

Orphans in Russia

In 2003, the Russian Ministry of Health indicated that the number of orphans in the country was still on the rise. Today there are an estimated 842,000 children growing up in Russian state-run institutions. As many as 95% of these children have a living parent and are considered social orphans. Poverty, alcoholism, drug abuse and other social problems are the primary reasons that parents abandon their children to Russian orphanages or lose their parental rights.

In addition to the hundreds of thousands of children growing up in state-run institutions, there are countless others that roam the streets, living in railroad stations, sewers or any place in which they can find shelter. Each child in a state-run orphanage is diagnosed as either normal or disabled at the age of four. More than two-thirds of the children in Russian institutions have been incorrectly diagnosed as mentally deficient and given the label "imbecile" for the rest of their lives with little hope for change.

Those children classified as normal usually remain in a state-supported orphanage until they are approximately 16-17 years of age. Typically, they are ill-equipped for life on their own, and many fail to make the transition from institutional to independent living. As the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Russia explodes (AIDS in Russia is growing faster than in any other country in the world), orphans become an increasingly at-risk group.

- **Comfort Foundation** works with State orphanages to help orphans transition from institutionalized housing to adult living. The Russian staff helps them set budgets, develop a plan for paying utilities, teaches them how to cook and budget their time wisely.
- **Comfort Foundation** staff workers offer Christian Ethics and Morals classes as well as life skills classes for children in orphanages.
- **Comfort Foundation** staff hosts camping opportunities for orphans and underprivileged children during spring and summer vacations.
- **Comfort Foundation** staff works with two children's shelters to provide help to children living in poor neighborhoods.
- The local governments in Vologda and Cherepovets have taken steps toward working with **Comfort Foundation** staff so that together they mobilize Russian businesses, private individuals, churches and other Russian organizations to serve underprivileged children and social orphans.

Comfort Foundation Offers Help!!!

Help our Russian staff help these children.

Send your tax deductible donations to:

**Comfort Foundation, USA
P.O. Box 220261
St. Louis, MO 63122
Tel. 314 909 9197**

www.comfortfoundationusa.org

Email: comfortfoundationusa@yahoo.com



Comfort Foundation, USA financially and emotionally supports the staff of Comfort Foundation, Russia as they minister to orphans and underprivileged children in the Vologda region of northern Russia.

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Help give these children a future!