



childhood without abuse



# Childhood without abuse



Toward a better  
child protection system  
in Eastern Europe

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**Report on Childhood without Abuse:  
Toward a Better Child Protection System in Eastern Europe**

Program implemented in 7 countries - initiated and financed by Oak Foundation

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# Dear Madams and Sirs,

For many years child abuse was a latent problem in Central and Eastern Europe. The media remained silent about it, while social policy recommendations and academic curricula avoided the issue. Professional assistance for abused children did not even exist. There were no publications, databases, or research concerning this problem.

The period of systemic transformation in the region seemed to create an opportunity to make the issue of child abuse and neglect recognized as a social problem. However, even though some Central and East European countries transformed rapidly after 1989, the child protection system remained underdeveloped. Even today, despite the fact that the issue of child abuse is gradually achieving legitimacy in some of these countries, voices about the “exaggeration of the problem” can still be heard.

This is the reason why we – with great encouragement and support from the OAK Foundation – have decided to develop a programme aimed at developing a comprehensive system of support and protection for abused and neglected children. The project has been implemented in seven countries of Central and Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine. It has been carried out by seven NGOs working in the field of child protection. These organizations coordinate project activities in their respective countries and engage other institutions in the project.

One of our major goals when developing the “Childhood without Abuse” programme was to provide professionals who deal with abused children with an opportunity to share their experience and good practices. We also wanted to help them in the gradual development of interdisciplinary cooperation among their organizations. Our activities have also been targeted at parents of children in need of support and at such children themselves.

When launching the programme in 2005, we assumed that assessing the scale of child abuse was essential for effective efforts to reduce the problem. Research conducted in 2005 in all the participant countries showed a profound need for raising the public sensitivity to the problem. Therefore, nationwide social campaigns focusing on various aspects of child abuse have been a major component of the programme. Apart from that, thanks to the engagement of all the national partners of the project, numerous training sessions, supervisions, site visits, and conferences have been organized in each country. During these meetings professionals from all the participant countries share their knowledge and improve competencies necessary to help abused and neglected children. Furthermore, every year several materials are published, targeted both at children and their parents, and at professionals.

During the three-year activity we have managed to gain support from numerous governmental agencies and NGOs, as well as other institutions and private sector companies, advertising agencies and media. Without them, it would be impossible to be so effective in achieving the objectives of the programme.

After three years of implementing the „Childhood without Abuse” programme, we have a pleasure to present a brochure summing up our efforts for abused and neglected children in Eastern Europe. We would also like to use this opportunity to thank our existing partners for their valuable contribution and to invite you to become involved in our activity against child abuse and neglect.

Maria Keller-Hamela  
Project Coordinator

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Maria Keller-Hamela". The script is cursive and elegant, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

# Childhood without Abuse: Toward a Better Child Protection System in Eastern Europe



childhood without abuse

“Childhood without Abuse: Toward a Better Child Protection System in Eastern Europe”, hereinafter called “Childhood without Abuse”, is a project which is now being implemented in seven Central and East European countries: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine.

The coordinator of the project is the Nobody’s Children Foundation from Poland. Together with partner non-governmental organizations from participant countries, the Foundation undertakes initiatives aimed at improving the child protection system. The major goal of the project is to improve the competencies of professionals working with children exposed to violence and abuse, as well as to raise the general public’s sensitivity to the problem of child abuse.

## The specific objectives of the programme include:

- ✧ Educating the society, broadening public knowledge about prevention of child abuse and neglect, and improving intervention opportunities.
- ✧ Changing parents and caregivers’ attitudes associated with child rearing and child protection.
- ✧ Diagnosing attitudes, knowledge and skills of Eastern Europe’s professionals working with abused children and improving their competencies through training programmes, supervisions, site visits, publications and research.
- ✧ Working out regional standards and solutions in the field of child abuse and neglect, based on proven strategies used in other countries and by more experienced organizations participating in the project.
- ✧ Lobbying (in the Parliaments, state governments and local authorities) for the introduction of legislative amendments necessary for changing and implementing social policies that would ensure effective child protection.

## The project involves a variety of activities:

- ✧ social campaigns
- ✧ lobbying in favour of legislative changes and building an integrated child support system
- ✧ publishing educational materials addressed to professionals, parents, and children
- ✧ organizing conferences, training sessions, supervisions, and site visits
- ✧ conducting research on social attitudes toward child abuse
- ✧ running the [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net) website which offers information about the project itself and the problem of child abuse in Central and Eastern Europe.

The “Childhood without Abuse” project has been planned for the years **2005-2009**. Recognizing the needs of the participating countries and partner organizations, the following **priorities** have been established for this five-year period:

- ✧ 2005 – child abuse prevention
- ✧ 2006 – diagnosis and therapy of abused children
- ✧ 2007 – legal protection of children and families
- ✧ 2008 – interdisciplinary help for abused children
- ✧ 2009 – institutional abuse

## The team coordinating the project:

- ☀ Maria Keller-Hamela – coordinator of the “Childhood without Abuse” project  
mhamela@fdn.pl
- ☀ Gabriela Roszkowska – programme assistant  
groszkowska@fdn.pl
- ☀ Dorota Gajewska – programme assistant, webmaster of [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net) website  
dgajewska@fdn.pl

## Current coordinators in participant countries:

- ☀ Diana Ruseva – Social Activities and Practices Institute,  
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- ☀ Agnese Sladzevska – Center Against Abuse “Dardedze”,  
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- ☀ Ausra Kuriene – Children Support Center,  
**Lithuania**, ausra@pvc.lt
- ☀ Ivana Stankovska – First Children’s Embassy “Megjashi”,  
**Macedonia**, info@childrensembassy.org.mk
- ☀ Daniela Popescu – National Center for Child Abuse Prevention,  
**Moldova**, daniela01md@yahoo.com
- ☀ Gabriela Roszkowska – Nobody’s Children Foundation,  
**Poland**, groszkowska@fdn.pl
- ☀ Lesya Kuzmenko – Child Well-Being Fund,  
**Ukraine**, lesya@ccf.kiev.ua



Meeting of the coordinators, November 2007

## The [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net) website

The webpage [canee.net](http://www.canee.net) is dedicated to the problem of child abuse and neglect in Central and Eastern Europe. It includes information on various dimensions of this phenomenon – research findings, statistics, legislation in force, and descriptions of activities undertaken to protect children’s rights.

Nevertheless, the main purpose of the [canee.net](http://www.canee.net) webpage is to serve as a communication platform for professionals and NGOs dealing with abused and neglected children, especially those participating in the “Childhood without Abuse” project. On the [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net) forum they can learn about new approaches to the problem, but also exchange experience and good practices. [Canee.net](http://www.canee.net) promotes multidisciplinary cooperation between professionals working in the field of child protection.



The “Childhood without Abuse” project was initiated and is financed and supported by the **OAK Foundation** within the **Child Abuse Programme**, which seeks to improve the environment for children so that they can grow up safely and securely, free from any forms of abuse, sexual exploitation, and neglect.

More information on the **OAK Foundation’s** activities is available at [www.oakfnd.org](http://www.oakfnd.org)



# Partner Organizations



## Bulgaria

**Social Activities and Practices Institute** (*Институт по социални дейности и практики*) is the NGO dedicated to the welfare and protection of children at risk. It runs three centres for provision of social services for children and families at risk, including mother-and-baby units, shelters for abused children and children at risk, psychological consultation, family consultation, day care centres for children at risk. SAPI has developed considerable training capacity for professionals from the helping professions. It provides training and supervision to other social service providers.

[www.sapibg.org](http://www.sapibg.org), e-mail: [sapi@sapibg.org](mailto:sapi@sapibg.org)



During the first three years the implementation of the project in Bulgaria was coordinated by Partners Bulgaria. **Partners Bulgaria Foundation** (*Фондация "Партньори – България"*) supports the process of democratic change taking place in Bulgaria and collaborates with several institutions, other non-governmental organizations, and specialists to develop institutional capacities necessary to promote the development of civil society.

Among many activities, PBF implements various programmes related to child protection. Besides providing information and raising public awareness of the problem of children's rights, PBF directly supports children and adolescents at risk, taking special care of those leaving social institutions and endangered by trafficking. An important part of PBF's work is also creating positive institutional environment for improving public policy concerning social activities for children at risk.

[www.partnersbg.org](http://www.partnersbg.org), e-mail: [partners@partnersbg.org](mailto:partners@partnersbg.org)



## Latvia

**Center Against Abuse "Dardedze"** (*Centrs Pret Vardarbibu "Dardedze"*) provides holistic assistance to children who have suffered from abuse and to their families. Professionals working in the Center offer intensive treatment aimed at reducing emotional, physical and social effects of violence on the child. Dardedze is also equipped with a forensic interview room, where children can give their legal testimonies. The "Dardedze" Centre

also organizes family therapy, consultations for potential guardians, and educational support groups for parents and children. Moreover, "Dardedze" serves as a resource and training centre for many professionals working in the field of child abuse and educates the whole society on this problem.

[www.centrsdardedze.lv](http://www.centrsdardedze.lv), e-mail: [dardedze@gmail.com](mailto:dardedze@gmail.com)



## Lithuania

**Children Support Center** (*Paramos Vaikams Centras*) ensures psychological well-being of children, adults and whole families affected by violence or sexual abuse. To achieve its goals, the Children Support Center works simultaneously in different fields, ranging from providing psychological guidance and counselling to children, their parents and guardians, through developing interdisciplinary training and cooperation programmes for profession-

als and volunteers, to raising public awareness, to facilitate the community's involvement in child protection. Besides the *Child Abuse Prevention* programme, the Center has successfully run the *Big Brother, Big Sister* project with the main goal of establishing a professionally supported relationship between an adult and a child, aimed at developing the child's responsibility, trust and social skills. Particular attention is devoted to violence prevention programmes at schools – a successfully implemented programme improving social and emotional skills, *Second Step*, a training programme for multidisciplinary school teams, *First Psychological Aid*, and a training programme for school communities, *School without Violence*.

[www.pvc.lt](http://www.pvc.lt), e-mail: [pvc@pvc.lt](mailto:pvc@pvc.lt)

## Macedonia

First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi" (*Прва Детска Амбасада во Светот "Меџашу"*) defines its basic task as child protection and preventing cases of child abuse for sexual or economic purposes. To achieve these goals "Megjashi" works on developing the general public's awareness of children's rights by organizing social and educational campaigns and by strengthening the NGO movement for children's rights. For children, "Megjashi" organizes *Children's Workshops*, which provide a unique opportunity to develop every child's potential and creativity. The organization operates a free helpline for children and youth, offers psychological counselling and free legal assistance, and runs the Daily Center for children living on the street.

[www.childrensembassy.org.mk](http://www.childrensembassy.org.mk), e-mail: [info@childrensembassy.org.mk](mailto:info@childrensembassy.org.mk)

During the first two years the implementation of the project in Macedonia was coordinated by Safe Childhood (*Bezbedne Detstvo*).



## Moldova

National Center for Child Abuse Prevention (*Centrul National de Prevenire a Abuzului Fata de Copii*) works for reducing the level of violence towards children through prevention and education. To accomplish its goals, NCCAP familiarizes the society with the main problems of abused children by publishing and disseminating awareness-raising materials and by organizing social campaigns promoting children's rights. The Center also runs educational programmes at schools and community-based centres, trains professionals who directly support abused and neglected children, and participates in building a cross-sector model to address the problem of maltreated children more effectively. Moreover, NCCAP provides psychological, social and medical assistance to abused children, their families, marginalized communities and children at risk.

[www.cnpac.org.md](http://www.cnpac.org.md), e-mail: [cnpac@moldnet.md](mailto:cnpac@moldnet.md)



## Poland

Nobody's Children Foundation (*Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje*) provides a broad scope of assistance to abused children. The Foundation's activities are targeted at physically, emotionally, and sexually abused and neglected children, their parents and guardians, as well as professionals dealing with cases of child abuse. The Foundation's main goal is to develop an efficient help system, which would integrate activities of state institutions, local authorities and non-governmental organizations working for the benefit of abused children. A child friendly interviewing room is located in the Foundation premises. The Foundation also conducts research and analyses that enhance knowledge about the problem, and publishes numerous materials, including a quarterly *Abused Child: Theory, Research and Practice*. The Foundation organizes social campaigns focusing on the protection of abused and neglected children.

[www.fdn.pl](http://www.fdn.pl), e-mail: [fdn@fdn.pl](mailto:fdn@fdn.pl)



## Ukraine

Child Well-Being Found (*Український фонд "Благополуччя дітей"*) provides various kinds of services aimed at improving the situation of children in Ukraine. To develop their full potential, CWF trainers organize educational activities targeted specifically at children and youth, and work on creating favourable conditions for their protection. In order to implement innovations in this field, CWF – with its consultants – tries to strengthen the capacity of local communities and to build partnerships working on children's rights protection. Moreover, in its consultative centres CWF offers social and psychological support for families and educates adults on how to enhance their parental skills. CWF also runs several resource centres which provide information, methodological consultation and technical support for professionals working with children.

[www.childfund.org.ua](http://www.childfund.org.ua), e-mail: [staff@ccf.kiev.ua](mailto:staff@ccf.kiev.ua)



# Project Activities

## Publications

Each year materials are developed and published within the project, to meet the needs identified by professionals dealing with the particular aspect of child abuse and neglect selected for the year. Some materials are translated and printed in all seven languages, while others are country-specific. The materials published so far include not only experts' analyses, but also educational brochures for parents, as well as games and books for children.

- ☀ The board game “Coming Back Home” was created as a tool for teachers and psychologists to work on prevention issues with children. It was designed in Lithuania by Saugaus Vaiko Centras from Kaunas and then translated into the native languages of the participating countries, adapted and printed. The game was then distributed among schools, NGOs, therapy centres and other places where professional can use them in their work with children. The aim of the game is to help children acquire effective safety skills and enhance their psycho-social resilience. While playing, children find out what situations could be dangerous and how to deal with them, and are encouraged to look for the best solutions.



- ☀ The brochure “10 Steps to Become a Better Parent”, based on NSPCC publication, provides 10 tips for parents, helping them to build positive and encouraging models of discipline for their children. Some parents are afraid that without spanking or other kinds of corporal punishment they won't be able to control their children's behaviour. The brochure describes, briefly and accessibly, positive rules which can change family life for better and happier both for parents and for children.

1. Love is the most important need for all children.
2. Listen carefully to what your child is telling you.
3. Limits have to be set, even in the most loving relationships.
4. Laughter can help diffuse difficult situations.
5. Seeing things from your child's point of view and imagining how your child feels is the key to understanding behaviour.
6. Praise and encourage your child.
7. Respect your child as you would respect another adult.
8. Set routines.
9. Some rules are necessary in every family.
10. Don't forget your own needs.

The brochures were published in 6 languages and are available on [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net).





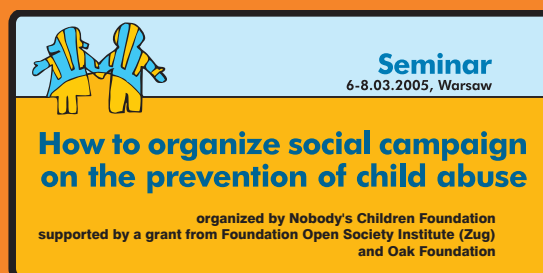
- ☀ The aim of the educational book “I am Going to Court” is to help children in getting ready for testifying in court. By a short and easy description, it helps children to understand court procedures and the child witness’ role and obligations. There is some space left for the child’s drawings to help them communicate their fears and imagine themselves in situations they are going to face. The book provides answers to questions that may be asked by child witnesses, such as: “What will happen if I am nervous, sad or I start crying?”; “How long will I have to stay there?”, “What will they ask me about?” and other questions. The first part of the book describes the people who take part in the trial and the court room itself. The last page of the booklet contains guidelines for parents and caregivers on how to support a child in such a difficult situation.

- ☀ The brochure “When a Child is a Witness in Court” is addressed to child witnesses’ parents and caregivers. The brochure explains parents’ rights as well as the rights of their children within court procedures. It also provides answers to important questions which may emerge when a child is going to participate in a trial, such as information on relevant legal regulations, the scope of competence of the police, the prosecutor, and the court, as well as interviewing procedures. The booklet was initially published in Poland and then translated, adapted and printed in Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania. This publication was financed from the European Commission’s programme AGIS.



## Conferences

Each year coordinators and professionals from the seven participant countries meet for the conference to share knowledge and learn from the best experts in the field. Topics addressed during each conference correspond closely with the project's theme for the year. The coordinators also participate in conferences organized by International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. Those largest meetings of professionals working on prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect are a source of knowledge and good practices for organizations taking part in the project.



**1 How to organize a social campaign on the prevention of child abuse**  
3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> of March 2005, Warsaw, Poland

This conference was devoted to building the participant organizations' capacity for preparing, launching and successfully implementing social campaigns on child abuse prevention.



**2 Child as a witness – assessment, treatment and support programmes for child victims of crime**  
19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> of October 2006, Druskininkai, Lithuania

The conference covered the whole range of issues related to the situation of child witness – diagnosis in child abuse cases, ways of helping these children and their families, and practical interviewing guidelines.



**3 Child as a participant in legal procedures in Eastern Europe**  
8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> of November 2007, Riga, Latvia

This conference provided an opportunity to present legal regulations concerning the protection of child victims, and to work on organizing efficient support for child witnesses in the participant countries.

The main focus of the conference was to analyse and discuss the scope of protection provided for children participating in legal procedures in Eastern Europe. Besides presenting the psychological and organizational challenges concerning special treatment of children witnesses, the significant part of a programme was devoted to workshops on practical issues related to this problem.

## Site visits

Visiting various organizations in different countries across Europe creates opportunities to share good practices, build networks and get inspiration from each other. Site visits take place along with international conferences and coordinators' meetings. The development of contacts with other organizations working in the same field creates new partnerships beneficial when applying for new projects, and brings in new ideas and inspirations for developing own programmes.

### 1 Site visit in Warsaw, March 2005

Participants visited several institutions and organizations, among them the **"Mazowiecka" Child Advocacy Center** equipped with a child-friendly interview room.



1

### 2 Site visit in York, September 2006

In the York office of the **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)**, the oldest organization working on child protection from cruelty in UK, participants of the site visit got acquainted with methods of NSPCC therapeutic work provided to children and their parents. The other place visited in York was **Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit**, where police officers presented interview room for children.



2

### 3 Site visit in Riga, November 2007

Participants in the site visit to the **Center against Abuse "Dardedze"** got acquainted with all activities of the organization and visited its child-friendly interview room.



3

### 4 Site visit in Lisbon, November 2007

During the XIth ISPCAN conference, which took place in November 2007, national coordinators of the project visited **Instituto de Apoio a Criança** in Lisbon. After being introduced to all the programmes run by the organization, they participated in the presentation of the programme for street children and got acquainted with helpline activities.



4



## Supervisions

Supervisions by local and international experts are another way of strengthening the group of professionals working with abused children. Local supervisions take place twice a year. They are expected to be helpful in sharing practical knowledge and improving skills of those playing the main role in providing direct help for children. A supervision with an international expert provides an opportunity to discuss difficult cases and look for the best practices in therapy and treatment of abused children, based on the experience, knowledge and skills of the best experts in the field.

### 1 Local supervision in Macedonia, October 2005

The local supervision which took place in Macedonia in 2005 was based on the case discussions. Participants were talking about the various aspects of treatment of children abused sexually within the family.

### 2 Local supervision in Ukraine, November 2006

In 2006 local supervisions in Ukraine were conducted in three regions: Crimea, Kirovohrad and Khmelnytskyj. Social workers, educators and psychologists learned skills necessary to identify children who have experienced abuse.

### 3 Supervision by an international expert in Poland, June 2007

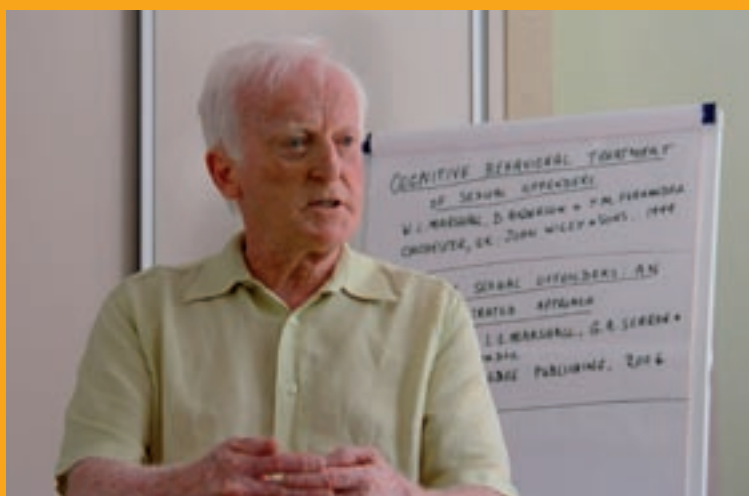
Supervision by an international expert, Bill Marshall, was conducted in Poland in 2007. The subject of the meeting was cognitive behavioural therapy of child sexual abusers.



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## Trainings

Competencies of East European professionals who work with abused children are enhanced through two-day training courses taking place twice a year in each country. Specific aspect of the year theme, the group of professionals to be trained, and trainers are selected by local project coordinators, based on the identified shortcomings and weaknesses in the knowledge and skills of that group.

### 1 Training course for psychologists in Moldova, August 2006

In 2006 Moldovian psychologists working in governmental and non-governmental community centers took part in a 3-day training course on diagnosis and psychological rehabilitation of abused child.

### 2 Training in Bulgaria, November and December 2006

There were two training sessions conducted in 2006 in Bulgaria. The main subject was diagnosis and treatment of child abuse, with the emphasis on treatment of child victims of domestic violence.

### 3 Subregional training for social workers and caregivers in Latvia, October 2006

In 2006 social workers and caregivers from Latvia and Lithuania took part in a subregional training session on child protection in institutions.



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## Social campaigns

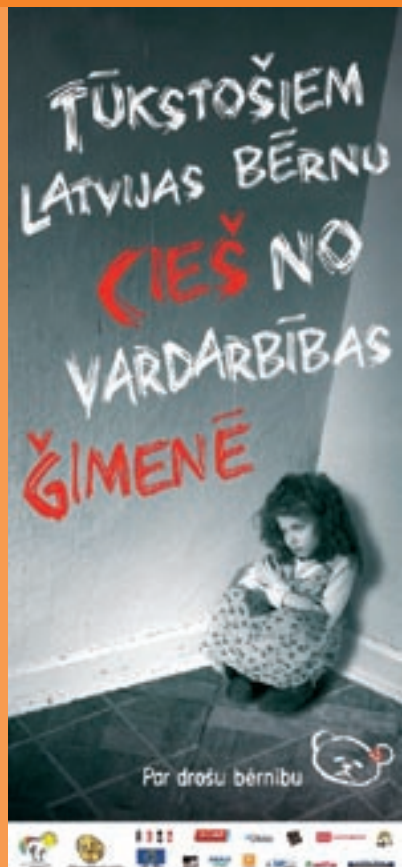
# Childhood without Violence

In 2006 countries participating in the programme carried out a campaign against violence towards children “**Childhood without Violence**”. The crucial issue of the campaign was to increase social involvement in actions against child abuse. Consequently, the campaign involved promotion of positive solutions in prevention, protection and intervention in child abuse cases, as well as encouraging local communities and institutions to take adequate actions. The initiative aimed also at improving the system of family support and developing parental skills.



☀ Billboard (Ukrainian version)

The campaign was based on materials used in the “Childhood without Violence”  Billboard (Ukrainian version) social campaign, created by McCann Erickson’s team and conducted initially in Poland in 2001. The campaign was extremely successful in raising public sensitivity to the problem of physical and emotional abuse among Polish children. In 2006 the TV spot, two radio spots and posters were translated and adapted into eight languages (the six national languages and, additionally, Russian and Albanian). Moreover, the media messages were complemented with billboards, citylights, leaflets, postcards, calendars, stickers, and other types of educational material. The campaign focused both on informing about the problem of child abuse and on promoting good parenting. In most of the six countries it was the first nationwide campaign concerning the problem.



 Billboard (Latvian version)



☀ Citylight (Lithuanian version)

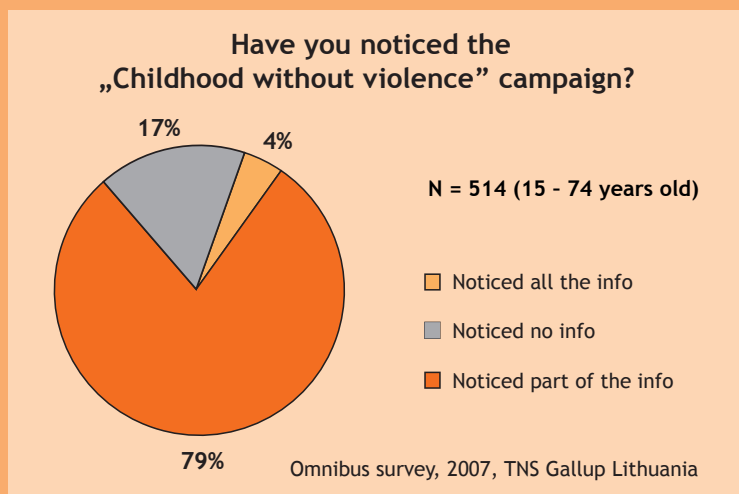
- ☀ The campaign "Childhood without Violence" included also a message to parents "I am learning life from you".

Respect me so I would respect others.  
 Forgive me so I could forgive.  
 Listen to me so I could listen.  
 Do not beat me so I wouldn't beat.  
 Do not humiliate me so I wouldn't  
 humiliate.  
 Talk to me so I could talk to others.  
 Do not laugh at me.  
 Do not offend me.  
 Do not ignore me.  
 Love me so I could love.  
**I am learning life from you.**

- ☀ In all the countries the local branches of McCann Erickson, an advertising agency, adapted the materials of the “Childhood without Violence” campaign on pro-bono basis and facilitated launching it in the media.

National campaigns were launched in September 2006 and carried out into the first months of 2007, achieving high visibility in all six countries. Media messages were presented on non-profit terms by several TV and radio stations. Precise data on the campaign visibility were collected after its conclusion in early 2007, through studies conducted on representative samples in each of the six countries. The findings are published on [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net).

# 1 Visibility of the campaign “Childhood without Violence” in Lithuania



Broad coalitions supporting the campaign were successfully built, comprising NGOs and government agencies. Furthermore, the campaign won support and active engagement of politicians, who contributed substantially to the organization of the inauguration events. In Latvia the campaign was supported by the President, who took part in the inauguration ceremony.

## 2 Citylight (Latvian version)

## 3 Billboard (Moldavian version)

## 4 Poster (Macedonian version)



## Child as a Witness

In 2007 in all the countries participating in the “Childhood without Abuse” project the campaign “Child: Witness with Special Needs” was carried out. Since according to the project’s schedule that year was devoted to legal protection of children, one of the most important issues to be achieved was to provide protection for child victims of crime in criminal proceedings in accordance with the EU guidelines. Therefore the goal of the campaign was to sensitize representatives of the legal system to the needs of children participating in legal procedures and to make them aware that children should be treated differently than adult witnesses.



☀ Poster “Your Honour, I am scared”

Posters “Your Honour, I am scared” were adopted and published in 6 languages based on the Polish version. The posters were distributed at police stations, prosecutor’s offices and district courts. The brochure “When your child is a witness in court” was also published (in Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania) based on the Polish version. This booklet, addressed to child witnesses’ parents and caregivers, provides answers to important questions which may emerge when a child is going to participate in a trial. Moreover, institutions offering psychological help

The campaign was addressed to professionals – judges, prosecutors, police officers, and psychologists acting as court experts – participating in legal interventions or helping children throughout the process. It was aimed at increasing these professional groups’ sensitivity to children’s special needs in criminal proceedings, improving their skills and competencies related to interviewing children and lobbying for the establishment of child-friendly interview rooms.

The campaign was targeting also parents and caregivers of children who participate in the investigation process and court proceedings as victims of crime. As persons who have the closest relationship with the child and who are trusted by him or her, parents and caregivers play a crucial role in helping the child cope with the difficult experience of being interviewed by the prosecutor or in court. Their task is to prepare the child for such a situation as participating in legal procedures. In many cases, however, contact with law enforcement institutions is a new and difficult experience for the parents themselves, who may not know legal regulations or what to expect during the legal proceedings, and are sometimes unaware of how the child feels and how to protect him or her from stress.



☀ Brochures “When your child is a witness in court”



to abused children were provided with “I’m going to court” colour books published in partner countries, which – through short and easy descriptions and pictures – help children understand the institution of court justice and the role and obligations of a young witness. They also instruct psychologists and parents on how to familiarize the child with the court and the situations to be expected during the proceedings.



☀ I am Going to Court



☀ Opening of the Latvian conference on protecting child witnesses by Minister Mr. Ainārs Baštiks, Ministry for Children and Family Affairs, who took patronage over the event.

What is worth mentioning, the campaign has already its second edition. Nobody’s Children Foundation, which conducted in 2004 campaign “Your Honour, I am scared”, launched in the end of 2007 the second stage of the campaign. As it was the logic continuation of the former edition, the message popularized this time was “Your Honour, I have the right not to be scared”.



☀ Polish poster “Your Honour, I have the right not to be scared”

## Child in the Web

In 2006 the Nobody's Children Foundation conducted research among children using the Internet, aged 12 to 17. At the same time, adult Internet users, among them parents of children at such age, were also surveyed. The study covered a wide range of issues, but the most important topic was children' and parents' awareness of threats related to making friends online and children' behaviours associated with such online relationships.

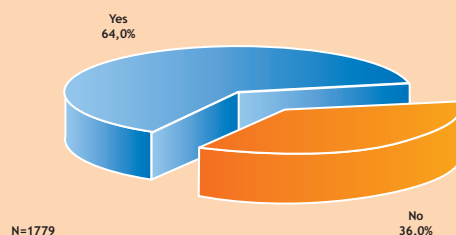
Not surprisingly, it turned out that the vast majority (64 %) of surveyed children make friends online. Moreover, a significant part of them did not see anything wrong or dangerous in disclosing private information, such as the e-mail address (78 %) or photos (58,5 %). And although those young people declared having heard or read about risks related to making friends online, still a significant part of them (45 %) at least once met somebody known only from a chat in the real world.

Although this study concerned only Polish children, it is more than possible that similar behaviours, views and attitudes are typical also in the other countries participating in the "Childhood without Abuse" project. Moreover, one cannot forget about still growing Internet activity of pedophiles and other people who can harm the child. The Polish research revealed that almost 70% of surveyed children had experienced a situation when someone tried to arrange an offline meeting with them. Also, the answers provided by Polish parents who - in spite of being aware that their children use Internet messengers and online chats - were typically sure that offline meetings with online friends did not really take place, showed that there still was an urgent need to raise the issue of Internet related threats.



☀ Latvian poster of the "You Never Know Who is on the Other Side" campaign

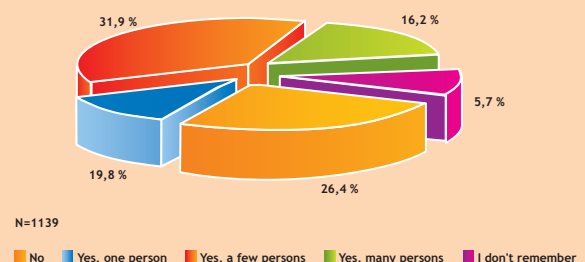
### Do you make friends online?



Gemius

Source: Gemius Report, January 2006

### Have you met online someone who tried to fix an offline meeting with you?



Gemius

Source: Gemius Report, January 2006

Recognizing the problem of dangers connected with uncontrolled and reckless usage of Internet also in the other countries participating in the "Childhood without Abuse" project, an effort was made to popularize there the "Child on the Web" campaign, launched originally in Poland in 2004. The campaign was created on the non-profit basis by a Polish advertising agency VA Strategic Communications and presented originally by the Nobody's Children Foundation. The major purpose of the campaign was to raise adults and children's awareness of threats to which young Internet users are exposed and to provide education on safer Internet use.



The media part of the campaign, carried out under a motto “You Never Know Who is on the Other Side”, included messages conveyed in press advertisements, on citylights and billboards displayed in the largest cities.



☀ Hi, I'm Ania. I'm 12 years old and I'm looking for friends.



☀ Hi, Ania. My name is Wojtek. I'm also 12 years old and I would like to meet you.

Until today, the campaign has already been successfully carried out in Bulgaria and Latvia.

☀ Citylights and billboards displayed in Bulgarian cities

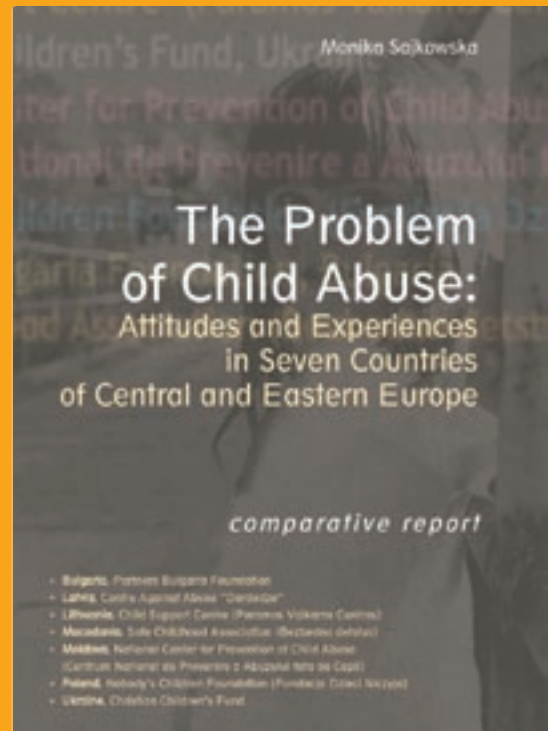


## Research

To assess adults' attitudes towards various aspects of child abuse, as well as to evaluate the knowledge and skills of professionals working with children, in the first year of the project research studies were conducted and will be repeated in its last year. The research was carried out in all the participant countries on representative adult samples. The respondents were asked about their attitudes toward parental use of corporal punishment and about their perception of the scale of such behaviours among parents. Teachers were additionally requested to report their experience in undertaking interventions in cases of violence against children and to evaluate the effectiveness of the child protection system in their countries.

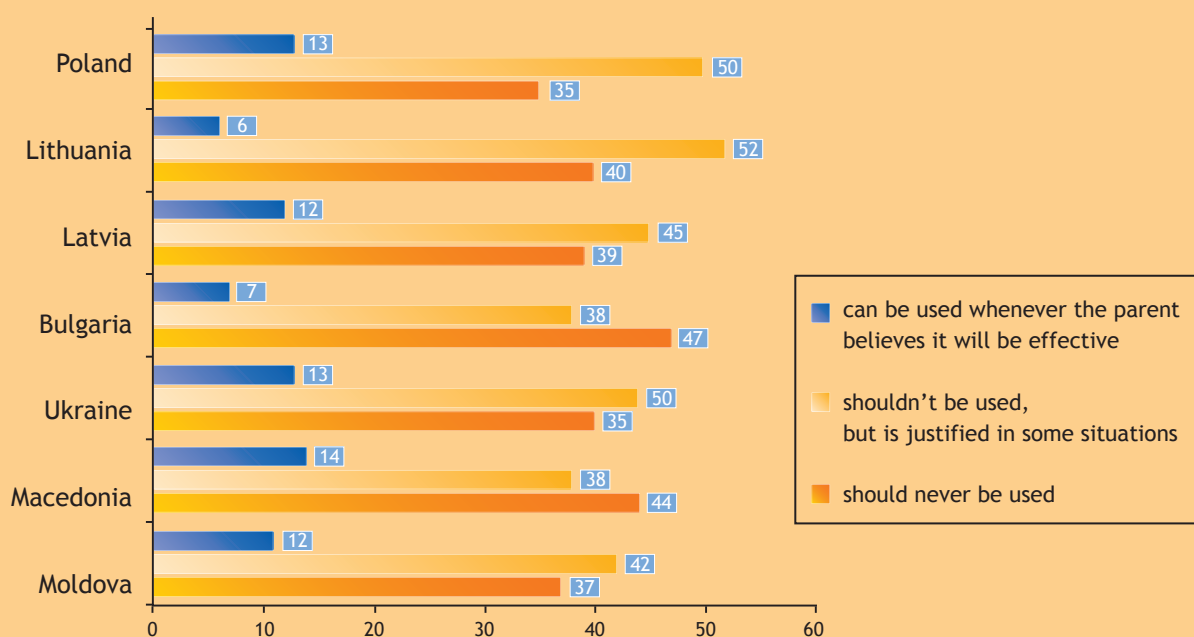
☀ The study "The Problem of Child Abuse: Attitudes and Experiences in Seven Countries of Central and Eastern Europe"

This study, however, was not only an examination of the public opinion. It will also serve as an evaluation tool measuring five years' impact of project's activities when its results will be compared with those obtained in the research planned for 2009.



### The survey on social acceptance of corporal punishment of children - results from seven countries participating in the project (2005)

Do you believe beating a child by a parent as a punishment is a disciplinary measure that...



Two questions were added to social demographic survey of a defined and stratified population in each country

# Calendar of the „Childhood without abuse” activities

**2005**

## **Child Abuse Prevention**

As it was the initial year of the project, it was devoted to recognizing the specificity and scope of the child abuse in Central and Eastern Europe.

- ☀ Research on teachers' attitudes to child abuse
- ☀ Survey on representative sample of adults on social acceptance of corporal punishment
- ☀ Conference “How to organize a social campaign on child abuse prevention” in Warsaw, Poland
- ☀ Site visits in several institutions in Warsaw, among them Mazowiecka Child Advocacy Center
- ☀ Publications eg. the brochure “10 steps to Become a Better Parent”, prevention board game “Coming Back Home”
- ☀ “Childhood without Violence” social campaign

**2006**

## **Diagnosis and Therapy of Abused Children**

- ☀ “Childhood without Violence” social campaign, continuation
- ☀ Conference “Child as a Witness – assessment, treatment and support programs for children, victims of crime” in Druskininkai, Lithuania
- ☀ Site visit at NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) in York, UK, at Child Abuse Investigation Unit of the York Police and Children Support Center in Vilnius, Lithuania
- ☀ Training Big Brother, Big Sister
- ☀ Subregional training
- ☀ Publication e.g. “I am going to court” in Lithuania and Latvia

**2007**

## **Legal Protection of Children and Families**

- ☀ “Child: Witness with Special Needs” educational campaign
- ☀ Conference “Child as a participant in legal procedures in Eastern Europe” in Riga, Latvia
- ☀ Site visit in the Center Against Abuse “Dardedze” in Riga and in the Child Support Institute (I.A.C.) in Lisbon
- ☀ Publication e.g. “I am going to court” (Moldova, Bulgaria, Ukraine), “When your child is the witness in court” (Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria)
- ☀ “Child in the Web” social campaign in Latvia and Bulgaria

**2008**

## **Interdisciplinary Help for Abused Children**

**2009**

## **Institutional abuse**

# To date the “Childhood without Abuse” project has been supported by the following organizations, institutions and companies:



State Agency for Child Protection SACP



Council of Europe



UK Embassy



Media Agency Piero 97



Ministry of Justice



VA Strategic Communications



ABBRO - Association of Bulgarian Broadcasters



Granna company



Bernu  
- Ministry for Children and Families



Vilnius Municipality



European Union



Ieva - Women's Magazine



Step by Step Foundation



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE  
Open Society Institute Foundation  
(Zug)



Ziedot charity web

National Council  
for Child Rights Protection

Municipal Direction  
for Child Rights Protection



State Social Service for Family,  
Children and Youth



Shopping mall „Rimi”



Superior Court of Justice  
of R. Moldova

McCANN ERICKSON

McCann Erickson



Body Shop



UNICEF



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE  
Open Society Institute  
and Soros Foundation



Ministry of Labor and Social Security





