

# What makes the Heart truly Serving?

By Pavel Ignatiev, Generation of Hope orphanage ministry,  
The Servant Heart project in Pushkino orphanage, Moscow region, October 2004

We are a Russian orphanage ministry working in 4 orphanages with over 1000 children on everyday basis teaching the Bible and rendering humanitarian aid to the needy orphans in Russia. Eight years of continuous ministry made us quite closed and reserved. Too often we see here in Russia good intentions of foreign missions turning into big problems of the local ministries.

To be frank, when Tom Banfield – the Director of the Servant Heart - contacted me through his Russian friend and told of the facility repair project I had mixed feelings. On one hand I was excited: in 9 years of ministry I never encountered such a ministry format and on the other everything sounded too good to be true. We prayed about it and decided to go for it. I am so happy we did!

The 240 kids with learning difficulties in the orphanage, all coming from families of alcoholics and prisoners, often abused and always neglected by their biological parents, have never had a room where they could be taught through games and just play. Only grey and shabby classrooms with desks – almost as grim as sad as their past and everyday life.

Within few short days a group of Gods people from America turned one of the orphanage rooms into spacious, colorful and joyful playroom! What a testimony to God's love and care!



Everybody in the orphanage was curious about the group of English speaking strangers spending their free time and resources to do something for the children. Even the Deputy Director - a woman-former police officer was so attracted to the effort that she spent her free time wandering around shops to choose wallpaper, carpet, and toys - willing to be in one team with American Christians.



The task was a challenge- flaky ceiling, decaying built in wooden cabinets, broken electric plugs and window frames and what not. Everybody in the team was working hard but the atmosphere during the whole project was so joyful, which was amazing and new to the orphanage workers. I could tell you a good hundred exciting details but if I had to choose the most exciting, this would definitely be the one - the moment the orphans crossed the door of the new room. Without a shadow of exaggeration - to them it was like a door to a new bright world – the world of childhood, they have hardly seen. New toys and developmental games, good quality furniture... The orphans felt they are loved and cared for.

It was the first time in all the years I could see the tears of joy in the eyes of the Deputy Director. All of us were crying out of joy and thankfulness to the Lord for what He has done through this group of volunteers from America. Even now, as I am writing these words I am overwhelmed with the memory of Gods grace we experienced then.

I would like to use this opportunity and thank everybody who was on that team, working in Pushkino orphanage. All of you have become very dear to my heart. Also we would like to thank all those who supported this project – both in prayers and financially.



The Servant Heart ministry, headed by Tom Banfield demonstrated unbelievable professionalism and the highest level of understanding of the Russian ministry field. These people taught us to be more open to cooperation and it taught us to serve the children better.

We are looking forward to the new project in July 2005 and wish to encourage Christians to come and experience the blessing through everyday practical work and fellowship with the needy Russian orphans. They will never forget you and you will be blessed forever.

Let me unveil the main secret of this unique ministry. This ministry is doing Gods revealed will which makes everybody's hearts serving and filled with blessing.