

**E**VEN IF I KNEW THAT TOMORROW THE WORLD WOULD GO TO PIECES, I  
WOULD STILL PLANT MY APPLE TREE.  
– ALLEGED QUOTE FROM MARTIN LUTHER

Fear about the future and uncertainty are the words that best describe the prevailing feelings in my current Ukrainian environment. It may sound like a paradox, but in these circumstances it is so easy to plant seeds of hope. When I returned to Odesa in mid-June as was planned, I did not even know whether we would be able to work with children and young people in the way we had been doing before. Now I can gratefully announce that we have been offering regular afternoon care in one of our day centres again since 04.09.2023. We are starting with a rather small group of children. We are starting with a small group of children who we already cared for before the war. Their joy at my return and the reopening was obvious and very moving.



When we reviewed our contact lists of families who were enrolled in our programme in February 2022, we discovered that almost 90% no longer live in Odesa or Petrovka. All of



Remains after rocket fire on Odesa  
in June 2022

them have either moved to other places in Ukraine or to other countries. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile for every single one who has stayed here to continue the work in Odesa. Every day people approach us for assistance and support. We help with food, medicine and other items, support women and mothers who have lost their sons and husbands in the war or whose husbands are still considered missing. In the last three weeks, a stepfather of two boys who come to us died at the front and a young man who came to our first day care centre as a child was killed on 21 August. This leaves us speechless and sad.

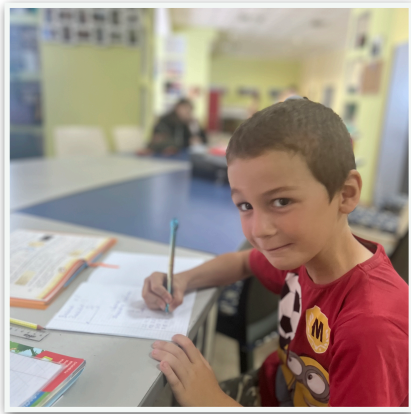
would like to share with you a family case that we have been following for many years and which has turned out well for the little boy we are talking about. Since his birth eleven years ago, he was a constant visitor of our center. His mother suffered from a serious drug addiction and was very ill. Unfortunately, his sister also died in her teens two years ago. When the war started in February 2022 and we had to close our centre, we organised for the boy to be taken in by a foster family in western Ukraine, because it was obvious to us that he could not stay with his sick mother without any additional care. It turned out to be the right decision.

In May 2023, his mother passed away after having suffered for a long time. When we saw the flat where she had lain dead undiscovered for three days, it was clear to us that the relocation to Western Ukraine had also saved the boy's life. He has new parents and it is so good to see that he feels comfortable in his new family, that he is well cared for and accepted. We hope and pray that he, as the only survivor of his family of origin, will take a different path than his ancestors. All the groundwork for this has been laid, thanks be to God. Our association has taken care of the cleaning, disinfection and clearance of the flat as well as the burial of his mother.



The flat before cleaning

We still have warm weather in Odesa. The government tells us that we have to be prepared for a hard autumn and winter. It is all the more important that we are able to be here on the spot. We thank you very much for making this possible through your financial gifts and prayers.



This year we also want to provide Christmas presents for children, young people and senior citizens. If you are able to pack a Christmas gift, you can find out more about what to put in the box and where to drop it off on our website [www.hope4kids.de](http://www.hope4kids.de).

If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We wish you all God's protection and blessings.

Sincerely ,

Nicole and Slavik together with the children and co-workers from Living Hope NGO in Germany and Ukraine

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