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OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN**

# SUCCESS STORY

## Ohio's Experience in Child Welfare Put to Use to Improve Lives of Russian Children

**The National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NFPC) and the Institute for Human Services (IHS) organized a study tour for Russian specialists and managers involved in child welfare to the state of Ohio as part of the USAID-supported 'A Compass for Childhood' Program.**



Photo: IHS/NFPC

*IHS founders, Judith S. Rycus, PhD., MSW, Program Director and Ronald C. Hughes, PhD., M.S.c.S.A., Director (center), deliver a welcoming speech to the Russian delegation in Columbus*

*"The Delegation from Russia exemplifies the international movement to end permanent orphanage placement as the only means of responding to child maltreatment and is working to build community based supportive services for families." - A. Troy Miller, President Pro Tempore of the City Council of Columbus, Ohio*

A recent U.S.-based study tour for Russian child welfare regional government representatives was initiated by the National Foundation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Moscow and hosted by the Institute for Human Services in Columbus, Ohio. The tour proved to be another effective step in building lasting partnerships to tackle challenges that both nations face. IHS is a leading child welfare agency in the development and provision of competency-based training for child protection service providers in Ohio, several states, Canada and internationally.

A nine-member Russian delegation visited a variety of programs in the state of Ohio, which has been hailed by other states and nations for success in training child welfare professionals and finding homes for hard-to-place children. High-level officials from various Russian regions came to Columbus to witness firsthand the work being accomplished, as far as caseloads, disability issues, finances and regulations are concerned. The agenda of the tour included exploring mentoring and job training skills systems for older foster children and services designed to keep troubled families together.

"We can't be just kind to children and give them our hearts, we need to be professional and have best practices that will help them in life," said Alexander Spivak, NFPC Vice-President, at a welcoming brunch at the Statehouse hosted by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, which is responsible for running the state's child welfare and foster programs.

One more trip through the 'A Compass for Childhood' Program is planned in the fall, this time for specialists from Program-established interregional Child Welfare Centers-of-Excellence in Buryatia, Perm, Moscow and Volgograd, and from regions assisting in dissemination of the NFPC-developed Toolkit for Regional Planning.