



The Kids First Fund

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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From the President

The desk which presently sits in the Oval Office of the White House has a name and fascinating history. The Resolute Desk was a gift of Queen Victoria to President Rutherford Hayes in 1880. The desk has been used by seven presidents. It was built of English oak salvaged from the British Arctic exploration ship HMS Resolute. It's a delightful word (and ship name) which is defined as being purposeful, determined, and unwavering. Those are the exact same attributes we owe the children whom we protect from child abuse. We will always be purposeful, determined, and unwavering in our mission to children in countries where resources are limited, such as Latvia and Moldova.

“Push with a resolute
and mighty force.”

Allow me a moment to ponder our shared mission. We live in an era which seems defined by extremes. Hurricanes or pleasant summer days. Police brutality or a peaceful protest. Political tyrants or responsive and ethical representatives. Democrat or Republican. Christian or Muslim. Black or white. It feels we have lost a middle ground, a public square, or common purpose, upon which we can all agree. We are quick to fight, argue, and walk away. But the issue of child abuse is different because it so vividly violates our common humanity.

I won't pretend politics, economics, religion, and culture sometimes have a terrible influence on child abuse prevention. But when you push with a resolute and mighty force against these weak-willed obstacles, good does happen. The Kids First Fund has been a force for good since 1999. Your donation keeps the wind in our sails and our ship pointed in the right direction. We are resolute in our mission.

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From the President continued

We advocate for, protect, and heal those who don't have a voice. By definition, our efforts focus on children and through practice our efforts help mothers and women as well. We do this in places like Latvia and Moldova where the need is made great by the severe lack of resources and awareness. We have so much work to do and your financial support allows us to do it. Thank you for the privilege of allowing the Kids First Fund to be a faithful steward of your donations.

For the kids,



Jay Sorenson, President and Volunteer

About the 2017 cover image:

Thank you to our partner Center Dardedze in Latvia for providing this year's cover photo. These Latvian girls are participating in an activity related to the Dzimba personal safety program. They are trying to understand if they can determine if a person is "good" or "bad" based merely on appearance; they learned that it's impossible to determine if an adult is an abuser or predator based upon their appearance.



KidsFirstFund.org

Numbers Help Tell Our Story

The 2017 annual report represents a continuing commitment to donor disclosure by including the annual financial statements for the Kids First Fund. In addition, filings made with government regulators, such as the US Internal Revenue Service, are available for download at KidsFirstFund.org. Revenue from donations and the travel auction represent the engine of our good works. Annual cash contributions have ranged approximately between \$7,000 and \$22,000 for the 2010 through 2017 period, as shown in the table below:

Cash Contribution Trend – Past 8 Years							
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
\$14,397	\$8,023	\$7,270	\$15,709	\$7,596	\$10,280	\$22,033	\$8,491

Although cash contributions for 2017 appear to have dropped significantly, the cash contributions in 2016 were unusually high due to very generous, one-time donations from travel industry companies IBS Software and Farelogix. Results from the annual travel auction were also lower due to fewer items available to bidders.

Kids First Fund, Inc. 2016 and 2017 Income Statement

Contributions	2016	2017
Cash donations	\$22,032.67	\$8,491.38
Interest from savings account	\$119.71	\$128.01
Dividends/change in market value securities	\$9.75	\$1,481.58
In-kind items (see note a)	\$578.36	\$0.00
Online Travel Auction for Kids (see note b)	\$21,517.77	\$17,966.62
Total Contributions	\$44,258.26	\$28,067.59
Expenditures and Distributions		
Grants made to support mission	\$35,870.00	\$32,000.00
Salaries, compensation and benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional fees and fundraising	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses and Distributions	\$35,870.00	\$32,000.00
Excess Funds – Deposited to Bank Account	\$8,388.26	(\$3,932.41)

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.

(a) Items were donated that support the mission of the Kids First Fund.

(b) Net results from the annual online travel auction. All items are 100% donated. Selling expenses associated with eBay auctions were 11-12% of the gross amount raised.

Kids First Fund, Inc. 2016 and 2017 Balance Sheet

Assets	Dec. 31, 2016	Dec. 31, 2017
Cash and investments	\$115,623.86	\$111,691.45
Other assets	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Assets	\$115,623.86	\$111,691.45
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Assets and Fund Balance	\$115,623.86	\$111,691.45

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.

In total, the Kids First Fund distributed \$32,000 in grants in 2017 for educational programs in Latvia and Moldova:

- A \$7,000 grant to the Center Dardedze in Latvia for school- and family-based prevention awareness and education programs.
- A \$10,000 grant to fund seminars in Latvia for judges and prosecutors to improve administration and sentences for crimes against children.
- A \$15,000 grant went to provide school- and family-based prevention awareness and education programs in Moldova.

Our cash and investments balance at year-end was a very healthy \$111,691. The Kids First Fund anticipates 2018 grant activity of \$15,000 for a 12-month component of our multi-year commitment in Moldova and an amount to be determined for activities in Latvia. The financial statements were drafted by Bob Bahlman, treasurer of the Kids First Fund.

Total grants made during 2017 exceeded revenue for the year, which generated a nearly \$4,000 decrease to net worth. Normal grant activity is around \$30,000 each year, with the \$10,000 seminar sponsorship being a non-routine event. With a cash and investments balance in excess of \$111,000, the Kids First Fund is in very good financial condition.

There is cause for concern going forward due to revisions made to tax regulations in the US, which became effective in 2018. For some taxpayers, the normal practice of taking income deductions for charitable contributions will become more complex or may disappear. Some of the solutions referenced in the media include: bunching or bundling itemized deductions, implementing a donor advised fund, and using charitable rollovers or qualified charitable distributions from retirement accounts. Donors are encouraged to contact their tax advisor for advice.

Seminars Educate Latvia's Judges and Prosecutors

Two highly successful and informative training sessions were held in Latvia in 2017 and in part, sponsored by the Kids First Fund. The seminars were conducted in late March and served to teach judges, judges' assistants, prosecutors and other legal practitioners how to act in the best interests of child victims of sexual abuse. Additional funding support for the seminars was provided by the US Embassy in Riga and the Baltic American Freedom Foundation, and the event was organized by the Latvian Judicial Training Centre.

The seminars were led by two leading experts of protecting children during the legal process. Judge Phillip Koss and Assistant Attorney General Miriam Falk, both from the US, used their expertise and demonstrated excellent practical knowledge on this issue and a deep and compassionate understanding of what is in the best of the children.

"Attendees found the sessions conducted by Miriam and Phil to be highly engaging and informative. The participation from the audience was impressive and proved how necessary this type of training is here in Latvia," said president of the Kids First Fund Jay Sorensen.

The seminars also offered a number of Latvian speakers of varying roles and perspectives that work on child sexual abuse cases, including judges, a prosecutor, an investigator, a clinical psychologist, NGO experts, and the director of State Inspectorate for Protection of Children's Rights. Each speaker shared their professional experience, providing others with a complete view of the process and ultimately a better understanding of the experiences of the children.

During the seminar much attention was paid to the psychology of children, including how the memory works, the best way to question a victim, how to assess trauma, and the long-term effects on human development. Many useful tips on how to protect the victims were provided, including how to gather

evidence and to focus on not blaming the victims. Participants were given real examples to better understand the real and complicated backgrounds of sexual abuse victims.

The two sessions were very well attended with a total of 126 participants, of which 28 were judges, 24 assistant judges, 46 prosecutors and four police officers, among others. A post-seminar evaluation was conducted, and the follow-up scores and remarks were very positive. Attendees said they would use the information they learned and share it with their colleagues.



Judge Phil Koss and Assistant Attorney General Miriam Falk from Wisconsin, present to a room full of Latvian legal professionals in Riga.

“The participation from the audience was impressive and proves how necessary this type of training is here in Latvia.”

More for Moldova! CRIC Begins Revisiting the Entire Country

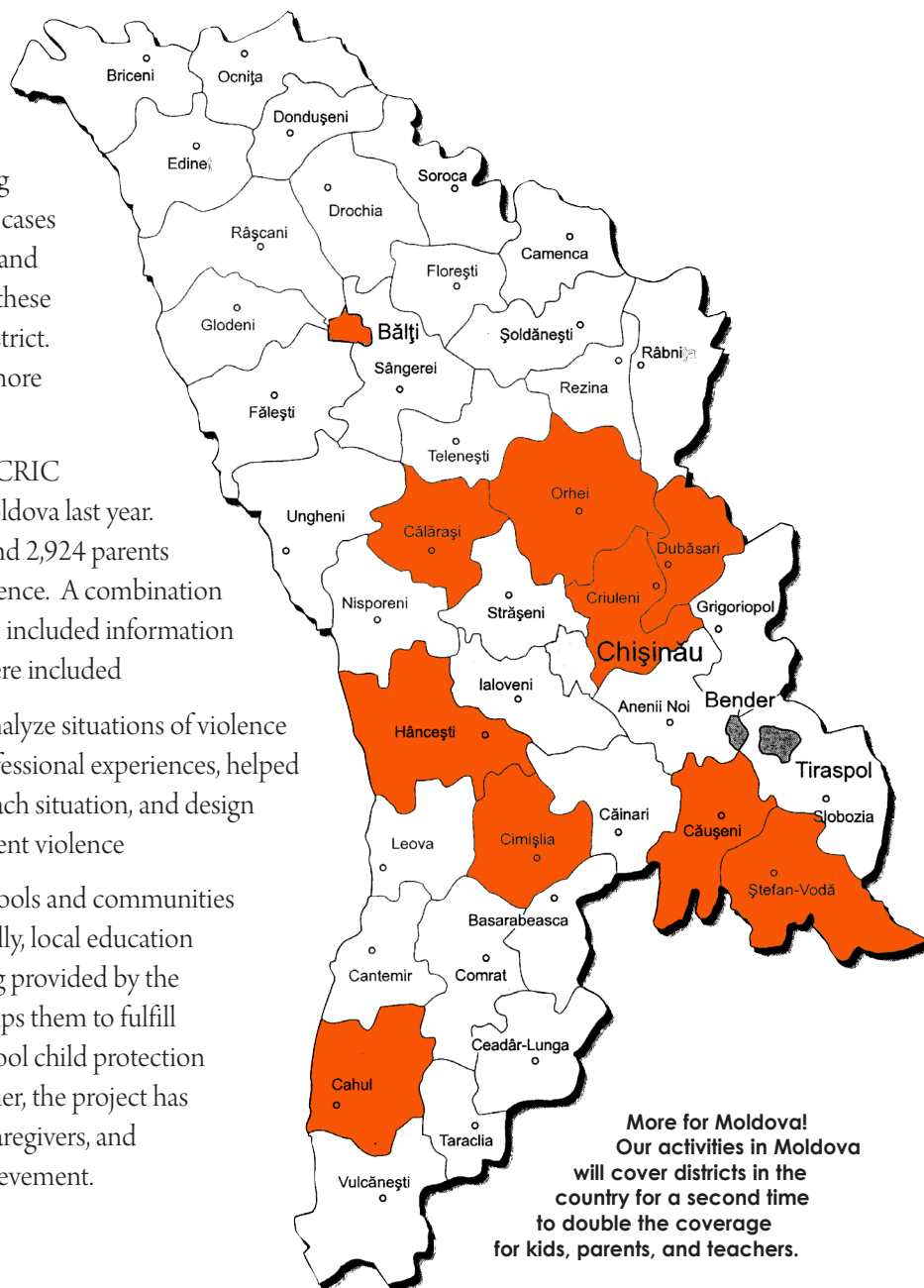
The Kids First Fund has proudly partnered with the Moldova-based Child Rights Information Center (CRIC) for eight years. The CRIC project aims to prevent child abuse in the country by educating teachers and social workers on how to identify cases of abuse, encourages them to report incidents, and organizes parenting learning activities. During these eight years, the project reached nearly every district. Now we are beginning the process of visiting more schools in every district.

Working with local school administrators, the CRIC project reached 5,167 children throughout Moldova last year. The program also worked with 278 teachers and 2,924 parents to teach them how to identify and prevent violence. A combination of life-skills education, videos, and training that included information on new legal provisions for child protection were included

The training courses enabled participants to analyze situations of violence against children by reflecting on their own professional experiences, helped them to better understand the complexity of each situation, and design activities with the students and parents to prevent violence

This continued partnership has resulted in schools and communities fully embracing the CRIC program. Additionally, local education departments welcome the support and training provided by the Kids First Fund and CRIC partnership as it helps them to fulfill a responsibility to develop and implement school child protection policies. During our eight years working together, the project has reached 41,706 children, 10,197 parents and caregivers, and 2,839 teachers – an amazing countrywide achievement.

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“Working with local school administrators, the CRIC project reached 5,167 children throughout Moldova last year.”

More for Moldova! continued

The CRIC project continues to deliver very meaningful results at a modest cost. More than 56,000 participants have been reached at a very efficient cost of \$1.65 per person since the project began in 2010. The statistics provided here define the audience reached directly by teachers interacting with parents and students. Of course, there is a wider audience in each community that benefits from the awareness-building and behavioral changes generated by the core group of teachers and parents.



More for Moldova! Our activities in Moldova will cover districts in the country for a second time to double the coverage for kids, parents, and teachers.

Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Project – Moldova							
Participant Groups	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	To Date
District representatives trained	56	213	220	343	174	*	1072
Children receiving abuse awareness training	2,592	6,240	12,235	5,149	7,907	5,167	41,706
Parents/caregivers involved in effective parenting curriculum	831	1,545	3,206	480	453	2,924	10,197
Teachers benefiting from sessions organized by colleagues	552	510	626	207	197	278	2,839
	Project Metrics						
Total participation	4,031	8,508	16,287	6,179	8,731	8,369	56,074
Kids First Fund program grants	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$92,500
Program cost per participant	\$3.72	\$1.76	\$0.92	\$2.43	\$0.86	\$1.16	\$1.65

Source: Child Resource Information Center. Project began in 2010.

* Included in teacher statistics for 2017.

Partnership with Dardedze Enters Year Three in Latvia

The third year of the Center Dardedze programs, Dzimba and Guardian Angel, continues to experience success in the four Latvian municipalities and has been expanded to two more:

2015/2016: Ludza and Karsava

2016/2017: Kuldiga and Kandava

2017/2018: Talsi and Tukums

The primary goals of the programs are to engage children in conversations about child abuse and to equip them with the knowledge of what actions are right and wrong. The programs also work to train teachers, school administrators, counselors, and social workers on how to have those conversations and to offer support to those who need it. The two programs continue to provide support to the regions and have found encouragement in the willingness of the local governments to contribute resources. Center Dardedze doesn't merely drop in and depart after the initial project year is completed. The design of these projects allows Center Dardedze to provide support to its local partners for years afterward.

The Kids First Fund has a tradition of focusing on rural areas, which often receive fewer resources to prevent child abuse. Large cities have the benefit of greater access to treatment facilities, concentrated political power, and attract more professionals. Rural areas truly appreciate a helping hand and are eager to work with organizations to compensate in areas where they are lacking. Center Dardedze is very effective at identifying municipalities where the need is substantial and local authorities have the capabilities required to implement the Dzimba and Guardian Angel programs.



Dzimba in action. Children are eagerly engaged by the Dzimba character by a Center Dardedze trained teacher.

Dzimba Program

The school-based Dzimba program works with the educational board of the district, school principals, teachers, tutors, psychologists, and school nurses. Dzimba uses a child-friendly character to teach children about personal safety and what to do when in danger. The team reported the following results for the 2016/2017 project year:

- Dzimba training partnerships were established with 33 schools and pre-schools in the Kuldiga and Kandava areas.
- Dardedze held a one-day workshop for 22 principals and also provided 38 teachers with training to become Dzimba representatives for their schools.
- The cascading effect of the project brought the program's child safety message to 120 additional teachers, along with 507 children and 449 parents.
- Pre- and post-test surveys indicate the Dzimba message delivers real results.
- For example, children are asked, "What would you do if a stranger – a person you don't know – came to you and asked to help him look for a missing kitten?" Results for the correct answer of "I wouldn't go, I would tell a grownup" nearly doubled after Dzimba is implemented.
- Another survey question for children asks, "What would you do if someone secretly wanted to touch your private body parts?" These responses have even better results, with the correct answer of "I'd say, don't do it! And then go tell my mom" more than doubling after the Dzimba experience.

Partnership with Dardedze continued

Guardian Angel Program

The family-based Guardian Angel program is designed to work directly with a district's social welfare department, social services, counselors, and social workers. Guardian Angel trains social workers so they can lead at-risk parent groups in guided discussions on effective parenting and child safety issues. The team reported the following results for the 2016/2017 project year:

- Eight social workers were trained as family based prevention program facilitators for parent groups.
- These social workers worked with 12 families (including one father) in Kuldiga and 13 families in Kandava, for a total of 25 families reached.
- The outcome of training allows social workers to conduct the 14-session Guardian Angel program for parents with young children.
- The topics covered often go beyond child abuse prevention to cover emergency first aid, dental hygiene for kids, creating family traditions tied to holidays, and methods of positive disciplining.

Feedback received from the sessions was really heartwarming. This is from notes provided by session leaders:

"Moms admit their self-esteem has increased. They have improved their ability to assess the development of their child. The existence of these meetings provides one of the rare opportunities to leave the house with their child; this is rare luxury in the countryside. It's wonderful to talk with moms about common issues. They appreciate that meetings are structured and that participants respect each other."

All of this interaction significantly helps reduce the risk of child abuse for these families.



Ready, get set, go! Your donations provide the funds for Dzimba supplies and training to be provided to rural areas in Latvia.

2017 Online Auction Brings in Over \$22,000

The 2017 Kids First Fund online auction had another successful year in 2017 with \$22,173 raised. The net proceeds were \$17,966, which is reduced from the previous year due to increased fees associated with the auction. Since the auction began in 2004, more than \$306,000 has been raised.

The three top donors for 2017 auction were:

- Southwest Airlines provided unrestricted tickets and elite status upgrades that generated the highest bid activity, which was more than \$4,600 – more than any other single corporate donor.
- Topbonus loyalty, one of Europe’s largest frequent flyer programs, donated packages totaling 400,000 frequent flyer miles, which generated more than \$4,400 in total bids.
- Delta SkyMiles provided packages totaling 180,000 miles, which were auctioned at FlyerTalk.com. These generated the third highest bid activity for any single donor company, bringing in over \$3,300.

Southwest and recently named Kids First Fund Board Member Debbie Sievert received a Kids First Teddy Bear Award in recognition of support for this year’s auction. Each bear has been custom crafted by the Vermont Teddy Bear Company with the logo of the Kids First Fund and a sash recognizing the recipient.

The recognition event occurred during the MEGA Awards Gala on November 30, 2017, in Palm Springs, California, and was associated with a global airline industry conference hosted by Airline Information. Accepting a Teddy Bear Award that evening was Jonathan Clarkson from Southwest Airlines. Debbie Sievert was also recognized at the event for her support to the Fund. She has secured Avis Budget rental car certificates for the auction



Kids First Teddy Bear Award recipient (left): Jonathan Clarkson (Southwest Airlines), with Debbie Sievert (formerly with Avis Budget Group and current Kids First Fund Board Member), and Jay Sorensen, (Kids First Fund).

for ten years and recently agreed to serve on the Kids First Fund Board of Directors.

Donor enterprises for the 2017 auction included: Avis Rent a Car, Choice Hotels, Delta SkyMiles, Hilton Honors, Priority Pass, Rocketmiles, Southwest Airlines, Southwest Rapid Rewards, Spirit Airlines, topbonus loyalty, United Airlines, and Wyndham Rewards.

The Kids First Fund thanks our 2017 donor companies:



Member Snapshot: Doug Mullen

When did you join the Board of the Kids First Fund?

I was thrilled to join the Board in October of 2014.

Tell me about your family. My partner Hana and I have a 20-month-old little girl Misha and are expecting a second little girl in May 2018. Hana is from the Czech Republic and we all enjoy traveling to Eastern Europe every year to visit her family.

Current profession? I am an in-house attorney at a trade association that represents the major U.S. airlines, Airlines for America.

Favorite destination? The next place where you can gain insight into the local culture and how the local population lives.

What interests you about the KFF mission? The combination of empowering local groups in eastern European countries with limited resources to support kids in rural areas is an extremely important and satisfying mission.

Where do you see the Fund five years from now? I see the Fund continuing to build networks and information in local communities in Latvia, Moldova, and beyond. That we will provide programs to empower local groups to protect kids from abuse and neglect.

What is the most important thing we do? The most important thing is to me is creating local community networks that provide a resource for local kids that are otherwise unavailable; every kid should have a place to turn for help.



Stop the presses. Doug became a daddy again on May 18. While he looks calm in this image, we suspect this may change in the future. His wife Hana and baby Nela are doing great. Congratulations Doug!

“The combination of empowering local groups in eastern European countries with limited resources to support kids in rural areal is an extremely important and satisfying mission.”

New Board Members Welcomed in 2017

Last year we were pleased to welcome four new members to the Kids First Fund Board of Directors, three of which are from Moldova, where we work with school districts to provide training and awareness to children to prevent child abuse. The fourth new member to join the Board has decades of travel industry experience and valuable fundraising contacts. She resides in the United States. The addition of the new members also increased the size of our Board from nine to 13 members.

Meet our new members:

Liliana Calmatui

Chisinau, Moldova

Liliana is a non-governmental organization (NGO) professional who has held positions with programs that work to improve public libraries in Moldova, coordinate a multidisciplinary approach to child abuse prevention, provide community-based access to lifelong learning, integrate minority groups, and educate women on health issues in rural areas. She is currently a project coordinator for the Liechtenstein Development Service (LED) in Moldova which supports agricultural education through a network of partner schools.

Liliana has also worked for the Soros Foundation to train university teachers, police officers, and local authorities on issues such as health issues and the prevention of domestic violence. Liliana is fluent in English, Romanian, and Russian.



Viorica Ghimpu

Chisinau, Moldova

Viorica is an internationally-focused Moldovan with more than 15 years of professional experience with various United Nations agencies in Moldova, of which more than 10 years is in child-focused program implementation. She is an expert in research, policy development and reporting on occupational safety and health, human trafficking, domestic violence and child labor issues. She recently led a medical sales company in Romania. Currently she coordinates a UN Program on Women's Economic Empowerment.

Viorica has volunteer experience with anti-corruption and child protection civil society organizations in Moldova. Her mother tongue is Romanian. She also speaks Russian, French, English, and Spanish.



New Board Members continued

Liliana Rotaru

Chisinau, Moldova

Liliana has dedicated her professional life to the lives of children in Moldova. Since 2004 she has been the executive director for the CCF Moldova, which is an acronym for “Children, Communities, and Families.” The organization is focused on reforming the country’s institutional care system by encouraging families to remain together, helping children to integrate back to communities, and improving services for those children who are separated from families. CCF Moldova has 25 employees and operates in 28 districts within the country.

Liliana is a regional representative to the Child Savings International Board of the Netherlands. Her prior experience includes being a lecturer with Moldova State University and a seven-year staff position with the U.S. Peace Corps. Liliana is fluent in English, Romanian, and Russian.



Debbie Sievert

Atlanta, USA

Debbie is a global sales and marketing account executive. She just completed more than 30 years with Avis Budget Group which is the owner of the Avis, Budget, and Payless rental car brands. In her most recent role as manager of partner sales and marketing – global travel and partnerships – she developed relationships with airlines, hotels, and travel companies all over the world.

Debbie has been an active supporter of the Kids First Fund since 2007 when she first arranged for Avis Budget to donate items to our annual travel auction. Because of her support, Avis Budget has been the longest donating corporate partner to the Kids First Auction.



About the Kids First Fund

The Kids First Fund helps abused and abandoned children. We protect children from abuse. We empower young adults with a positive future. We strengthen families. We build awareness of child abuse. We operate in countries where resources are very limited. Current projects provide support for children in Latvia and Moldova. The Kids First Fund supports programs to educate child welfare professionals such as police officers, judges, social workers and prosecutors on child abuse issues. Direct assistance is also given to centers providing care for abused children. The Kids First Fund does not incur any expenses since all staffing and services are donated. The organization has been granted special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Special Thanks

This annual report is courtesy of the services contributed by Amy Thomas, who operates field|works, a graphic design firm in Glendale, Wisconsin, and Diana Cronan, who wrote and edited the document.

Hosting and updating of the KidsFirstFund.org website is donated by Matthew Frederick, who operates DigitalPerceptions.com, an interactive web media development firm in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Kids First Fund is a charity recognized by Airline Information, which provides generous financial support and includes the Teddy Bear Awards in its annual MEGA Event airline industry conference.



Scott Wiseman and the crew at Auctionjam have been excellent administrators of the annual Kids First Auction for 14 years.



Vermont Teddy Bear provides custom crafted teddy bears for the annual Kids First Teddy Bear Awards.



Learn More and Donate Online

KidsFirstFund.org

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Board of Directors and Officers

Bob Bahlman, Treasurer
(Atlanta, Georgia)

Liliana Calmatui (Chisinau, Moldova)

Diana Cronan, Director
(Washington, DC)

Viorica Ghimpu (Chisinau, Moldova)

Rogers Grigulis, Director (Riga, Latvia)

Arturs Irbe, Director (Riga, Latvia)

Irma Kalnina, Director (Riga, Latvia)

Hamid Ladjevardi
(New York City and Riga, Latvia)

Doug Mullen, Vice President
(Washington, DC)

Indra Petersons, Director (New York City)

Liliana Rotaru (Chisinau, Moldova)

Debbie Sievert (Atlanta, Georgia)

Jay Sorensen, President
(Shorewood, Wisconsin)

United Nations Representatives

Jay Sorensen and Doug Mullen are designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Roger Grigulis and Irma Kalnina are the designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva and Vienna.

Kids First Ambassadors to Children

Dr. Valdis Rande (Riga, Latvia)

Dr. V. George Nagobads
(Minneapolis, Minnesota)