

**BETHANY SOCIAL SERVICES
ST. PETERSBURG RUSSIA
2004 Annual Report**

Bethany Social Services in St. Petersburg, Russia, was officially registered as a non-profit organization in Russia on November 11, 1998. The mission of this organization is to “protect and enhance the lives of children and families through high quality social services and through improving the social work practice in St. Petersburg and Leningrad area.”

Throughout the years, Bethany St. Petersburg built its programs and reputation and became well known in the Leningrad area. Agreements are signed with government and non-governmental organizations, and currently three projects are being implemented (two in the Leningrad area and one in the city of St. Petersburg). Bethany’s team consists of eight full-time employees, 14 contract employees, and 20 consultants.

PREGNANCY COUNSELING PROJECT (GREEN PROJECT)

The Green Project provides comprehensive, medical-social support to teenagers and young pregnant women. The goal of the project is to improve the reproductive health of young people, to offer counseling and support to young mothers and pregnant women, and to prevent the institutionalization of their babies. This project is implemented in partnership with the State Healthcare Establishment “City Children’s Polyclinic # 68” of Krasnogvardeysky District of St. Petersburg. This polyclinic is a model in the region for its medical and social services provided to pregnant women, teenagers, young mothers, and their unborn and born children. The City Children’s Polyclinic # 68 serves a district of St. Petersburg with a population of 400,000.

The “Green Project” began in 2000.

Accomplishments in 2004:

- Thirty-eight (38) teenagers received medical treatment and training on reproductive health.
- Fifty-five (55) pregnant women received counseling, medical care, training for delivery and baby care, and material support.
- Fifty-five (55) young mothers received counseling, training on baby care, and support.
- Twenty-nine (29) children were born to the clients served by the project and are being raised by their families.
- Ninety-six (96) food sets were distributed to pregnant women and young mothers.

EDUCATION PROJECT

The reform of the child welfare system identified the need to ask Bethany to train orphanage staff, including the orphanage directors, social workers, psychologists, and teachers. The project proved to be a success and the Committee for General and Professional Education of the Leningrad Area requested that Bethany continue this program in the future.

The orphanage directors reported that the quality of life and care for the institutionalized children improved due to this program. A network between these professionals was created and many of them continue to stay in touch after graduating from this program.

Accomplishments in 2004:

- In 2004, 25 orphanage directors from the Leningrad area completed 148 hours of training that helped them find ways to modernize their orphanages and make them more like a family environment for children. Eighty (80) of these training hours were offered in 2004.
- In September 2004, a new group of 25 students began a new training course. The title of the course was developed by Bethany in cooperation with the Leningrad Area Education Development Institute and is called "Quality of Education and Care in an Orphanage."

The students who participated in this course are the director assistants from 25 of the orphanages in the Leningrad area, which serve 2,500 children. In 2004, 64 hours of training were performed.

LIFE SKILLS PROJECT IN LOMONOSOV (TEEN PROJECT)

Bethany St. Petersburg adapted the curriculum developed by Bethany Christian Services in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and began this project in 1998 with 20 youth. The government specialists evaluated the results of this pilot program and because of the obvious positive results achieved, the Committee for General and Professional Education of the Leningrad Area decided to develop this initiative. The "Teen Center for Children Aging Out of Orphanages in Leningrad Area" was open.

Bethany participated in the rehabilitation process for a dormitory building of the trade school "Center for Teens," where 50 youth (orphans) could live and receive education every year. Some youth will live here for two or three years, until they completed their vocational training (the government decides for how long the youth will stay in this Center). While the government was responsible to provide the vocational training, Bethany trained these youth in life skills. *This project is the first initiative in Russia where a trade school is also providing special support and life skills training to the orphan-youth.*

Fifty (50) youth are part of Bethany's program every year. They receive individual counseling; training on various life skills; personal growth, job placement, healthy lifestyle, and parenting skills; and legal advice. Seminars are organized on various topics, as well as sewing, crafts, and aerobic lessons. The youth attend community events and, because of this project, the local community has changed its perception about orphans.

Life Skills Project Statistics

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of youth who graduated	34	24	34	18	22
Youth employed	32%	63%	79%	72%	55%
Youth who continue their education	9%	17%	14%	22%	18%
Youth attending mandatory military service	11%	4%	7%	6%	14%
Youth who have a place to live	82%	92%	93%	94%	100%

The Bethany staff working with these youth reported that they saw how our program increased the self-esteem of these youth and changed in better their aggressive

behavior. The government staff recognized that Bethany made a difference in the lives of these youth.

ORPHANAGE SUPPORT

Bethany Social Services St. Petersburg also supports a number of orphanages in the Leningrad area. Through donations from individuals in the U.S. and Russia, these orphanages receive clothing, shoes, medication, toys, and practical equipment, such as washing machines, water heaters, mattresses, etc.