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Press Release

## **Kids First Fund Expands Reach to Moldova**

*2010 Efforts Continue to Support Work in Latvia and  
Extend to Others in Eastern Europe*

Shorewood, Wisconsin (September 23, 2010) Abused and neglected women and children in Moldova and Latvia will be the beneficiaries of 2010 Kids First Fund grants. The board recently announced ongoing support for its Child and Family Center in Rugaji, Latvia, as well as a US\$7,500 grant to Child Rights Information Center (CRIC) in Chisinau, Moldova.

### **Outreach in Moldova**

The 3-year grant to CRIC is intended to enhance the prevention of child abuse in rural areas of Moldova by developing the capacities of professionals such as teachers and social workers to identify cases of child abuse, refer and/or report child abuse, and organize positive parenting activities. Each year a minimum of 50 professionals from two regions will be trained to improve their awareness of child abuse prevention and develop their capacity to work with children. In addition, children and parents from 16 communities (at least 3,200 children) will receive information about child abuse and its prevention. These activities will be led by the Child Rights Information Center.

The Kids First Fund board identified Moldova as an area of need after significant research and exploratory trips in 2009. "Countries such as Latvia and Moldova have been particularly punished by the global recession," explained Jay Sorensen, Kids First Fund board president. "Our efforts this year continue to focus on the abused and abandoned children in eastern Europe."

### **Ongoing Support in Latvia**

The Kids First Fund will continue to provide financial support in Latvia, specifically through a US\$10,000 grant to the Latgale Regional Support Centre in Rugaji, Latvia. The grant will extend the stay of some children and mothers at the centre after state funding ends. Latvian financial support for services at the centre ranges from 30 to 60 days. In some instances, the abusive situation is not resolved in that time. The grant will allow identified women and children to remain at the centre until they can reestablish themselves in a safe environment.

Operating revenue for the centre is provided by central, regional and local governments in Latvia. Funding for the construction of the US\$1.1 million centre came in part from the Kids First Fund in 2008; work was completed in 2009. In addition to providing secure and immediate shelter for children and/or mothers to help ensure protection from abusers, the centre also treats victims of abuse with therapy and psychological services such as self-help skills to allow the family to re-establish itself after re-entry into the community.

**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 limited. 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. Learn more at [KidsFirstFund.org](http://KidsFirstFund.org).