



«Baby Boxes in Russia» presentation abstract

The first modern «Baby Box» in Russia was opened in 2011 in Perm and Krasnodar. The “life window” in Perm was opened by the charity fund “Cradle of Hope”.

The project is now supported in 10 regions of Russia. In total, there are 19 “life windows”. Since the first «Baby Box» was opened in Russia, 78 children's lives have been saved. Of them, 12 have returned to their biological family (to parents or relatives), and 66 babies have found a new family.

«Baby Boxes» are located at medical facilities. Every “life window” has an information board with such information as phone numbers of support centers, counselling centers and religious groups, as well as a message for the parent who has decided to leave their child, advising them to think one more time about their decision. There are no security cameras or security guards around the “life window”.

Actions carried out when a baby is placed in the «Baby Box»:

1. The baby’s condition is briefly checked visually and evaluated by a medical doctor, and all necessary medical checks are done.
2. The police are contacted about the case. It is confirmed that the police are not searching for the child. If there are no police records related to the child, and the parents of the child are unknown, the baby is registered as lost.
3. Guardianship organizations are contacted.
4. From the moment that the baby is placed in the «Baby Box», the baby is under the protection of the government.

The mother or relatives have a chance to get the baby back later, as long as the baby is not adopted.

Our charity fund, together with guardianship organizations, police, and social workers, are actively working on the prevention of babies being placed in «Baby Boxes».

So, in 2012, together with Perm Region Ministry of Social Development, our charity fund opened the first specialized crisis center for pregnant women and mothers in a difficult life situation in the Perm region. Following that, two more centers were opened in the cities of Berezniki and Chaikovsky. Since 2012, these crisis centers have provided help to 781 people, of whom 416 are children.

Our charity fund is also active in the area of preventing orphanage and infanticide. In 2016, together with our partners and with the support of the Administration of the President of Russian Federation, we conducted a complex sociological research aimed at finding the social and psychological backgrounds of infanticide and ways of its prevention.

Currently, the question of the need for the existence of «Baby Boxes» remains open at a legislative level. However, “life windows” have gained a lot of social support. In 2016, more than 250,000 citizens of Russia signed a petition against the ban of «Baby Boxes» in just three weeks on the Change.org service web-page. According to data provided by the National Center of Public Opinion Research, 75% of Russian citizens are in support of «Baby Boxes».

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