

The Kids First Fund

FROM THE PRESIDENT

“This life matters” were the words said by a Lutheran pastor at the funeral of Renata Laukandt. This kind and generous lady died at the age of 102 after a wonderful life as a gifted music teacher, composer, pianist, cook, hostess and gardener. I knew Renata as a fellow church member; she was an eternal optimist who delighted in the joy of life. It’s the combination of the pastor’s words and Renata’s life philosophy that offer a compelling message for this annual report.

Brigita, a 14-year old girl in Latvia, would be surprised to learn “her life matters.” She would be truly amazed to learn her life is important to you. Brigita has experienced nothing but pain in her young life. She was raped by her step-father. He was arrested for the crime and remains in jail. Family members universally blame Brigita for the situation. Everywhere Brigita faces ridicule and hatred from those closest to her. But she found shelter near Rugaji, Latvia where she discovered her life does indeed matter.

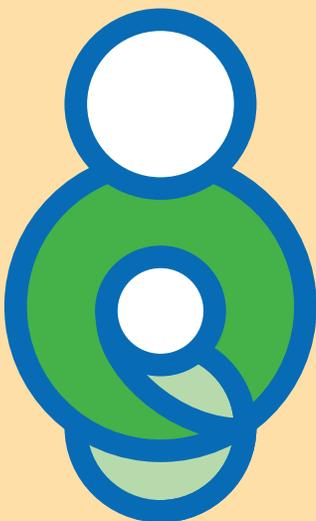
optimism love generosity
joy life kind
caring
delight shelter

Isn't it amazing? You live thousands of miles from her. Before the prior paragraph you did not know her. And yet you eagerly proclaim “this life matters” through your donations and support of the Kids First Fund. You demonstrate the wonder of our universal humanity. Every dollar, euro or pound contributed by you shouts in very oh-so-precise words . . . this life matters. It’s a message that is heard by every abused child and mother helped through the Kids First Fund.

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Eternal optimism and joy of life were enduring qualities for Renata. And everyone associated with the Kids First Fund shares these wonderful qualities. Caregivers in Latvia believe in positive outcomes when they help children recover from abuse. Teachers in Moldova safeguard a future generation when they help parents become more effective and protective. Donors know their generosity helps bring joy by creating places where children are safe from hurt.

Your optimism allowed the Kids First Fund to build a sizeable balance through the years. During 2008, \$200,000 of this money was spent on the construction of a family shelter in Rugaji, Latvia. The Latgale Regional Support Centre for Abused Children and their Families was completed during 2009 and celebrated a grand opening on June 13. This shelter is indeed a place where children are provided the opportunity to reconnect with the joy of life stolen by physical and sexual abuse.

You know these lives matter. The very same qualities that defined the life of 102-year old Renata Laukandt drive your generosity and love of humanity. Never forget the awesome good you have delivered through your gifts to the Kids First Fund. Never forget how your life matters because it is so very connected to children throughout the world.

For the kids,



Jay Sorensen, President and Volunteer

“You know
these lives matter.”

—JAY SORENSEN

**KIDS FIRST FUND, INC.
2009 & 2008 INCOME STATEMENT**

CONTRIBUTIONS	2009	2008
Cash donations	\$8,143.17	\$8,809.97
Interest from savings account	\$752.71	\$6,857.17
In-kind items (see note a)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Online Travel Auction for Kids (see note b)	\$0.00	\$21,947.87
Total Contributions	\$8,895.88	\$37,615.01
EXPENDITURES AND DISTRIBUTIONS		
Grants made to support mission	\$1,356.91	\$200,000.00
Salaries, compensation & benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional fees & fundraising	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses & Distributions	\$1,356.91	\$200,000.00
Excess Funds	\$7,538.97	-\$162,384.99

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.

(a) Items were donated that support the mission of the Kids First Fund.

(b) Net results from the annual online travel auction. All items are 100% donated. Selling expenses associated with eBay auctions were 15% of the gross amount raised.

**KIDS FIRST FUND, INC.
2009 & 2008 BALANCE SHEET**

	DEC. 31, 2009	DEC. 31, 2008
ASSETS		
Cash and investments	\$122,878.02	\$115,339.05
Other assets	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Assets	\$122,878.02	\$115,339.05
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Assets & Fund Balance	\$122,878.02	\$115,339.05

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.

NUMBERS HELP TELL OUR STORY

The **2009 annual report** represents a continuing commitment to donor disclosure by including the annual financial statements for the Kids First Fund. In addition, filings made with government regulators, such as the US Internal Revenue Service, are available for download at KidsFirstFund.org.

The financial results demonstrate the effect of the worldwide recession. Total revenue was over \$8,895 which represents a significant decrease from 2008. Individual cash donations of \$8,143 dipped by approximately 7% compared to 2008 donations. The average donation received during 2009 was approximately \$247 and is nearly identical to the 2008 average.

The most significant change from 2008 was the absence of the annual International Online Travel Auction for Kids. This activity was canceled for 2009 due to financial turmoil in the airline industry. It was not a good year to solicit donations from airlines and other travel companies when layoffs, losses, and bankruptcies were so prevalent. Interest income also dropped due to a lower bank balance after distribution of the \$200,000 Latgale Regional Support Centre grant in 2008 and lower interest levels.

The Kids First Fund continued its tradition of operating on a zero-overhead budget and did not incur expenses related to salaries, fundraising fees, and travel expenses. Results for 2010 will be significantly boosted by a very successful International Online Travel Auction for Kids held during April 2010.

Our bank balance at year end was a very healthy \$122,878. Spending on grants during 2009 was limited to \$1,356 for the purchase of laptop computers to be used by school-age children at the family shelter in Latvia. This amount was a designated gift made during 2008.

FAMILY SHELTER OPENS IN LATVIA

The Latgale Regional Support Center, located in the small village of Rugaji in eastern Latvia, hosted an opening ceremony on June 13, 2009 to mark completion of the shelter. The event was attended by local residents, contractors and workers involved in construction, local and national government representatives, Gundars Daudze MP (Chairman of Latvia's Parliament), Ambassador Scott Heatherington (Embassy of Canada), Charge d'Affaires Bruce Rogers (Embassy of the USA), and board members of the Kids First Fund.



This image from October 2009 shows the completed family shelter.



Ribbon cutting (left to right) Jay Sorensen, Joern Ziegler, and Gundars Daudze.

Participating in the ribbon-cutting ceremony were representatives of the primary donors for the project: Gundars Daudze (Representing the Government of Latvia), Andris Berzins (Executive Director of the Latvia Children's Fund), Joern Ziegler (Managing Director of CCF Children's Fund of Germany), and Jay Sorensen (President of the Kids First Fund). The Sprott Foundation of Canada was also a major contributor to the project; the donation was arranged by the Kids First Fund.

The two-story structure accommodates a minimum of 30 mothers and children in 14 private bedrooms and uses earth-friendly design elements. The ground floor includes administrative offices, interview and therapy rooms, full-service kitchen, and a dining room. The ground floor will also feature a conference room that can be used as a children's activity room and a place for older children to do homework. Living quarters for mothers and their children are on the second floor (or the first floor in European terms). This floor features family lounge areas, indoor play areas, bathrooms, and accommodations for nighttime shelter supervisors.



The outdoor play area is likely the heart and soul of the facility. It was made possible by a donation from the Sprott Foundation of Canada.

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Shelter staff posing with produce from the garden.



Color-coded towels used by children in the dining room. When this image was taken there were 14 children living at the family shelter.

The Rugaji government provided land for the family shelter. The property includes a large outside play area, parking lot, and grounds for self-sustaining vegetable gardens. The family shelter is within walking distance of local schools, shops and a church.



Image of a guest room to accommodate a mother and children. All wood furniture was manufactured in Latvia.

EMERGENCY GRANT HELPS KIDS IN HAITI

The board of the Kids First Fund responded to the crisis in Haiti with a \$10,000 emergency grant to help children affected by the earthquake. While technically a 2010 event, the timing of this donation during the writing of this document prompted its inclusion in the 2009 annual report.



UNICEF/Roger LeMoyné

Haiti street scene after the earthquake.

\$5,000 was donated to the United States Fund for UNICEF and \$5,000 was given to Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres). These funds provided immediate assistance to children and parents with food, water, shelter, and health care. The charities were chosen because each had existing operations in Haiti and are regarded as very good stewards of donor funds. This type of grant-making activity is unusual for the Kids First Fund, but the overwhelming impact of the disaster compelled the board to reach out during a time of extreme need.



GOOGLE DOES GOOD

The Kids First Fund receives significant benefits from Google and its Google Grants program. In 2007 Google awarded the Kids First Fund with an ongoing in-kind grant for free AdWords advertising at Google.com.



AdWords delivers advertising messages when a specific search word or phrase are entered on Google.com. The Kids First Fund specifies the search words and writes advertisements to solicit donations. When a designated keyword is entered, Google.com responds with unpaid and sponsored links. Advertisements (sponsored links) appear on top of the search results in a shaded box or on the right side of the page. Clicking on a sponsored link takes a user to the advertiser's website.

Displayed to the left are examples of three current Kids First Fund advertisements associated with the AdWords program. For example, searching for "children fund" or "kids in need" at Google.com generates a Kids First Fund message along with other AdWords advertisers.

Kids First Fund advertisements appeared on more than 3 million Google search pages during 2009. These messages generated a stunning 35,000+ clicks to visit KidsFirstFund.org. The AdWords program generated exposure for the Kids First Fund among users in the USA, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Once at the Kids First Fund website, donations may be made via Google's Checkout service. We benefit from the generosity of Google in a second way, as the company waived all credit card processing fees for 2009 and will do the same for 2010.

The Kids First Fund can identify several donations received through online exposure at Google.com. This includes a \$1,000 donation from a US-based foundation and individual donations from around the world including France, Malaysia, and Mozambique.

Thank you, Google, for providing resources to allow the Kids First Fund to tell its story all over the world.

<p>Stop Child Abuse Learn How You Can Help Needy Kids! Join the Kids First Fund Today. www.KidsFirstFund.org</p>
<p>Children's Charity Learn How You Can Help Needy Kids! Join the Kids First Fund Today. www.KidsFirstFund.org</p>
<p>Child Abuse Prevention Support for Abused & Abandoned Children. Learn How You Can Help! www.KidsFirstFund.org</p>

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bob Bahlman, Treasurer (Neenah, Wisconsin)

Stuart Benzal, Director (Chicago, Illinois)

Rogers Grigulis, Director (Riga, Latvia)

Jason Handal, Vice President (Mequon, Wisconsin)

Arturs Irbe, Director (Washington, DC)

Irma Kalnina, Director (Riga, Latvia)

Gabriel Mumjiev (Chisinau, Moldova)

Jeff Patrias, Director (Eagan, Minnesota)

Sharon Polk, Director (Lenexa, Kansas)

Jay Sorensen, President (Shorewood, Wisconsin)

United Nations Representatives

Jay Sorensen and Stuart Benzal are designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Rogers Grigulis and Irma Kalnina are the designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva and Vienna.



About the Kids First Fund

The Kids First Fund helps abused and abandoned children.

We protect children from abuse. We empower young adults with a positive future. We strengthen families. We build awareness of child abuse. We operate in countries where resources are very limited. Current projects provide support for children in Latvia and Moldova. The Kids First Fund supports programs to educate child welfare professionals such as police officers, judges, social workers and prosecutors on child abuse issues. Direct assistance is also given to centers providing care for abused children. The Kids First Fund does not incur any expenses since all staffing and services are donated. The organization has been granted special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

SPECIAL THANKS

This annual report is courtesy of the services contributed by Amy Thomas, who operates field|works, a graphic design firm in Shorewood, Wisconsin.

Hosting and updating of the KidsFirstFund.org website is donated by Matthew Frederick, who operates DigitalPerceptions.com, an interactive web media development firm in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

SWISS International Air Lines and airBaltic generously donate travel for board member trips to Latvia and Moldova. Parking is provided by the **Hilton Garden Inn Chicago O'Hare Airport**. All official trips rely on corporate donations and are otherwise self-funded by board members.

Oleg Yusufov of Shorewood, Wisconsin keeps a wonderful tradition of allowing customers in his tailor shop to contribute change to the Kids First Fund.

The Inland Companies of Milwaukee donated proceeds from its 2009 holiday cookbook project.

LEARN MORE AND DONATE ONLINE

KidsFirstFund.org

Write to us at:

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Shorewood, WI 53211, USA

Telephone:

414/961-1939

