

# MiraMed Institute



## Annual Program Report 2004



# MiraMed Institute

## 2004

December 1, 2004

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Cover artwork  
"Winter Cats"  
by Larisa K, age 9,  
an orphan.

### Letter from Dr. Juliette M. Engel, Founding Director

*Dear Colleagues, Sponsors and Friends!*

2004 has been a landmark year for MiraMed Institute in Russia! In spite of all the difficulties of working in an uncertain and constantly changing environment, all of our programs have gained increasing support from both the Russian government and the corporate community.

As Russia's business community becomes more stable, company directors are beginning to look at the role that they and their businesses can play in the restructuring and support of civil society in this country.

All Russians acknowledge that their country is in crisis and that the most serious issue is the social welfare of children and youth. President Vladimir Putin stated in his State of the Federation address for the year 2004 that the crisis of Russia's children needs to be a first priority issue for the Russian government. The tragic and deliberate attack on Russian children in the village of Beslan has caused shockwaves throughout all levels of government and society here.

If Russia is to survive into the next century as a stable society and an anchor for maintaining peace in the boundary regions of Asia and the Middle East, its dangerous falling population rate—which fell a record 3.2% in the first half of 2004—must be reversed. Russian children must be protected — not only from the external dangers but from the threats from within. The fastest growing rate of death in Russia is among youth 15 to 30 years of age. Most of the factors threatening young people here are being addressed by our programs and this has drawn the attention of the President's Administration. These key programs include educating the most at-risk populations about the growing incidence of HIV/AIDS, working to protect the increasing numbers of young Russian women and girls who are criminally trafficked abroad for prostitution, improving the health of young single mothers and their babies which now account for more than 1/3 of all new births in Russia and teaching critical life skills to teenage orphans so when they leave their institutions they will not become addicted, criminals or trafficked.

Thanks to funding support from the Bristol-Myers Squibb office in Moscow, the World Childhood Foundation and Geneva Global, MiraMed's Center for Independent Living and Social Adaptation has developed Russia's first comprehensive teaching curriculum for HIV/AIDS prevention among the highest risk youth—orphans, street children and social orphans. MiraMed staff are now working with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to adapt these curriculum materials into a standardized curriculum for use in Russian public schools.

With support from the US State Department, the Swedish International Development Agency and Geneva Global, the Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center (TVAC) in Moscow was able to directly assist in the rescue and repatriation of 65 victims of international trafficking during its first year and over 100 victims through our network of Angel Coalition partner-operated safe houses, which provide the only victim assistance and rehabilitation in Russia. The TVAC also works closely with government agencies, including the Ministry of Interior and the Directorate of Detectives, to open international investigations into trafficking cases from Russia to other countries. This requires an unprecedented level of cooperation between law enforcement and NGO's in the Russian Federation.

Our next major project is to address the need to provide assistance to the tens of thousands of children trafficked into Moscow from rural regions of Russia or former Soviet republics for purposes of prostitution, sex tourism and pornography. Our partner will be the City of Moscow and our goal will be to develop a system of shelters for the rescue and rehabilitation of these child victims.

So there is much on our plate for 2005! Once again I thank all of our sponsors, donors and friends who continue to keep our work and the dreams of thousands of Russian children alive with their love and generous contributions. You are all making a difference in the world – one child at a time!

Juliette M. Engel, MD

Moscow, December 1, 2004





**Baby Artyum enjoys a royal chat with Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden during her official visit to the Tsarytsino Center in September**



**Program donors from the International Women's Club of Moscow help celebrate the 5th anniversary of the MiraMed Center by participating in one of the lessons for teenaged girls.**



**Orphanage teens share their dreams for the future during a class led by a MiraMed Center psychologist on how to develop healthy relationships and families**

## **Queen Silvia of Sweden makes an official visit to MiraMed's Young Single Mother's Program**

In September, Queen Silvia of Sweden, founder of the World Childhood Foundation which funds our Young Single Mothers program and Babushka Brigade, flew to Moscow to spend an afternoon at the Tsarytsino Center with moms and their babies, the program staff, and the babushkas (grandmothers) and dedushkas (grandfathers) who volunteer their time and expertise. She met later at the Swedish Ambassador's Residence with the Mayor of Moscow and directors of Russia's leading companies at a small, private reception to talk about the Foundation's work in Russia and the programs of MiraMed Institute.

For security reasons, the Tsarytsino community at large had only a few days notice of the Queen's arrival and immediately went into a blizzard of activity to make sure her experience would be memorable with much baking of the traditional Russian pancakes (blini) and dumplings (piroshki) by the babushkas. And memorable it was. Not only did Her Majesty tour the center and meet with staff, but the charming and personable Queen spent time chatting with our moms and their babies and even took to the stage to sing along with the "babushka" choir resulting in an outburst of enthusiastic applause!

Dr. Engel attended the Embassy reception and spoke to the group about the need for the development of a strong, healthy civil society for the future of Russia's children and families and what the Russian business elite could do as corporate leaders, to help support the health and welfare of those at risk.

The World Childhood Foundation is preparing a special commemorative book on its work with women and children around the globe and one of its main "success" stories is MiraMed's program in Russia. We are very proud that this project has received so much acclaim internationally and enthusiastic support in Russia.

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## **MiraMed Centers for Independent Living and Social Adaptation celebrate 5 years of success and begins National Training Center program**

In October, MiraMed celebrated its 5th year of providing Russia's first comprehensive social adaptation and independent living program for orphans. MiraMed Centers now help more than 1000 orphans in four different regions of Russia acquire the critical life skills they will need to make a successful transition from institutional life to society. A highlight this year was the initiation of a National Training Center to train orphanage staff directly in how to use the materials and methods in their own orphanages. Staff from more than 25 orphanages were trained this year and the number will grow each year as more and more regional networks of MiraMed partner Centers are established. In addition to training orphanage staff, MiraMed has also begun a program of corporate sponsorship of orphanages.

The first such sponsor was the GE Corporation in Moscow. Their support not only pays for the independent living and social adaptation program to impact an entire orphanage, but encourages their employees to become involved as mentors and friends. GE staff regularly come to take the kids on excursions, do some fix up and repair, play sports, etc.

Other milestones in the continuing development of this vital program was the hiring of the program's first Director of Education, Natalia Vladimirova, who has many years of experience in the Vladimir region as a teacher and administrator and our first Director of Design and Publications, Dima Shinkarev. In addition to producing many MiraMed and Angel Coalition publications, Dima is responsible for creating our annual holiday card campaign, teaches computer and computer graphics at the Center in Moscow and helps facilitate the Summer Volunteer Program.

Finally, the special fundraising campaign to ensure the program's long term residency at the Blago Center this past summer was a resounding success and raised more than \$30,000. This has enabled the mandated renovation of the building to continue and has resulted in a contract with the local okrug government that not only affirms our right to the 300 meters we now use, but grants us a credit of all funds used for rehabilitation to be applied to our rent. Our plans for 2005 include a major revision of our curriculum (which now includes more than 80 separate workbooks) to integrate HIV/AIDS prevention into all aspects of the program.



## **MiraMed and the Angel Coalition publish a Counter-trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation**

A key element in building sustainable mechanisms for fighting trafficking in Russia is the establishment of "best practice" counter-trafficking protocols. These include all elements of the processes needed for prevention, repatriation and rehabilitation of victims as well as prosecution of traffickers. Normally such protocols are drafted by governments or government agencies, but Russia does not yet have an anti-trafficking law or a dedicated agency to combat trafficking. After conducting extensive research about other national protocols, MiraMed and the Angel Coalition decided to use its expertise and create one for Russia.

Since its publication in August, 2004, The Angel Coalition Counter-Trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation has been widely disseminated both in Europe and Russia in order to seek consensus input from international, federal, regional and local governments and law enforcement agencies. As comments are received they are catalogued by staff and will become part an Appendix that will be printed and distributed in 2005 and used to help shape future anti-trafficking legislation. Members of the Angel Coalition have been serving on a Working Group that has been advising the Russian Federal Duma about trafficking for the past several years.

The Counter-Trafficking Protocol establishes practical guidelines for the delegation of counter-trafficking responsibilities, interdepartmental coordination within the Russian government, and methods of international cooperation that utilize the experience and expertise of non-governmental organizations working in counter-trafficking.

It also addresses ethical, social and legal problems connected with trafficking in human beings to, from and within Russia and makes recommendations for effective responses for national and international governmental and non-governmental agencies on the basis of human rights principles, gender equality and in compliance with the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons as ratified by the Russian Federation in 2004.

### **First of five high level regional strategic anti-trafficking conferences begins in the Republic of Karelia**

This year and next, each of MiraMed Institute's five original safe house partners will be conducting high level conferences to bring together key government officials, NGO's and experts from Russia, Europe and the US to their regions for on-site training. The conferences are funded by the Swedish International Development Agency and by the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Office. They have also been endorsed by the President's Administration of the Russian Federation. As a result, each regional governor has been mandated to participate by delegating responsible officials to attend. This ensures that at each training, crucially important local government officials will fully participate. At the first training in the Republic of Karelia in northwestern Russia, 70 leading governmental officials including the Acting President, the Vice President and leading Ministers were in attendance.

The purpose of each conference is to give each local partner the ability to invite experts to focus specifically on those issues that are important to that region. The first conference took place in August 2004 in Petrozavodsk, the capital of the republic of Karelia. MiraMed's partner in Karelia is the Karelian Center for Gender Studies. Since Scandinavia is the largest receiving region for women trafficked from Karelia, the Center invited five Swedish experts (from the Prosecutors office, national police and immigration) and the Finnish Consul to provide their combined expertise on how to improve direct international cooperative actions based on the Counter-Trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation. In addition to the invited Scandinavian delegation, more than 50 local/regional NGO representatives attended.

All participants received the Russian language version of the Counter-trafficking Protocol for input and review with the expectation that this document will form an outline for the program and the basis for a mechanism of international cooperation. The next conference is planned for December, 2004 in St. Petersburg.



**Government representatives from Russia and Sweden meeting in Karelia to review Angel Coalition's Counter-trafficking Protocol and share information about reducing cross-border trafficking**

**The Angel Coalition Counter-trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action establishes "best practices" for the Russian Federation**



**L. Boinich, Vice President of the Republic of Karelia and Dr. L. Boichencko, Director of the Karelian Center of Gender Studies open the Karelian Strategic Seminar, August 12, 2004**



**Lois Herman, MiraMed Institute's representative to the United Nations, attending the Annual Session of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva**

## **Increasing role of MiraMed Institute and the Angel Coalition in the United Nations, Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

In 2004, MiraMed welcomed our new United Nations representative, Lois Herman. After visiting our headquarters in Moscow, Ms. Herman plunged into an exceedingly busy year by representing MiraMed Institute and the Angel Coalition in New York, Geneva, Romania, Moldova, Bangkok and the Czech Republic. Her energy and enthusiasm has raised the level of awareness of the trafficking issue in the Russian Federation and lead to invitations to participate in global conferences, panels and working groups.

In April, Ms. Herman accompanied MiraMed Russian Country Director, Vladislav Suprunov, on his first participatory visit to the United Nations in Geneva. Mr. Suprunov addressed international delegations on the need for counter-trafficking cooperation between sending and receiving countries, the Angel Coalition Counter-trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action and began the process of accreditation for the Angel Coalition (MiraMed has had special consultative status with the UN since 1999). In July, Robert Aronson, MiraMed Program Director, represented MiraMed and the Angel Coalition in Vienna at the first meeting of the Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons at the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna.

In May, Oleg Kouzbit, Director of the Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center, was invited to speak to delegates at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, and is now representing Russia in the writing of the European Convention on Counter-trafficking.

In August, Elena Yurova, Director of Public Health for the Angel Coalition, and Vladislav Suprunov attended the OSCE Strategic Task Force meeting in Helsinki and will be part of the counter trafficking work group in 2005.



**MiraMed Russian Country Director Vladislav Suprunov attends the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva to address the need for counter-trafficking cooperation between nations**

## **MiraMed and Theatre for a Change premieres "The Enemy Inside" as part of USAID-funded tolerance education program in the Volga Federal District**

After three months of development, "The Enemy Within", MiraMed and Theatre for a Change's tolerance education play, premiered in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia's third largest city. Over the next three years, more than 25,000 teenagers will see the production and receive follow-on tolerance educational materials to help combat discrimination, inter-ethnic crime and prejudice against orphans, the disabled, refugees and people with HIV/AIDS.

In addition the production and performances, MiraMed is creating an Advocacy Network of NGO's in the Volga Federal District to engage government to provide needed services to these marginalized populations.

The production, featuring life-size puppets worn by the actors, is creating a lot of excitement in the Volga region and in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan, Russia's largest Muslim republic. The Director of Education for Tatarstan has asked that the company offer training to other theatres so the production can be seen by as many of the high school students there as possible.



**Project Director Robert Aronson in a training session with the Theater for a Change artistic team as they study the meaning of "social action theater" and its relevance to teaching the value of tolerance to Russian youth**

**The "spectre of intolerance" is a 10 foot high pole puppet that introduces the play with a strongly-worded soliloquy about the effects of intolerance...and ends the play with a challenge to teens to take action to stop the hate**



## Trafficking Victim Assistance Center begins toll-free helpline in Russia, Germany, Holland and Belgium

After more than one year of planning, MiraMed and the Angel Coalition initiated Russia's first toll-free international helpline to help trafficking victims trapped in Germany, Holland and Belgium and their concerned families throughout Russia. Working with a "call center" in Moscow, specially trained operators are on call 24-hours a day to receive calls from Russian speaking victims and/or their families and friends.

Using a sophisticated data base developed by MiraMed, callers are instantly referred to law enforcement agencies and NGO's ready to help them wherever they are. Crisis calls can also be routed to Miramed's Trafficking Victims Assistance Center (TVAC) in Moscow where immediate psychological support and practical assistance can be given.

In the months to come, special palm cards will be created with the toll-free number. These cards will be given out at border crossing points by Russian authorities and by NGO's, law enforcement agencies and government agencies in these three countries to distribute through their channels.

Future plans call for the helpline to be expanded to other countries where trafficking is rampant as well as to the United States. Providing instant, toll-free access 24 hours a day to Russian girls and women by trained, Russian-speaking staff has long been a long-term goal. Now that it is finally in place, it will be carefully monitored and evaluated. MiraMed and Angel Coalition partners helped rescue more than 350 girls and women in 2004—but there are many thousands still trapped. The toll-free hotline is just one of the innovative resources we have developed to help in the rescue, repatriation and rehabilitation of these victims.



**Oleg Kouzbit, Director of the Trafficking Victim Assistance Center in Moscow consults with a concerned mother who has lost two daughters to international trafficking.**

## Highlights of MiraMed's Annual Summer Volunteer program at Svir Stroi Orphanage

After a hiatus of one year while Svir Stroi Orphanage was undergoing major renovations following a devastating cold snap that forced its more than 100 residents to spend almost 9 months living at a local school, MiraMed volunteers returned to Svir Stroi in July and August.

Americans Jody Payne, a school teacher from Michigan, Miriam Berkowitz, a college student in Massachusetts and Tomas Novak, a college student in California, brought their energy and enthusiasm to help teach computer classes, English, arts and crafts and sports.

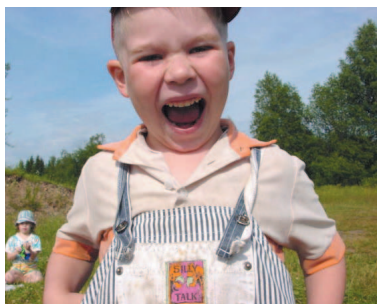
The trio was joined by MiraMed Russian staffers Dima Shinkarov and Timur Litvinov. Ms. Berkowitz and Mr. Novak are continuing their studies in Russia for six months and Tomas has already become a volunteer at MiraMed's Center for Independent Living and Social Adaptation.

Our volunteer program has had a significant impact at Svir Stroi. The health and welfare of the children have improved dramatically. We have provided tons of food, clothing and supplies and raised tens of thousands of dollars for a major remodel. It's time for us to bring this program to a new orphanage in need—but in case of emergency, we will always be there for Svir Stroi!

**Although growing in national and international influence, MiraMed remains a "hands-on" grassroots organization**



**Artym, Genya and Misha use one of several laptop computers Jody brought**



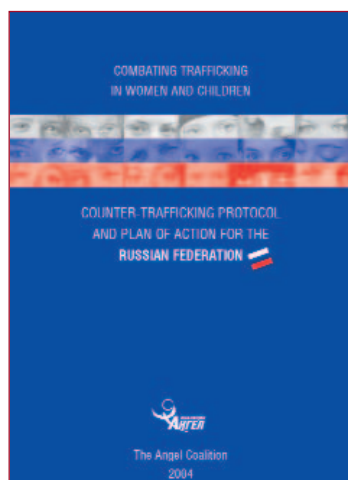
**Igor roars like a lion !**



**Tanya, Tyoma and Andrei enjoy Svir Stroi's riverbank**



## Major grants, donors and sponsors – 2004



**In 2004, MiraMed and the Angel Coalition published The Counter-trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation—now in use by Russian government agencies and the President's Administration**



**In 2004, the MiraMed Center for Social Adaptation created Russia's first newspaper for orphanages which is currently awaiting funding. The newspaper will be written by orphans as well as staff and is entitled "We Can Do It!"**

### Major grants and donors

United States Department of State,  
Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons  
United States International Development Agency  
IOM – International Organization of Migration  
The Starr Foundation  
World Childhood Foundation  
Geneva Global  
The GE Foundation  
The Bristol-Myers Squibb Health Foundation  
The Anne and Charles Roos Advised Fund  
The Taylor Fund  
United Way, Moscow  
International Women's Organization, Moscow  
Oriflame of Sweden  
Families for Russian and Ukrainian Adoption (FRUA)  
Virtuoso

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