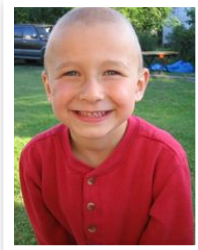


OUR NEEDS...

We have been hit hard as a charity in Latvia this last year not only because of receiving now fewer lats per pound or dollar of donation but also because of steep inflation here. In fact we will have to face the difficult decision of cutting back our work unless we can raise more regular support. Often we hear people commenting on how wonderful and needed our work is, how important it is for our children to have the oasis they have in our centres. If you also consider our ministry is good and needed then please take time to weigh up how much you could give – no gift would ever be too small or too large.



Of course we are always glad of volunteer help if you love children and teenagers or are an experienced 'handyman'. Looking towards next summer we will also need help in the development of a holiday base for the kids

Bank transfers can be made to our bank in Latvia:

SEB Unibanka
SWIFT: UNLALV2X
Address: Pils iela 23, Riga, Latvia
Account name: Hope for Children
Account Nr: LV93 UNLA 0002 0054 69960

Alternatively, cheques in any currency can be sent to:

Hope for Children
A/K 576,
Riga LV1050,
Latvia
*Please address the cheque to **Hope for Children***

If you live in the UK:

We can recover tax on your gift through The Dove Trust. Please call them on 0845 130 3683 and ask how you can make a donation to Hope for Children.

Proverbs 14:21

**“... but blessed is he who is
kind to the needy”**

HOPE FOR CHILDREN NEWSLETTER JULY 2008

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www.hope.lv

Sometimes I look around and it seems that things are getting better for kids and families in Latvia. We're thankful for the good work of the special task Ministry for Child and Family and we're thankful for the improved situation with employment and at least some, albeit very small, basic social benefits for those raising children on their own who cannot work. Also this past year we've seen a much more concerted and coordinated effort to work with problem parents instead of hurriedly taking their children away from them straight into formal children's homes which will never be able to fill the need of parental love. But when we listen to our children and what they share, when we see their abominable living conditions and understand no one is going to provide anything better for a very long time to come, when we hear of school and college teachers drunk at work and drinking with the kids on excursions, when we see how ineffective the police are against open distribution of drugs, when we see parents continuing to abandon their children to go and work abroad, we understand that there is a new generation of problem families growing around us. For some, we trust that the foundation we are to build into their lives at Hope for Children will stop the downward cycle. We continue to work, not only professionally, but with prayer and the power of the life-changing gospel that we have seen set so many free and change the cycle of alcohol, drug and other abuse. The children we serve need our help not just for one or two years but for many and we are committed to serving them long-term. An enormous thank you to those of you who support our work prayerfully and/or financially already, especially those who have stayed with us long-term.

Helen M Vipass, Director



Just a few kilometers out of Riga city centre (a European capital!) are two large districts of old, dilapidated wooden housing with no modern facilities.



DAY CENTRES

The children that come to our daycare centres (two in Riga, one in Skrunda) are all kids who are very poor and at risk. Many of them, because of what they face at home, (violent and/or drunken parents, eviction etc) are living on the edge of their nerves and this of course reflects in their behaviour. But other issues we've been dealing with are:

A little boy who doesn't cry or react to pain when he falls or hurts himself

Children asking to take food home since they have none at home

Children with dark shadows under their eyes because of lack of sleep

A little girl who is stealing to get attention

A little girl burdened by the memory of a boy she saw murdered and the traumatic accidental death of her grandfather
Several older teens who've turned to us for help because they're homeless

A child who police have given up returning to her children's home

A very withdrawn, sensitive little girl whose mum went abroad to work leaving her with relatives who don't feed her or care for her.



Occasionally we have the great pleasure of chaperoning groups of children to Atlanta USA on a hosting programme arranged by 'Simple Obedience Ministries'. Through this programme several of our older children have found adoptive families who love them to bits. Recently Edgars, now 13 years, had his dream come true when he left to live with his new family



But despite their disadvantage or burdens the children do so well with the love, care and prayer they receive at Hope for Children. We're thrilled that all our regular kids have passed this year at school and will be able to move up a grade next academic year, particularly in the case of one girl whose older brothers and sisters had all dropped out of school early. Being able to go out and shop for new shoes or clothes is a rare treat for our kids, and for many a first time experience, as is to be asked what they want for Christmas or their birthday. Guntis, overwhelmed by the attention we gave him, cried when he received his birthday present saying no one at home had greeted him or given him a gift for his birthday. He's such a lovely, helpful lad who always notices things that need fixing and tries to fix them, we just love to make him feel special!

HERE COMES SUMMER...

Sadly we have had to stop renting our summer house by the beach this year but we have lots of plans of spending summer in camps and even a trip to Sweden for 11 of our kids (thank you Oskarshamn Pentecostal Church!). We have excursions planned to the countryside and some major tourist towns of Latvia and we are so looking forward to volunteers arriving from the UK who'll lead activities with the kids and teach them English. Please remember we have to fill three long months of



holiday time from school here in Latvia so we are particularly glad of volunteers during this time!

We still have land by the sea in Ķesterciems that we hope to develop into a holiday base for our kids.



Our director Helen Vipass was awarded an MBE by H M queen Elizabeth at the new year. March 22 she received the insignia at an inauguration at Buckingham Palace led by HRH Prince of Wales



Rita, one of our staff, fosters a boy who came to our central day centre who hadn't seen his little brother or sister since they were very small. Recently Rita found them in a children's home and there was such a happy reunion! And from this summer onwards Rita will have guardianship of all three!

