

# Center Against Abuse ***Dardedze***

Annual Activity Report 2009



# Center Against Abuse „Dardedze”

## *Letter from The Board*

Dear partners, friends and supporters,

2009 has been another intensive and fruitful year in the life of Center „Dardedze”. This year has been important for evaluating our work and promoting our own growth and capacity. It was a year that helped us understand that in spite of the fact that state funding has been withdrawn and municipal funding has been significantly reduced, we can still find strength and resources in ourselves to continue the work that we believe in - making this world a safer place for our children.

At the beginning of 2009 we completed the adjustment works for a new preventive educational program „Safety Trip” for the 1st – 3rd grade students and their teachers. This program aims to reduce child victimization through interactive playing and learning elements that help children model various situations and their behavior in these situations that would help them avoid victimization. Program was welcomed enormously by teachers, parents and children themselves. The first assessment of the program shows that children have significantly improved their safety skills after attending the program and remembers the information learned after a 6 month period.

In 2009 we were frequently asked if we do not regret closing a Support House service, where children who were removed from their homes after abuse could stay and receive supportive services for a certain amount of time. When we look back at the past 2 years after closing this service, we can be confident that looking at the perspective in a broader sense, we see the importance in investing our resources and skills in preventive services, thus assuring early intervention in cases and preventing the increase of number of children who are victimized in our country.

Providing services to abused children and their families has also remained as one of our main priorities in 2009. Through the support program we strive to help children and families deal with the consequences caused by victimization and recreate safe and healthy foundation for a child to continue developing and growing in their families.

We are proud that we were able to continue the anti-bullying program „Courage to be friendly” started in 2008 addressing a fast growing

problem among children and adolescents – bullying. This program gave us an opportunity to reach many adolescents in the age group of 5th – 9th grade encouraging them to make small steps in order to make their environment safe and friendly.

In 2009 we have tried to reach individuals, professionals and whole society by conveying the important message of safeguarding our children and valuing the safety of each child and family.

With a humble heart I would like to recognize every staff member who has worked with genuine dedication, every partner and supporter without whom this work would have been impossible!

**Agnese Megne**

Head of the Board of Center „Dardedze”



## Center Against Abuse „Dardedze”

Center Against Abuse „Dardedze” is a non- governmental, non-profit organization working to prevent child abuse in Latvia and to provide direct help to children exposed to sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect.

Our vision and mission is planted in the belief that every child has the right to feel safe, to be loved, cared for, nurtured and respected. Therefore the professional team of our center works towards enhancing:

- child's safety and protection at home (in the family)
- child's safety and protection at school
- child's safety and protection in residential placements
- child's safety on line
- child's safety in community

We actively work towards preventing child abuse in all levels, and provide support and help when child abuse occurs.

We believe that by emphasizing public opinion, educating society and by early identification of high risk and early intervention providing help to families with children at risk, we can stop child abuse and protect our children from all forms of violence.

## Programs run by Center Dardedze in 2009

### Helping abused children and families

Since the first day of Center „Dardedze” one of the main tasks has been to provide assistance to children who have been victims of sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect. Initially our Center ran a shelter support program for children who were removed from their families due to abuse, as well as out-patient counseling services. The Shelter program was closed several years ago, but we still continue to work with children and families both to process trauma caused by abuse and to provide every possible support to this family, as well as work in a preventive manner to provide

support to families where there is a high risk of child abuse.

Depending on each case, we work either with individual, family or group approach for assessment or therapeutic purposes, with sand therapy, play therapy, theraplay, etc.

Our team of professionals – social workers, psychologists, vocational therapist always works using multi disciplinary approach, engaging all responsible parties for the best outcome of the case that would be in the best interests and needs of a child.

*Ilze is a young woman, who has faced many difficulties in her life. She lives together with her spouse John in unregistered marriage! Five years ago their daughter Baiba was born, she was sick very often and for the new, inexperienced parents it was a great challenge to take care of the sick child. Baiba was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis, a disease marked by joint swelling and pain. Ilze says: „The child is constantly in pain, she cries almost the whole time, I don't feel rested; I feel frustrated, I feel hurt, because I did not deserve such a thing*

*happen to my child. At times I feel angry at her, I can start yelling and swearing at her, and I have to admit I hit her at times. I regret that immediately but I cannot help myself.” After some time Ilze's mother started caring for granddaughter. Shortly after that Ilze found out that she was pregnant with her second child. She was desperate and felt depressed, because she thought that the same thing would also happen to this baby. When baby girl Paula was born it was discovered that she has Down's syndrome. Now Paula is 4 years old. It was even more difficult*

for both parents to accept this fact than the first daughters illness. They refused to accept this and the fact that they had to learn how to care for this baby according to her specific needs. Both parents started consuming alcohol, they have regular loud „drinking parties” in their flat, strangers come and go. Paula spends most of her week in kindergarten, where she receives adequate care. There are disagreements about Paula’s education issues at home, because for Ilze and her friends it seems that Paula is „just like any other kid”. She thinks that Paula is just lazy and doesn’t want to do things she is told and expected to do. She spansks and smacks Paula regularly, because she is stubborn and annoying, according to what mother says. Both parents claim that she receives physical punishment, because Paula „just doesn’t know how to behave”. Parents realize they should not act like this, but they do not know any other way how to deal with her.

After Custody court was informed about this situation, they assigned both parents to

Center „Dardedze” to receive specific services – individual counseling, parent education and support program. After meeting both parents, special sessions with vocational therapist were assigned to help parents understand the needs and capability of a child with Down’s syndrome. Vocational therapist works separately with parents and child to help her strive, as well as together with the whole family to demonstrate special techniques. Parents also attend the Parents support group learning about the positive parenting approaches, as well as individual counseling sessions. As a result Custody Court has not withdrawn parental rights. They continue to come and receive support and as they both say – day by day they are growing closer to their child, understanding that she is special to them and that she does not deserve such attitude that hurts and breaks her as a child so early in her life. They want to learn more to become good parents to their girls, but they know they can’t do it on their own – just not yet...

## Program facts:

Carried out since	2001
In 2009 program was funded by:	Riga City Council Oak foundation
How many children reached through the program:	156 (83 girls; 73 boys)
How many parents reached through the program:	200 (158 women; 42 men)
Time of the program in 2009	January - December





## Child abuse prevention program “Džimba safety program”



### Džimba safety program:

- Child focused program for reducing child victimization
- Every child should receive instructions on personal safety that are positive, comprehensive and effective
- Every parent and educator should receive support and guidelines on how to teach personal safety to their children

### The goals of the program are:

- To enhance a child's ability to avoid victimization
- To enhance a child's self esteem
- To reduce the feelings of guilt and blame that often are associated with victimization
- To promote disclosure of abuse and victimization
- To enhance and coordinate community response
- To enhance communication between parents and children about personal safety
- To reinforce adult supervision and protection
- To deter offender behavior

Several years ago Center provided support to 2 boys who were sexually abused by a foreign pedophile. He had become a close friend of both boys and their mother, as well. Using bribes, gifts and positive communication he was able to build a “special” relationship with the boys that even mother trusted the boys to be safe with the man. In contrary, he sexually abused both boys and made sure boys kept this in secret.

After discovering the whole situation, mother reported to police, pedophile was convicted and the family received counseling to process the trauma within our Center. In one of the counseling sessions mother said

that she wonders, how she had never thought that she should talk to her boys about such matters as personal safety in relationship, about touching personal parts of body, taking photos, about keeping such things in secret. She felt so guilty that if only she had discussed it with the boys, she would have done at least something that was in her power to protect them. She was also so shocked that boys actually never came to her and didn't tell her until she walked in the room and caught the man in action, it was so disturbing for her that the boys had kept this thing in secret for such a long time, without realizing that no matter what, they should have come and told about it.



Center “Dardedze” runs various activities under the Safety program:

### ***Džimba Safety lessons in kindergartens***

This is a 30 – 40 minute long interactive lesson in kindergartens where a trainer teaches children the lesson of „My body is MINE” safety rule. During the interactive activities children learn the difference between a safe and unsafe touching, about the things that can be kept in secret and things that shouldn't be kept in secret. The main goal of the lesson is to help children identify adults whom they can trust and tell if someone touches them inappropriately, and to encourage them not to keep it in a secret.

After the lesson kindergarten teacher receives a folder of materials that can be used in the further work with children to refresh their knowledge of the personal safety issues.



#### **Program facts:**

Carried out since	2005
In 2009 program was funded by:	Aizkraukles bankas sabiedriskā labuma fonds
How many children reached through the program:	857 children
How many teachers reached through the program	55 teachers
Time of the program in 2009	September - December

## ***Džimba Safety program in pre- schools - 9 step pilot program***

In 2009 Center “Dardedze” developed a 9 step preventive educational program to be applied in 24 kindergartens and child care institutions in Latvia. There were 24 professionals trained who became Safety trainers and carried out the 9 step program in their work places. We reached 600 children all over Latvia with this program. One 40 minute safety lesson was included in the regular pre-school curricula during the 9 week period every week. Parents were informed with a special letter every week, introducing them with the Safety issues children have learned during the week and giving them special home work to be completed together with children. Knowledge on children's safety was tested before and after program. After the completion of the program 90% of children could recognize potentially dangerous situations, knowing how they should act in these situations. Parents were also surveyed before and after the program. 83% of parents indicated that their children did not have sufficient skills and knowledge of safety. After the program 88% parents recognized the program as a very effective tool in provoking dialogue among parents and children and helping parents to discuss various potentially dangerous situations with their children, as well as letting parents assess their own parenting style with their children.





### Program facts:

Carried out since	2009
In 2009 program was funded by:	Ministry for Children and Families
How many children reached through the program:	600 children (and their parents indirectly)
How many teachers reached through the program	30 teachers
Time of the program in 2009	February – December



## ***Džimba Safety trip for 1st – 3rd grade children***

Džimbas Safety Trip for 1st – 2nd grade students is a 3 hour interactive adventure during which children learn 8 personal safety rules that are important in reducing the risk of these children to become victims of violence. During the program children go through 4 interactive stations, learning the key factors of safety in relationships with peers, adults, strangers and people whom they know. This program also involves teachers and parents with a purpose to continue the discussion with children after the program.

This program helps children recognize abuse, teaches how to be safe and where to look for help when they are exposed to violence and/or abuse.



### **Program facts:**

Carried out since	2009
In 2009 program was funded by:	Carnegie Social Initiative Fund
How many children reached through the program:	1834 children
How many teachers reached through the program	91 teachers
Time of the program in 2009	February - December

## Džimba Safety Summer Schools

It is a 4 day interactive prevention program for children 4 – 7 years old, involving their parents. This program is a fun, interactive way to learn Safety rules in relationships with other people – adults, peers, strangers and also persons children know well.

### The core principals of the program are:

#### 1. Children have the right to be safe

Children learn what personal safety is and that they have the right to be safe.

#### 2. There are some fundamental principles underlying all activities we do with the children and adults in Safety program

a) Children learn to identify deceptive behavior (it's not what people look like, their age or how well you know them – it's what they ask you to do that is important).

b) Restore instincts and feelings (how to trust and act upon their feelings and instincts)

c) Builds self confidence (if they feel valuable, they feel worthy of being safe)



### Program facts:

Carried out since	2008
In 2009 program was funded by:	Aizkraukles Bankas Sabiedriskā Labuma Fonds
How many children reached through the program:	65 children
How many parents reached through the program	70 parents
Time of the program in 2009	January – December

## Courage to be friendly – anti bullying program

School's social worker was informed by the class teacher who had noticed that 12 years old girl Ieva started to behave strangely – she had become withdrawn, avoidant, started missing school often. Girl's mom noticed that Ieva often complained about headaches and stomach pain, telling, that she doesn't want to go to school. The changes with Ieva started when she became „friends" with Agita. Agita is the class leader with lots of friends. Agita and her friends dictate their own rules at school, force smaller and younger kids to obey their requirements. Initially, Ieva was very proud about Agita's expressed willingness to be friends, but it turned out that there is a "price" for this friendship - Ieva was required to do various 'services'. To be accepted in the circle of Agita's friends, Ieva had to take the money from younger schoolmates, ask cigarettes from people, had to smoke herself and skip school. If Ieva refused to do something, Agita started

to use threats and physical force to make sure Ieva did what Agita wanted. As a solution she tried to avoid meeting Agita, for some time and it worked, but then everything started again. Ieva's mother turned to Center „Dardedze" for help and started attending counseling with Ieva. We also contacted school and offered the school to become part of the „Courage to be friendly" program. School's administration initially showed some reluctance towards the offer, stating that bullying is not a problem in their school, but when we were able to show them some actual facts, they agreed to become involved. Now we have worked with students and teachers during the program and students are reporting back that the program has made them consider their behaviors and attitudes towards each other and have helped them realize that bullying is something that should not be tolerated in their school.

This is a special program designed to help schools and other children institutions and organizations to build child friendly environment, develop anti-bullying policy and intervention plan in case bullying takes place. This program involves students, schools' staff and

parents. Courage to be friendly was started and still remains as a part of the "Friends Across the borders" project started by Save the Children Sweden to be carried out in all three Baltic States – Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, giving each country the freedom to design the



program according to individual needs and challenges.

Statistics indicate that bullying has been one of the most frequent problems affecting children in schools in 2009. Research conducted in 2008 indicated that 51% of students who took part in a survey showed that they have been bullied in school because they felt different in one or another way. This project year has allowed us to raise awareness of the problem of bullying in schools for a large number of students, as well as adults. Courage to be friendly as a project has contributed in increasing student's knowledge, awareness and understanding of bullying and how it may affect one's life. Special "Courage to be

friendly" sessions were held in 57 schools: 370 classroom auditoriums, reaching 7174 adolescents in the 5th – 9th grade age group. 370 teachers were also addressed with the bullying issue during this program. An important step in 2009 was pilot program carried out in 2 schools of Riga helping these schools develop anti bullying policy and plan of action in case bullying takes place in schools. This project in 2009 allowed us to reach out more to schools with practical assistance and help in how to fight bullying in their own schools. A social campaign involving students was carried out in 2009, with the campaign closing event in one of the largest parks of Riga.

#### Program facts:

Carried out since	2008
In 2009 program was funded by:	Swedbank Save the children Sweden
How many children reached through the program in 2009:	8363 children
How many teachers reached through the program in 2009:	464 teachers
How many parents reached through the program in 2009:	200 parents
How many unique website attendees at <a href="http://www.drosmedraudzeties.lv">www.drosmedraudzeties.lv</a> in 2009:	17 419
Time of the program in 2009	January - December

Courage to be friendly pictures that reflect honest involvement of children:







## Child abuse prevention program for families at risk with young children „Guardian angel”



Program “Guardian angel” – community based prevention program for young parents with children 0-3 years old. This program is for new parents (parents at risk), providing education in child development, parent and child relationships, and adult relationships; information on community resources; and enhancing parent-child bonding and attachment. The main goal is early intervention and prevention of child abuse in these families. Program’s Guardian angel goal is to create a support system for new families where young parents come from orphanages, or are families that are in high social risk situations and are expecting baby or parenting a young child. The program was re-designed in 2009 putting a much larger emphasis on individual support to young parents at risk, as well as on engaging local community in supporting these parents. In this program we are involving volunteers from community to train them to become support persons for high risk families with children. Every year we work with young mothers who have graduated from orphanages or residential placements and do not know how to be the best moms for their children due to the lack of knowledge and personal experience. We not

only provide them professional assistance, but also pair them up with a trained volunteer from community who then becomes informal help and support to this family - being a role model, friend and support in the most difficult time of this family life, almost like a “Guardian angel”. Volunteers are regularly trained, supervised, monitored and supported by professional staff to ensure healthy relationship between all parties. This is an important program for the whole community, because it is an example of good practice showing how the community itself can get involved in empowering and strengthening its families for the safe and healthy childhood of its children.





Anna grew up in an orphanage and soon after graduation she met Igor - current father of her children with whom she also lives now. She came to the center „Dardedze” in a very difficult moment of her life! Igor had become severely abusive towards her - both emotionally and physically. In the family they have 8 month old son Maxim. Three older children (ages 11, 8 and 7) were placed in an orphanage, because their parental rights have been withdrawn. Anna had one more child, who was a little bit older than Maxim, but he died from an infectious disease when he was 13 months old.

Anna and Igor fight frequently and he tends to abuse her physically every time they have an argument. One day after another argument Anna left home as if going to do some business, leaving little Maxim in her husband's supervision. But he was drunk and in the presence of the child he cut his wrists. Later he was taken to the hospital! Orphan's Court and social workers tried to talk with Anna, and explained her that it is very dangerous and irresponsible to live in such conditions and especially in such relationship where child's health and life is at major risk. Anna understood and agreed to come to „Dardedze” to learn more about how to take a better care of the child and to prevent life-threatening conditions and situations for children!

Anna attended psychological counseling session and claims that she wants to leave her husband so

that she can protect herself and the child better, but again and again more reasons appeared that distracted her and she couldn't make the final decision. After some time Anna told that she has found a new place where to live with her child. She didn't show up for several counseling sessions, although claimed the opposite to social workers. After some longer time period she came again to see psychologist, and it turned out that she hasn't left her husband and, in addition, has given birth to another baby – daughter Kristin.

Anna was unsettled, uncertain about herself and at times was scared of her husband. In the counseling sessions when she was alone she behaved more freely, but together with her husband she was silent, letting her husband make all of the decisions about anything. She felt worthless, as if she did not deserve love. Also she felt like she could not succeed as a mom. She and her husband were offered a possibility to join the parent's program "Guardian Angel", but as Igor was categorically against it, they both refused to use this opportunity. After some time, the couple agreed that Anna can come to the Guardian Angel group and Igor will take care of Maxim during that time. The family has also accepted help of volunteer, who helps Anna and little Kristin to come to „Dardedze” and attend „Guardian angel” group. This gives her the possibility to meet other mothers and learn new experiences to take better

care of children. Now Anna is happy that she can spend some special time with her newborn baby, can learn how to build a closer bond with her, understand her needs better. She also feels that through this she has become a better mom to Maxim. She is so appreciative about the informal support that support person - volunteer Sandra is providing her. She feels she can trust her and share with her all problems and ask for advice without fear to hear judgment about her as a

bad mom. She understands that still she has a long way to go but feels much better than the first time we met her. In June when all the Guardian Angel moms celebrated Midsummer Festival together with the volunteers and staff of Dardedze, Anna admitted that this is the first time she has ever made a flower wreath (which is a traditional custom for all the girls and women to do on Midsummer Day), and she feels proud that one day she will be able to teach it to her daughter!



#### Program facts:

Carried out since	2002
In 2009 program was funded by:	Foundation "Ziedot.lv" Oak foundation
How many children reached through the program in 2009:	12 infants
How many parents reached through the program in 2009:	12 parents
Volunteers engaged	12 volunteers



## Pathways to competence



This is parent support group program for parents of children 0 – 7 years old with the aim to reduce child abuse risk in these families. There are 2 groups per year with up to 15 parents in each of them. Groups meet once a week for 10 weeks, discussing such topics as child development, understanding the needs of a child, nonviolent

disciplining, building attachment, playing with your child, family traditions, etc. At the same time special group for children is held as well, where children learn positive communication skills and problem solving. The purpose of this group is to train parents to reduce risk of child abuse in these families. Families are referred either by social services, schools, and hospitals or may sign up themselves.



### Program facts:

Carried out since	2002
In 2009 program was funded by:	Riga City Council
How many children reached through the program in 2009:	51 children
How many parents reached through the program in 2009:	45 parents

A 43 years old father of 6 children Ivars, who was trying to deal with a very challenging situation in his life, joined parent support group „Pathways to competence” at Center „Dardedze”. Ivars' wife had suddenly died 2 years ago leaving him a single parent to his 6 children who were 2, 3, 6, 8, 11 and 13 years old at that time. Ivars was not able to mourn, because the children needed extra care and attention, especially the three youngest ones who were at the pre- school age. He had to not only help their children to move through the grieving process at the loss of their mother, but all of the sudden learn how to care both emotionally and physically as their mother did. During the difficult situation Ivars occasionally began to use alcohol, lost his job. Life became more complicated, he couldn't adequately take care of his children - they were more and more neglected and actually have become parentless, in a sense losing their father as well. Therefore, the Orphans' Court made a decision to withdraw his parental rights. Children were placed under the guardianship of their grandmother - mother's mother who lived far away from their previous residence. At that

moment, Ivars came to the group to acquire new knowledge in order to understand children's needs and learn parenting techniques and skills that could be applied in order to take better care of children. Ivars was very sad about the separation from his children, but he was able to find strength and motivation to stop drinking. He attended classes regularly. He was eager to learn not only from the parent group leaders, but also from other parents, who became his support network. In order to successfully learn different educational techniques, he found different ways to meet with children, so that he could do group's homework. Participation in the group helped Ivars to better understand emotional needs of his children and his role as a father. When another Orphan's Court meeting took place, which overviewed the issue on Ivars' parental rights renewal, the decision was favorable to him and the children could return to their dad. Ivars still calls the staff of our Center occasionally to consult on various issues that he finds challenging, but he has successfully brought his family back together.

## Child as a witness or victim of crime

Since year 2001 we are also active in providing support to children who are involved in criminal proceedings as witnesses or victims of crime. We have often faced the situations where children have been severely traumatized by involvement in criminal proceedings due to the lack of consideration of children having special needs when being involved in this proceeding. We provide trainings for law enforcement professionals – police, prosecutors and judges dealing with cases involving children. We have also been active in lobbying changes in legislation allowing video interviewing of children in friendly environment and then considering that as a legal evidence in the criminal proceedings that would protect children who have already been traumatized.

Our Center was one of the first ones in Baltic States establishing Child friendly forensic interview room, where child was interviewed in the presence of psychologist

reducing the anxiety and traumatization level of a child. We also provide supportive services to the child and the family, becoming representatives of a case in the court, giving our testimonies of the interactions with the child that can be helpful during the proceedings.

We have also carried out various campaigns and activities to raise public awareness of the issue, as well as build capacity of professionals involved in interactions with children, emphasizing the sensitivity and need of a child friendly approach.

In 2009 we were able to provide support in 40 such cases.

Center is currently actively working in developing a special web site that would serve as a resource for professionals involved in working with children who are victims or witnesses of a crime, as well as to families, parents, social workers and teachers.

Police brought an 8 year old girl, who had been sexually abused by her step father, for a forensic interview. She came together with her mom. They both seemed scared, confused and frustrated. Our psychologist conducted interview where girl told her "story" that was hard and heart breaking. After the interview mother told psychologist that she does not know what to do. That she feels angry and she doesn't know what to do next, how to help her child, will she have to go to the police again, what will happen in the court, what will the child have to do, will she have to tell anybody about what had happen to her ever again. Psychologist offered that we can provide support to

her and her daughter all the way through the criminal procedures that will help her to deal with her emotions, fears, as well as explain step by step what will happen during the whole process.

After the process was over mother told that she didn't know how she would have dealt with everything that had happen without the support she had received. The support of counseling helped her understand the whole process, prepare for it and thus helped her to be there for her daughter that was the most important thing of all, so that her daughter would feel safe and secure without feeling destroyed and hurt all over again.

## Active projects in 2009

### ***Sexual Abuse against Children at Residential Institutions***

Funded by: European Commission under the "DAPHNE III" Program

Time period of the Project: January 2009 – December 2010.

#### **Partners of the Project:**

1. Social Activities and Practices Institute, Bulgaria
2. Nobody's Children Foundation, Poland
3. Children Support Center, Lithuania
4. Association for the Social Support of Youth, Greece

#### **The objectives of this project are:**

1. Set-up a national Support Council.
2. Prepare, translate into English and submit a report about the current situation in Latvia.
3. Carry out a qualitative and quantitative in-depth study of the essence, main aspects and characteristics of the phenomenon sexual abuse against children at residential institutions and its impact on the victims of the abuse, based on the results of the analysis of the current situation in Latvia.
4. Identify good national practices and submit recommendations about future activities and measures.
5. Provide Latvian assistance for the making of the movie and web site.
6. Organize one-day national conference.

## ***Childhood without abuse – towards a better child protection system in Easter Europe***

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Funded by: Oak foundation

Time period of the Project: 2005 – 2009

### **Partners of the Project:**

1. Social Activities and Practices Institute, Bulgaria
2. Nobody's Children Foundation, Poland
3. Children Support Center, Lithuania
4. National Center for Child Abuse Prevention, Moldova
5. Child Well Being Fund, Ukraine
6. The First Children's Embassy in The World, Macedonia

This project is being implemented in 7 countries simultaneously. The coordinator of this project is the Nobody's Children Foundation in Poland. Project activities are aimed at improving the child protection system in Easter Europe. The major goal of this project is to improve the competencies of professionals working with children exposed to violence and abuse, as well as to raise general public's sensitivity to the problem of child abuse.

### **The specific objectives of the program include:**

- Educating the society, broadening public knowledge about prevention of child abuse and neglect, and empowering intervention opportunities;
- Changing the attitudes of parents and caregivers 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 programs, supervisions, site visits, publications and research;
- Developing 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 for the introduction of legislative amendments necessary for changing and implementing social policies that would ensure effective child protection

**The project involves the following activities:**

- Social campaigns
- Lobbying in favor 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 towards child abuse;

For the five year project period there were the following priorities set for each of the years:

2005 – Child abuse and prevention

2006 – Diagnosis and therapy of abused children

2007 – Legal protection of children and families

2008 – Interdisciplinary help for abused children

2009 – Institutional abuse of children

More detailed information about this project is available at [www.canee.net](http://www.canee.net)

## ***Multidimensional protection of child victims of crime***

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Funded by: Prevention and fight against crime 2008 EC Action Grants

Time period of the Project: July 2009 – June 2011

### **Partners of the Project:**

1. Social Activities and Practices Institute, Bulgaria
2. Nobody's Children Foundation, Poland
3. Children Support Center, Lithuania

### **The objectives of this project are:**

1. To ensure that child who is a victim of crime participating in legal procedures are protected in accordance with the European Union's guidelines.
2. To improve skills, competences and sensitivity of professionals involved in legal interventions.
3. To enhance progressive changes in the practice of interviewing children.
4. To disseminate information about child victims of crime (research and expertise results).
5. To encourage cooperation between NGOs from East European countries.

## ***Making a difference: joint response to child abuse in Zemgale district, Riga, Latvia.***

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Funded by: Oak foundation

Time period of the project: October 2009 – September 2012

### **Specific objectives of the project:**

1. To improve the protection of children from abuse through building the capacity of police, social workers, doctors and other Child Abuse and Neglect professionals and better coordinating their efforts.
2. To empower parents and the community to better protect their children.
3. To provide direct services for children who are victims of abuse in Dardedze center.

Main goal of this project is to establish and support professional network providing services for abused children and families, as well as advocating for the best interests of children in Latvia.

## Trainings conducted in 2009

Title	Participants
Resilience approach in working with children in institutions	41 Children's rights inspectors
Child abuse – providing assistance to abused children	37 professionals - psychologists, social workers and psychotherapists
Child abuse – signs and symptoms, consequences and risk factors. Prevention of child abuse.	77 professionals - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.
Positive disciplining principles and methods.	75 professionals - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.
Interactive methods in working with children.	21 professional - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.
Establishing communication with difficult clients.	51 professional - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.
Resilience approach in working with children in institutions	31 professional - staff members from child care residential institutions
Emotional development of a child	13 professionals - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.
Prevention of professional burn out in working with survivors of child abuse.	10 professionals - psychologists, social workers, care workers from child care institutions, social services, etc.

In 2009 we were able to provide training to 356 professionals working with abused children and promote their capacity and skills to enable them to be more effective in the services they provide.



## Campaigns in 2009

### Campaign "Courage to be friendly"

In 2009 we were able to organize a special campaign "Courage to be friendly" to address the issues of bullying in school. This campaign was special as it largely involved children themselves. They developed posters, video materials, songs conveying anti bullying messages addressing their peers, as well as carried out different events in their closest environments – schools, that would encourage their peers to become more tolerant towards each other.

In April a special closing event of this campaign was organized where almost 1000 students and their

teachers participated. This event was organized as a gratification gift for all the participants of campaign who had worked actively for 4 months to address the problem of bullying in their schools, classes and communities. There were also well known artists, performers, musicians and famous people participating, encouraging students to remain friendly and tolerant disregarding the differences. This event was largely reflected on TV, radio and electronic media, drawing also wider public attention to the issue of combating bullying.



## Campaign “Put down your belt!”

This campaign was created in collaboration with DDB Latvia and based on campaign called “See it. Hear it. Tell it” Center “Dardedze” carried out in 2008 in the framework of project “Childhood without abuse” that was addressed to everyone’s responsibility to recognize and report physical abuse of a child.

Campaign “Put down your belt” was mainly addressing parents to reconsider the consequences of corporal punishment. At the end of year 2008 Center Dardedze in cooperation with company “Data serviss” carried out a public survey where 1000 people were surveyed and asked various questions about corporal punishment. 49% of the respondents agreed that they have experienced corporal punishment in their childhood but still turned out as good people, 37% believed that there are some situations when corporal punishment should be implemented in child rearing, 26% of respondents believe that spanking or smacking helps children understand the difference between good and bad, 26% believe that the use of corporal punishment does not impact parent child relationship in a long term perspective and 20% of respondents believe that corporal punishment is a positive and acceptable way of disciplining children.

During campaign there were special posters produced and placed on city lights all over the city, there were TV broadcasts shown on TV and radio broadcasts played on radio stations. There was a special web site developed [www.noliecsiksnu.lv](http://www.noliecsiksnu.lv)



(put down your belt) where parents could write and ask questions about child disciplining and receive response from professionals. Parents could also share their experiences and read what others ask and what sort of answers they receive. In the web site one can find valuable information that helps parents gain more knowledge and understanding about children’s needs and disciplining issues. During the campaign telephone line was opened for parents and open-house days were organized at our center for parents to come and consult, as well as participate in support informative groups. Every week there were 1000 unique attendees of the web site.

At the end of 2009 this campaign was also adopted by our Ukrainian partners at Child Wellbeing Fund and implemented throughout Ukraine, as well.



## Publications of 2009

Title of publication	Target group
Booklet "How to protect your child from abuse" (in Russian)	Parents, educators
Safety story book for children	Children, parents, educators
Visual materials – posters, cards for Safety program	Children, parents, educators
Anti bullying cards	Children



## Important events with and for center Dardedze in 2009

- Web site for child safety [www.dzimba.lv](http://www.dzimba.lv) adopted in Russian and now accessible for Russian speaking people
- Safety Trip program for 1st – 3rd graders opened
- Press conference about Child Safety in February
- Most Friendliest class of Latvia participating in Friends Day in Stockholm after the campaign "Courage to be friendly"
- Center "Dardedze" co-establishes a crises Center for abused children in Balvi - Eastern region of Latvia
- Participation in BASPCAN Seventh National Congress in Swansea, South Wales, "Changing Landscapes, Emerging Challenges – contemporary issues in safeguarding children and young people"
- Participation in Save the Children Denmark "Free from bullying" training.
- Participation in conference "Improving prevention and intervention in cases of child abuse in Eastern Europe", Warsaw, Poland.
- Press conference about the problem of bullying in Latvia in November
- Confirmed a new project "Making a difference: Joint community response to child abuse in Zemgale district, Riga, Latvia" with funding from Oak foundation

## Funding for the operation of center Dardedze in 2009

Grant (project) based funding:

Funder	Funding
Carnegie Social Initiative Fund	17 640.37 LVL
Social Activities Practices Institute (Daphne program)	16 366.90 LVL
Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje (EU Crime prevention program)	17 483.27 LVL
Oak Foundation	30 962 LVL
Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje (Childhood without abuse program funded by Oak Foundation)	10 956.13 LVL
Soros Foundation	630.42 LVL
Foundation Ziedot.lv	4002.04 LVL
Radda Barnen Sweden	22 984.64 LVL
Foundation AB.LV	9223.78 LVL
Ministry for Children and Families of Latvia	21 000 LVL
TOTAL:	151 249.55 LVL

Donations:

Lursoft Ltd	300 LVL
Forticom Ltd	605 LVL
Ltd Skonto Metal	15 000 LVL
Private donations	9840 LVL
TOTAL:	25 745 LVL

Subsidies for providing services to abused children and families:

Riga City Council	51 372.65 LVL
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Others:

Others	13 444.56 LVL
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Thanks to all our partners, supporters and donors in 2009



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FOUNDATION  
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Save the Children  
Sweden

CARNEGIE  
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