motivation for attempting at living an alternative life.

The ongoing strengthening of the general support systems specifically directed at children and families with children would be one such measure that may benefit the prevention of children ending up in the street.

From the discussion it was also made clear there is a definite time issue: the earlier in a street career you can intervene, the easier it is. Trust in adults and belief in your capacity to survive in the society is something that is worn down gradually and the sooner this process is halted, the better.

It may be argued that children in the street is not a category of children at risk but a consequence of children at risk. The many testimonies that children end up in the street as a result of exploitative experiences in their home, or as a result of a period in a prison or an institution would make such an assumption valid. However, as the discussions proceeded it became clear that the life in the streets creates a context that is

so different to the societal norm, that adaptation to this context for the young person inevitably demands of him or her to form a personality structure different from what we see in children victimised by exploitation for example. Such a personality structure includes social adaptation, psychological adaptation and sometimes-biological adaptation to a life where other values and norms will need to take precedence to the norms and values of the surrounding society. Such adaptation to what some would call anti-social behaviour may well function as a border between the child and mainstream society.

Violence between children in the street was mentioned briefly.

In Sweden it was recognised that children would not choose to live on the street unless there was some form of community to join. Most of the time, this does not exist in Sweden. During summer periods this community is, however regularly formed and young persons may well find peers that also choose to live for a period in the street. Otherwise, living in the street in Sweden usually consists of moving from house to house, spending time with friends and friends of friends. The obvious risk of exploitation and of exposure to criminal life styles and behaviours makes this kind of life dangerous to the young person's development.

Sweden, Norway and Finland mentioned that unaccompanied children seek asylum in their countries and that some of these children disappear from reception centres, unknown where. Some of these children would most certainly fall under the term street children as they have no permanent residence and no adults that care for them. It is feared that some of these children are caught in the sex industry; others will be in the countries in order to commit other crimes, often instigated by adults. Children living under these conditions often need to sustain their life by criminality or by other forms of survival.

## **Conclusions**

### **Prevention:**

The participants at the meeting were in general agreement on the existence of a number of prerequisites for children to choose a life in the street:

- A home environment that did not adequately care for the child due to alcohol abuse, drug abuse or criminal lifestyle among the adult caretakers.
- Abuse and exploitation of the child in the home without any intervention from social services or other child protection services.
- Institutions for children and young persons are seen as risk environments as many children run away from institutions. Institutions may be considered detrimental in that many children in institutions leave these since they are not adequately and respectfully cared for. According to testimonies this is especially true for children that come from exploitative background.
- Children suffering abuse or exploitation in institutions both by adults working there and by other children at the institution form a special group at risk of ending up in the street.

- Programmes for life skills training for children preparing them for a life outside of the institution was considered valuable in preventing children and young persons from choosing a life in the street.
- Young persons with a criminal record that leave safe institutions are at high risk of ending up in the street, both as a result of their often-chaotic background and following their institutionalisation. Young persons leaving safe institutions are seldom prepared for the life in a society that often looks upon them with distrust.
- The lack of employment opportunities for young persons forms an obstacle for many young persons in independently establishing themselves. Especially girls are hit by the marginalisation this may create.
- Several young persons form families in a situation they cannot control, ending up in financial difficulties with the young father often leaving the family. Support to young persons forming families and to young parents is one way of preparing the young persons for what may happen.