



# MiraMed Institute

*A Non-Governmental Organization with Special Consultative Status  
to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

*Winter ~ Spring 2003*

*Direct Humanitarian Aid ✨ Education and Training for Russian Orphans ✨ Prevention of Sexual Trafficking from Russia*

## **New Single Young Mothers Program enrolls over 150 teen moms and babies**

**I**N AUGUST, MIRAMED BEGAN A NEW program for young single teenaged mothers at the **Tsaritsyn Community Center** in southwest Moscow with support from the “World Childhood Foundation” founded by **Queen Silvia of Sweden**. Within six weeks, more than 150 young mothers—from 16–23, had enrolled. The program includes infant and maternal health care, motherhood education and training, group and individual social work, a “Mother’s Club” where single moms can share their feelings, a clothing bank and daily meal prepared by the young moms and the volunteer pensioners or “babushkas” who serve as their mentors in the program. A computer center, donated by STS Television, will be used for training in word processing and other job skills which are very much in demand in Russia.



*Teenage mothers and their babies enjoy an outdoor concert with their “babushka” mentors at the Tsaritsyn Community Center.*



*Dr. Juliette Engel presents a photo album and program materials to Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden, October, 2002, St. Petersburg.*

In October, MiraMed founder **Dr. Juliette Engel, MD** was invited to St. Petersburg to meet Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden and present the first results of the program as part of a royal visit to Russia. ✨

## **Join MiraMed’s “Travel with a Cause” Russia Cruise this summer!**



*Beautifully restored St. Basil’s Cathedral is the jewel of fabulous Red Square, Moscow one of the many highlights of our wonderful 12-day Discover Russia Cruise!*

**W**E’VE BEEN ENCOURAGING MIRAMED supporters to come to Russia since 1991—and the best way to see this very beautiful and endlessly fascinating country is by taking a river cruise between Moscow and St. Petersburg. This year, our “Travel with a Cause” program is extra special since the operator of the boat, Value World Tours, is giving MiraMed a \$200 donation for *each* passenger who books a special July 8 or July 28 cruise!

On each of these trips, MiraMed founding director Dr. Juliette Engel and/or Program Director Robert Aronson will be on board as hosts.

**From Seattle, including airfare and the 12-day cruise, the price is just \$2598 – 2798!** See the enclosed flier or visit our travel website **www.miramed.com**. ✨

# American and Russian volunteers team up for a sixth summer in Svir Stroi and Moscow

This year's Summer Volunteer Program featured a new twist—Russian and American volunteers working together as a team. From the U.S., **Richard Sinden, Carla Perez-Colon**—and from Russia, **Timur Khusnetdinov, Nadezhda Shapkina** and **Natasha Shelyaeva**.

In Moscow, Nadezhda worked with **Marianna Solomotova**, the Moscow development director of the Angel Coalition, on a research project that involved documenting Angel Coalition anti-trafficking NGOs about their activities and progress. Ms. Shapkina is a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia. Carla Perez-Colon, from Miami, brought her energy and talent as a volunteer web-designer to create MiraMed's new website ([www.miramedinstitute.org](http://www.miramedinstitute.org)). Richard

Sinden, who owns a successful Internet sporting goods business in Utah, brought his extensive background working with children to teach computer skills to the children at Svir Stroi. An avid outdoorsman (he and his dog hiked the entire 1,500 mile Appalachian Trail several years back), Richard also took several groups of Svir Stroi orphans on overnight camping trips. Natasha, a Russian university graduate psychologist and art therapist, worked on art projects with the children over the summer and helped Richard with both computer and camping activities. Timur, a 24-year-old former orphan who speaks fluent English, served as a role model and "sportsman" for the children and spent countless hours in the gym, swimming and assisting Richard and Natasha.

A special focus of the program this year was a new emphasis on working

with Svir Stroi's younger children under the age of 10. By the end of the summer, chil-

*Natasha and Richard enjoying some of the younger children at Svir Stroi. It's a very short summer this far north, so the children love to spend as much time as they can outdoors with the volunteers.*

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*Vlad, MiraMed's translator and program assistant, with Carla and Nadezhda, American volunteers who worked in Moscow designing our fabulous new website (Carla) and doing research for anti-trafficking projects (Nadezhda).*



*Timur, an orphan himself, being mobbed by his gang who followed him around like Pied Piper. Being 24, Timur fortunately had as much energy as the kids and was with them from sunup til sundown!*

## Angel Coalition begins Embassy training and research program

For the past year, MiraMed has provided the **Angel Coalition**, Russia's anti-trafficking association of 43 organizations from 25 regions of Russia and 7 former republics, office space and services to help build its capacity. With this support the Coalition has been able to begin a number of successful new projects and is well on its way towards self-sufficiency. This summer the Angel Coalition began an innovative training program for visa section staff at foreign Embassies in Moscow. MiraMed funded the printing of a new Angel Coalition brochure, which describes the training and other program services of the Coalition, as well as educational materials (posters and brochures) that are given to each Embassy as part of its training to educate young women who are planning to visit or work in their respective countries about how to avoid being trafficked. The Dutch Embassy, the Finnish Embassy and Embassy of Switzerland were the first to be trained. The Swiss Ambassador to Russia was so impressed that he wrote a personal letter of commendation to Marianna Solomatova, the Angel Coalition's Moscow Development Director, who was responsible for the training. In addition to Embassy training, the Angel Coalition Moscow office also received a small research grant from the US Embassy in Moscow to collect field data from the 43 member Angel network on trafficking from their local regions. With a number of new projects in the wings and grant proposals waiting to be funded, the Coalition is confident that it will be able to open its own independent office in 2003. As an NGO member of the Coalition, MiraMed will continue to provide technical and field support as needed. ❁



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MiraMed Institute is a federally registered US 501 (c)(3) organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

*Thank you for helping us make a difference... one child at a time in 2003!*

Newsletter design and layout of this was generously donated by **Marianne Wyllie**, who came to Russia with MiraMed in 2000.



## MiraMed Centers for Social Adaptation begin their third year

**MiraMed Centers for Social Adaptation and Independent Living** began their third year in September with programs in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Uglich. Almost 400 children and young adults are enrolled in the program, which combines life skills training, social work and psychological support for children in their last two years of orphanage life and those who have been “emancipated” up to age 23.

The major task this year was to enrich the curriculum and expand the core content to include more education around the issues of health. Russia is in the midst of an explosive AIDS crisis, has an increasingly high incidence of young adult suicide and accidental death and its overall health

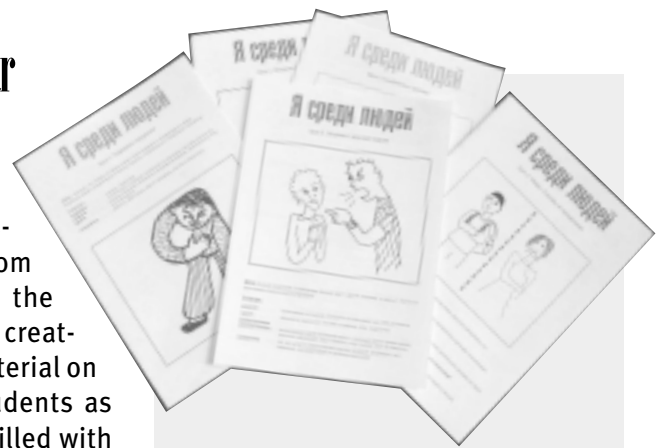
care is still “third world.” Orphans are at extremely high risk for communicable and sexually transmitted diseases. Funded by grants from Bristol-Myers, Squibb and the World Bank the Centers are creating specific educational material on “healthy living” for its students as well as a “Survival Guide” filled with

useful, practical information for teens and young adults living in Moscow. This project is directed by our new Center Professional Staff Director, **Dr. Andrei Shipkov**, a Russian physician and child psychologist. Together

with a more highly qualified group of social pedagogues and psychologists than ever before, the Center staff in



*Some of the older orphans mugging for the camera at MiraMed's Moscow Center*



*New MiraMed Center curriculum materials help orphanage graduates adapt to life beyond an institution.*

Moscow is moving closer to our goal of starting a Training Center for other NGOs and orphanages to adopt our materials and program for themselves.

In 2003, we plan to move the Moscow Center to a new facility which will offer more space and services for the students—our current space is much too small already. ✨

## “Let’s go to Paris” premieres in Nizhny Novgorod to educate Russian high school girls

**A**S PART OF OUR CONTINUING ANTI-TRAFFICKING EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS, MiraMed has developed an in-school, interactive, anti-trafficking play featuring live actors wearing full-size puppets. Before and after the show, students complete a one-page questionnaire on what they want to do after graduation and their feelings about working overseas. The 25-minute in-classroom production is followed by a discussion about trafficking with the teacher and actors and each student receives a copy of the Angel Coalition anti-trafficking brochure. The production uses the same talent that created the TV spots for the Angel Coalition/MiraMed anti-trafficking media campaign that ran last May. “Let’s go to Paris” features a



*The “suave” businessman trafficker tries to convince “Elena” to come to Paris.*



*After the production, the all-girl high school audience raises their hands when asked whether or not they will “think twice and get the facts” before accepting work overseas.*

suave businessman/trafficker and his attractive 20’s something accomplice. They invite the young unsuspecting “Elena” to come to Paris to “have a great life.” Using audience participation, improvisation and songs from Britney Spears, all three characters dance and sing together which adds a strong dose of contemporary Russian teenage life to the production. We are currently seeking funding to bring this production to a wide audience of school children and the theatre company is so excited about the potential of “social action” theatre that they have formed a new company called “Theatre for a Change” that will focus solely on the development of other such “socially relevant” productions. ✨

## Celebrate Independence Day with our Moscow T-shirt!

Each year the **American Chamber of Commerce in Russia**, of which MiraMed is a member, holds a big Independence Day celebration for members, the expat community and their Russian



*The Uglich Orphanage Crafts Booth was a big hit on the 4th of July selling crafts and T-shirts.*

friends. This past July 4, MiraMed had a crafts booth and sold "official Am-Cham T-shirts" created by one of the

orphan students enrolled in our social adaptation program in Moscow, as well as dolls and other handmade items. And we still have some great 100% cotton T-shirts for sale—your chance to put something unique in your stocking stuffer this holiday season and support MiraMed for just \$10 including postage. Sizes L and XL only. To order yours, just



send a check to MiraMed for \$10 with your address and size! ❄️

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dren as young as 4 were working at the computers. Richard and Natasha were true Pied Pipers—in the sandbox every morning playing, off for a swim, making drawings and teaching computer—all in the cause of making learning fun.

Svir Stroi had two important milestones this year—it's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an orphanage and its first new director in the past 15 years, Nikolai Ivanovich Khabugin. He has big plans for the future, including developing self-enterprise projects, long a MiraMed goal for this isolated orphanage. ❄️

## MiraMed receives grants from the Trafficking in Persons Office of the US State Department and Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation

In October, 2002, MiraMed Institute received a grant from the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Office to implement a Moscow-based **Trafficking Victim Assistance Center** in partnership with the International Office of Migration. The purpose of this center will be to find Russian victims of international trafficking who have been stranded abroad and to help them through the difficult process of returning to Russia. In addition, the grant funds the creation of five safehouses in northern Russia. Currently, victims of trafficking are at very high risk when they return home. Many are re-trafficked within days of their return—others are threatened by the traffickers who claim that they must pay off "debts" and are forced into prostitution in Moscow under the same slave conditions as they experienced abroad.

The five safehouses will be the first in Russia and will receive trafficking survivors, provide them with medical, psychological and legal services and help them reintegrate safely back into their communities. This program requires extensive international cooperation with non-governmental organizations and government bodies including consulates, embassies, Interpol, militia, border guards and foreign ministries.

Also in October, 2002, MiraMed Institute received a grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation to write health related protocols to address the specific healthcare needs of returning trafficking survivors. Most of them have sexually transmitted diseases and many have HIV/AIDS. They also suffer from drug addiction and physical injuries related to beating and torture. All of these health needs must be addressed and treated if these survivors are to return to a successful life. ❄️

## MiraMed UN representative Dr. Anele Heiges joins Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa

**Dr. Anele Heiges**, MiraMed Institute United Nations Representative, went to Johannesburg to co-sponsor with Earth Values Caucus a panel presentation entitled, *Earth on the Auction Block*. Participating with Dr. Heiges were Suzanne Golas, Sisters of Saint Joseph of Peace and Martha Gallahue, American Ethical Union. The panel compared the children and young women being trafficked by international criminal groups for sex to 19<sup>th</sup> century slaves on auction blocks to the same way that the earth is being ravaged on global auction blocks with no thought given to the future.

Connections were made between the emergence of self-reflective thought as an evolutionary part of earth's living consciousness and the thought-life of each human living on the earth. According to Dr. Heiges, "Human destiny is linked to earth destiny, and is constantly in danger of being bartered by greed."

*(At this writing another sister-linkage is being explored with the Rotary International Club of Great Neck, Long Island in New York.) ❄️*



*Panelists of "Earth on the Auction Block" in Johannesburg. From left: Suzanne Golas, Anele Heiges, Martha Gallahue.*