

# BIG FAMILY

Ministry to Children

May 2005

*“Worship that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the father is this: to visit and help and care for the widows and orphans in their affliction and need....” James 1:27 (AMP)*



***During our recent visit to Russia, we were blessed with the opportunity to share special times of tea, tort, fellowship, Easter celebrations, and sharing with over 130 children.***

## ***What next...???***

Each time we go to Russia, it seems that God has arranged a theme for our visit. The theme for our recent visit during the first 10 days of May was “What next?”

As always, we enjoyed sharing cake and tea, candy, and fruit with our young friends at the orphanages, but what happens after life at an orphanage, even if life at the orphanage is filled with treats and yummy desserts? “What next” in the lives of the 15, 16, and 17-year-old orphans who are ending their mandatory education next month by graduating from an orphanage or internat? A few children who are fortunate enough to have an adult mentor or a teacher who has taken special interest in the child told us about their plans to go on to a vocational or technical school.

Unfortunately, most of the soon-to-be graduates we talked with have no idea about “what next”. Will they end up being a “statistic”, one of the 5 out of 6 orphan graduates who will end up addicted to drugs or alcohol, in prison, living on the streets, or committing suicide?

The other “what next” we encountered during our visit is “what next with Big Family Ministry in Russia?” Although it is very important to provide ministry and treats and celebrations for the children in an orphanage, it is perhaps more important to prepare these children for their ultimate graduation from the orphanage care system.

How can Big Family do that? We believe the most effective action is encouraging Christians, especially Christian young adults, to become mentors for the children in the orphanages. We have already seen good results with this model in Kommunar. In order to encourage this mentoring and to make Russian Christians aware of opportunities for foster parenting, Big Family must decide

if we are to become “official” in Russia and have a full-time director who will be responsible for communicating these opportunities to as many Christians as possible.

Will you join us as we pray about “what’s next” for Big Family in Russia? If we expand our ministry in Russia and become “official”, we will also be required to have a part-time bookkeeper in Russia. As our expenses in Russia increase, will you also join us as we pray about finances for Big Family work in Russia?

### ***Praise Report and Prayer Requests***

#### **Please pray for:**

- Anna, who will be graduating from Kommunar orphanage and has no idea what she will do when she can no longer live at Kommunar orphanage;
- Youth and young adults in Russia who will become mentors for older orphans;
- For Russian professionals and business persons to become interested in the plight of Russian orphans;
- For opportunities for Dianne and Ken to present Big Family Ministry to church and Sunday School classes in America.

#### **Praise God for:**

- Our safe journey to Russia;
- Sergei and Nadia Morozov becoming “captains” for Big Family Ministry to U.S. Russians;
- Doors opening for Vania in Kommunar to become member of the Big Family foster home family.

## ***Meeting a statistic face to face?***

The statistics are so impersonal until you know a child who is on his way to being a statistic. Dima was one of the first children that we met at the Kommunar orphanage. From the first time we met him, Dima was trying hard to be a tough guy, but it became quickly obvious that Dima was grappling with a big hurt deep inside his heart. His two twin sisters had been adopted by Americans when he was only 5 or 6 years old, and Dima was left behind in Russia where he grew up with his orphanage friends as his only family.

Dima graduated last year from the internat at Kommunar. He had an opportunity to go on to a technical school to learn how to become an auto mechanic. His schooling and board and lodging in a town about two hours away from Kommunar would be completely paid for by the government. From a government standpoint, Dima had a bright future. Unfortunately, what Dima did not have was a family or anyone to take the role of mentor and encourager while he studied among strangers, and two months into his technical program, he dropped out of school and returned to Kommunar. How does Dima spend his time now? Alcohol has become his companion.



We have been praying for Dima, and had thought about trying to contact him when we were in Russia, but were told that he is difficult to find most of the time. We were completely surprised when we turned a corner at the Kommunar internat, and bumped into Dima. But why shouldn't Dima show up at the internat? It is the only home he has ever known.

We had a brief but precious conversation with Dima. It was obvious that he had been drinking. He explained, "No one wants to hire you when you are 17...maybe when I am 18." As we told him of our concern for him and told him once again that we are praying for him, we could see the tears in the eyes of this "tough guy" and Dima bit his lip to keep from crying. We wanted to grab him away from the future we see lurking around the corner of his life.

Will you join us in praying that Dima will accept God as his Father, and that a miracle will somehow occur in Dima's young life. Pray with us earnestly that Dima will not become a statistic!

## ***Our contact information***

### **Big Family Ministry**

E-mail: [info@bigfamilyministry.org](mailto:info@bigfamilyministry.org) .

Ken and Dianne Dockery, home phone: (610) 683-6137.

Bob and Vickie Felix, Luga captains, Gettysburg Baptist Church, home phone: (717) 334-7134.

Sergei and Nadia Morozov, captains of Russian-speaking ministry in the United States, home phone: (413) 781-1165.

Big Family Ministry is an inter-denominational missions outreach of Lighthouse Community Church, in cooperation with our Family Friends.

For more information, please visit our website:

[www.bigfamilyministry.org](http://www.bigfamilyministry.org) .



## ***Meet an incredible family***

May we introduce you to Sveta and her four children. Sveta is a widow. Before her husband's death in a traffic accident last year, Sveta and husband had become foster parents for 3 of her sister's children after her sister disappeared. After her husband's tragic death (which occurred on the birthday of their daughter), authorities tried to persuade Sveta to let her sister's three children go into an orphanage, but Sveta took a stand, and now, at age 29, she lives with her children in a small dilapidated flat with no running water. She works hard as a laborer in a job that allows her to be with the children when they are not in school. BIG FAMILY has already provided the family with much-needed bunk beds and mattresses, and we are hoping to soon provide a commode for their toilet. (They now have an ancient device that is much like an outdoor toilet but it is in their apartment.)

If you know someone who would like to become a Family Friend for Sveta and her four children, please contact us.



***Sveta's kitchen sink: no running water***