



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2016

# MissionPossible

Bringing Help and the Gospel to the Children and Families in Eastern Europe

They expect us!





IGNAT IVANOV  
President

## "I want out of this place!"

Mitko is a thirteen-year-old boy from one of Bulgaria's slums. He was at our Dobromirka center during youth camp, half of whose participants were from Gypsy villages. That is where I met him. He is smart, strong, and willing to help.

Mitko told me that he didn't want to leave Dobromirka. The nice well-kept center with its atmosphere of joy and encouragement, all the kind people, the activities, and the order were like another world compared to his everyday surroundings. "I can't stand that place," he said, referring to his home in the slums. "It is full of criminals who sell drugs outside our window. I want out of that place!"

"Endure a few more years and finish your schooling," I told Mitko. "Keep meeting with the church. After you graduate, we'll enroll you in our professional school. You can get a driver's license, gain employment, and begin a new life."

Mitko felt he was a prisoner of circumstances, but he also understood that he had a chance at a different life. There are many children and teens like him where we work. Through the Gospel message, we can help them find spiritual freedom. We can also help them find a way out of their hopeless situations. That is why we continue to do what we do. Thank you for making it possible!

## How can we help more children? We can go to their homes.

Two hundred and fifty children are housed in our shelter homes and rehabilitation centers each year. That is our facilities' maximum capacity. However, more than twice that many children are reached through family ministry as our teams visit the homes of families in crisis.

Working with families is an integral part of the ministry in almost all of our locations. This work has been especially expanding in Yekaterinburg. Our team there regularly visits families and offers them much-needed help. The children are often invited to the shelter home to bathe, change clothes, receive additional teaching or speech therapy, and to participate in the activities. A Christian program and recreational events are arranged for both children and their parents.

There is much potential for this work, but lack of space in an already crowded shelter home limits our efforts. The situation is improving, though! We now have a second building - a large


house - outside the city, just a one-hour drive from the shelter home. It has four large rooms and an open kitchen and living room area. For additional accommodations, we'll build a couple cottages beside the house. We hope to complete two cottages, each designed with two living units, by the end of this year.

The main house will serve as a shelter and rehabilitation center for mothers and their children. It will be a place where temporary housing, aid, and education are offered to these hurting ones from families in crisis.

In addition to this, the new center can be used as a camp and holiday retreat for children. There is ample room to play in the fenced yard, and the house is situated next to a serene lake and forest.

The house was put to use immediately. During the other shelter home's pipe renovation, some of those children were moved to the new home until construction was complete.



A photograph of three children sitting at a table in a room with peeling paint and clutter. They are eating pieces of bread with white filling. The child on the left is a toddler with blue eyes, wearing a striped shirt. The child in the middle is a toddler with brown hair, wearing a patterned tank top. The child on the right is a young girl with blonde hair, wearing a green t-shirt and striped shorts. A plate of bread is on the table to the left, and a white cup is visible in the background.

Inside the four walls:  
Hopelessness, fear, and  
lack of everything

**Every day, the children in families in crisis witness and experience:**

- Substance abuse
- Sickness
- Unemployment
- Inadequate space and hygiene in dilapidated housing
- Malnourishment and lack of clothing
- Neglect because mothers were raised on the streets or in orphanages and don't know how to care for children or how to find help

# Meeting with residents in homes the size of closets

## **We've known Anna since she lived on the street**

When the street patrol in Yekaterinburg started its work in 2004, red-headed Anna was one of the girls who received assistance. We helped her find a small modest room to live in when her first baby was born. Now she has five lovely children. Anna's husband is disabled with several major health issues. The family's life is very difficult.



We often bring Anna's children to the shelter home to have a meal, take a shower, and to play with the other children. Anna's family always participates in the events we organize through the church. Over the years there has been progress made in the parents' lives. Namely, they have stopped drinking.

The family's one-room home has only enough space for beds. The bunk bed we gave them clears up a little floor space. We visit the family regularly and bring help specific to their needs. The children are outgoing and happy, neatly dressed, and adequately fed. With our assistance, the family submitted an application for a larger apartment and is on the waiting list to receive one.

### **Lena was rejected at birth**

Our team also helps Lena, who grew up in an orphanage, and her child.

"My mother lived on the street and left me in the maternity ward at birth. I spent my childhood in different orphanages and went to a boarding school for problematic children."

"After graduating from a landscaping school I came to Yekaterinburg. Since

**Help, friendship, and  
the Gospel message  
This is what we give to  
families whose every  
day is a challenge.**

I didn't have any family here, I stayed in my classmates' homes and in an awful dormitory. Then I was told that, according to the law, I was entitled to an apartment."

Lena, indeed, was given a small apartment, but she didn't have the life skills to live independently. Several men took advantage of the timid, lonely young woman struggling through life. This is how Lena became the mother of little Kiril.

We heard about Lena and how she was living on a very small allowance. It is a pleasure to help her because she is so grateful for all the instruction and support she receives. She is very cooperative and takes responsibility for what she is capable of doing, and she readily participates in the church events we coordinate for mothers and children.

### **Our Children's Bible Club is a lifeline for Tolik**

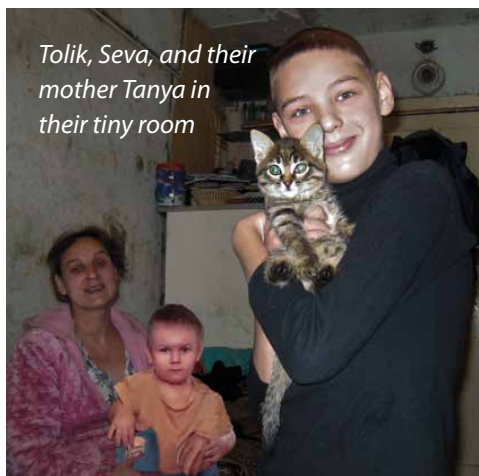
Twelve-year-old Tolik, his little

brother Seva, and their mother Tanya live in a tiny apartment - 95 square feet, to be exact - that looks more like a closet. We have been helping them for three years.

Tanya, similarly to Lena, grew up in an orphanage. When her second son was born, her eldest began to spend his time on the streets because life in the small room was too stressful for Tolik.

Tolik now regularly attends the Children's Bible Club and afternoon activities organized by Mission Possible on the main floor of the communal house (see next page). There he is given a hot meal, and our team assists him and the other children in homework. He has been to our camps, too.

We have done some renovation on Tanya's tiny room and we continue to give food and clothing to her needy family. We plan to get them a bunk bed so there will be more floor space for the boys..



*Tolik, Seva, and their  
mother Tanya in  
their tiny room*



*Lena with little Kiril*



ALBERT DOKTER

## Inside the walls of a communal house

From a distance the five-story building looks to be in reasonably good condition. Things are seen differently once you enter. It is a so-called communal house. Each long corridor has 25 doors leading to rooms of between 95 and 160 square feet. At the end of the hallway are a toilet, a sink, and one shower to be shared by all residents.

There is little privacy and there are always problems, which are not just noise-related. Issues with alcohol, drugs, and domestic violence are regular occurrences. Children are often left on their own because their single mothers have to work

to make ends meet.

This building has a room on the first floor known as “The Red Corner.” Mission Possible organizes an after-school program there five days a week for these children, and they eagerly wait for us to arrive every time.

“When do we eat?” asks one of the boys, who is about eight years old. “Are you hungry?” I ask. “Yes,” he says. “At our home there is nothing to eat.”

The children are served a meal, and each day has its own program: crafting, painting, outside games, an excursion, lessons on social behavior, Bible lessons. During the school year the program begins with homework time under our supervision.

A few mothers join their children on occasion. Their faces are drawn, one has a black eye. She does her best to avoid our camera. The ladies are not very talkative, except for Olga.

“For twenty-seven years I have lived in this place and I’m fed up with it,” she says. Compared to the other mothers, she is reasonably

well-off. She has a job and her mother watches her child in the building. After Olga’s husband physically beat her, she insisted he leave – that is quite unusual in Russia!

Most of the residents pay rent for their room, which is about 100 euros (\$108) a month. With an average monthly income of 160 euros (\$174), poverty is inevitable. They are grateful for the clothing and food parcels Mission Possible delivers. At the beginning of each school year, the children also receive school supplies.

But above all it is the love and attention they receive that brings them to us each day. Auntie Lyuba, the director of Mission Possible in Krasnoyarsk, is adored by both the children and mothers. She is always ready to listen to their problems and tries to resolve them.

“My heart breaks when I see the circumstances these children are growing up in. So little joy in their lives, and what is their future? Every day I thank God that we again have the opportunity to show these children something of His love.”





*The boys and Noah's ark with "The Red Corner's" sky wallpaper as a backdrop.*

## **In "The Red Corner" the Gospel and help are shared**

In the Soviet Union time, "red corner" meant a room within a workplace or governmental building for propaganda. Nowadays these facilities are not used much.

Mission Possible was given The Red Corner of this communal building to be used for Children's Bible Club gatherings. Here, the resident children can participate in many activities and become acquainted with the Bible. In the picture, Auntie Lyuba is bringing a surprise cake to a birthday boy.



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In our last newsletter we introduced you to our innovative new Baby Box Project. It combines face-to-face counseling and Bible study with a box of essential baby care products. The hands-on support and evangelism are a source of profound hope for some of Eastern Europe's most desperate mothers. But we can't do it alone.

Check your mailbox soon! You will be receiving a letter from Ignat, President of Mission Possible, with

more information about how you can personally make a difference. We will show you how you can get involved and how your gifts will impact many lives.

Your partnership with us provides the kind of help that the mothers and their infants need: practical baby essentials, health and care instructions, emotional support, and spiritual guidance for the mothers.



Please consider sending a Baby Box today. Go to [mp.org/give](http://mp.org/give), or call 1-800-729-2425. A donation of just \$60 will fill a Baby Box. Thank you for your help!



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Bringing help and the Gospel  
to those in Eastern Europe  
who are abused and forgotten