



Media Contact: Jay Sorensen  
Telephone: 414-961-1939  
Web site: [www.KidsFirstFund.org](http://www.KidsFirstFund.org)

## **Kids First Fund Extends Grant in Moldova Two New Board Members Add Valued Expertise**

Shorewood, Wisconsin (October 10, 2013) Abused and neglected women and children in Moldova and Latvia continue to be the beneficiaries Kids First Fund (KFF) grants, with the board recently agreeing to extend support to the Child Rights Information Center (CRIC) in Chisinau, Moldova for another three years. The organization continues to support activities at its Child and Family Center in Rugaji, Latvia.

### **Outreach in Moldova**

The grant to CRIC extends the work already begun 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, professionals are trained to improve their awareness of child abuse prevention and develop their capacity to work with children. In addition, children and parents receive information about child abuse and its prevention.

The Kids First Fund board identified Moldova as an area of need after significant research and exploratory trips in 2009. The initial CRIC grant was issued in 2010. "We have been pleased with our partnership with CRIC and satisfied with the work they have done on behalf of women and children in Moldova," said Sorensen, Kids First Fund board president. "We are excited about the progress being made and planned for the future."

### **Ongoing Support in Latvia**

The Kids First Fund continues to provide financial support in Latvia, specifically through funding for the Latgale Regional Support Centre in Rugaji, Latvia. The shelter, supported by central, regional and local governments in Latvia as well as KFF, provides secure and immediate shelter for children and/or mothers in abusive situations. 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.

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#### **New Members Join the Board**

To assist KFF in the effort to support abused and abandoned women and children, Maria Marinuta and Viorica Cretu have joined the board. Marinuta, a pediatrician and native of Moldova, was a specialist and translator in the Ministry of Ecology in Moldova. She also served as the administrator for a non-government organization (NGO) for children and women's rights protection in Moldova. Currently a member of the Executive Board of the International Women Club of Moldova, she also serves on the Grants Committee of the same club.

Cretu, also Moldovan, serves as the Deputy Country Director in the Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova, a part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Prior to her current position, she was the Coordinator of the Project "Protection and empowerment of victims of human trafficking and domestic violence" jointly implemented by the Moldova country offices of UNDP, UNFPA, IOM Mission and OSCE Mission. She also worked in the field of Child Protection / Preventing Violence against Children and Child Trafficking for UNICEF Moldova in 2005-2009.

#### **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)