

Information About The TOUCH Project

The TOUCH Project (Take One Ukrainian Child's Hand) was formed as a sponsorship program for Ukrainian children.

In 2000, Sabra Killen and Alice Rampton traveled from Corvallis, Oregon, USA to Uzhgorod, Ukraine to help distribute a shipment of humanitarian aid from the Corvallis-Uzhgorod Sister Cities Association. This shipment of humanitarian aid was one of many projects between Uzhgorod and Corvallis since the inception of their sister city relationship in approximately 1990.

Killen and Rampton visited 3 orphanages and recognized that there were many children with special needs. Upon returning home, they envisioned a program that would help meet some of these specific needs. To help with the support of these children, the concept of a sponsorship program was developed.

The 110 children at the Chaslivtsi Orphanage outside of Uzhgorod, Ukraine were the first to receive sponsors. The TOUCH Project has grown to include additional children in Uzhgorod with disabilities, abandoned or neglected children, and orphans. There are now over 300 children in The TOUCH Project with sponsors for each child. Most of the sponsors are from Corvallis, Oregon, but there are sponsors now in eleven other states and 2 in Canada. Sponsors include families, individuals, businesses, civic & religious organizations, youth clubs, and school classrooms. Each sponsor contributes \$60 annually. This money is hand carried each year to Ukraine each year. In addition, various sponsors have covered the cost of dental surgery, college expenses, or tutoring for the child that they sponsor.

Approximately 100 individuals have traveled from the U.S. to Ukraine since 2001 as part of an annual TOUCH delegation to help these children in various ways. These volunteers travel at their own expense. Delegation members meet and visit with the children, take them shopping for school clothes, on outdoor excursions and hikes, and to movies, museums, parks, and cultural events. Sponsorship funds are also used to purchase eye glasses, school supplies, food, furniture, toys, books, etc.

Additional funds have been raised from TOUCH sponsors and other individuals and corporations, including NuSkin Enterprises Force For Good Foundation, to support various projects including the installation of a septic system at the Chaslivtsi Orphanage, remodel of 11 classrooms, a mini van, a laundry facility, 2 computer centers, and 120 beds and bedding. Over \$250,000 has been raised and donated to improve and brighten the life of each child in The TOUCH Project.

The TOUCH Project has grown to include five sponsorship programs for over 350 children in Ukraine including:

- The Chaslivtsi Orphanage
- The New Family Program
- The Medical-Social Rehabilitation Center
- Vocational Training Programs
- Uzhgorod Public School #14

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[The Chaslivtsi Orphanage](#) provides a boarding school situation for children, ages 7-17, who have been abandoned or orphaned. Most of the children reside at the orphanage on a fulltime basis, but a few children travel home to relatives on weekends or certain occasions.

[The New Family Program](#) includes children whose parents are deceased, deprived of their parental rights, in prison, or have abandoned their children. These children are often under the care of a grandparent who lives on a pension of about \$50-60 per month. The program provides a center where children may receive a hot meal, meet with friends, study, take a shower, wash their clothes, and gain instruction in singing, dancing, art, sewing, languages, and computers.

[The Medical-Social Rehabilitation Center](#) includes children from 3 to 18 years with various physical and/or mental disabilities who usually live with a family member and come to the center for school, physical therapy, socialization, and training.

[The Vocational Training Programs](#) provide opportunities for orphanage graduates to live in a safe environment and learn to develop marketable skills.

[Public School #14 in Uzhgorod](#) is a school where students come from very impoverished circumstances. Sponsorships help to pay for food, book, supplies, and improving the school facilities.

The TOUCH Project Sponsorship Guidelines

- The TOUCH Project is a friendship program, not an adoption agency.
- Limit of two children per sponsor.
- Each sponsor contributes \$60 annually.
- Donations are hand carried to Ukraine by volunteers who travel at their own expense.
- Donations are used to purchase needed items for children in the program. The funds are also used to improve facilities where the children live or gather.
- Each sponsor receives an Annual Report and a photograph of the child.
- Correspondence through letters is encouraged between the child and sponsor.
- All donations are tax deductible when checks are written to the Corvallis-Uzhgorod Sister Cities Association.

Additional information about The TOUCH Project is available at the following website:
<http://www.sistercities.corvallis.or.us>

You may also contact the volunteer Co-Coordinator for more information:

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