



# LIFT THE CHILDREN

LIFT YOUR SPIRITS

SUMMER 2008

An agency of the Child Abuse Prevention Center  
[www.liftchildren.org](http://www.liftchildren.org)

## A VERY SPECIAL GRADUATION

IN 1999, when the social worker first brought Romanian orphan siblings Kati and Matei, aged 14 and 15, to our attention, we were skeptical. They had already spent 10 years in an orphanage after a tumultuous early childhood. We wondered if they were too old or too damaged to respond to our help. Was it too late to give them a “normal” life?

By any standard, Kati and Matei’s lives had been traumatic. Their earliest memories were of a violent father who beat their mother to death in a rage as they stood by in horror. Kati and Matei spent the next 10 years in an orphanage, where they clung to each other for support and shared a special closeness. Yet even that precious bond was shattered when the archaic Romanian institutional system wrenched them apart to place them in separate boys’ and girls’ orphanages. But Kati’s dream—to be reunited with her brother in a real family—never wavered.

After hearing their story, we knew we had to give them a chance in our Lift the Children Long Term Foster Care program. We were surprised at their resilience and enormously pleased when they responded warmly and positively to our efforts. Both Kati and Matei soon learned enough English to be our



interpreters every time we visited their little medieval city of Sighisoara. Despite one foster care setback, both kids demonstrated remarkable drive, graduating from the

academic high school with scores that were high enough to get them into Cluj University in northwest Romania.

In June I had the enormous pleasure

*see **Graduation** on back page*

## TEN SUCCESSFUL YEARS!

A note from our director, Katie Smith

**IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE** 10 years have passed since Richard and Kathy Miller and I sat at my kitchen table and dreamed about helping children in Romania. Now, having just returned from back-to-back trips to Romania and Guatemala, and with our Ukrainian colleagues arriving shortly, I have a wonderful feeling for how far we have progressed from July 1998—and the many paths ahead of us.

There are still too many at-risk children in the world that need our help. More organizations that are providing direct services in their villages or communities tell us about the projects they could implement if they had additional funding and technical support. We are building strong relationships with international agencies including UNICEF and World Learning/USAID who recognize our potential to provide best practices training on a range of topics related to children and families. The possibilities to expand beyond our dreams are almost overwhelming!

We recognize the strong asset we have in our foundation of donors and supporters that has grown over the years. We are grateful for the donations, for the encouraging support you provide Lift the Children and for your willingness to get involved. We could not have had successful exchange programs without our supporters who welcomed visitors into their homes and into their organizations to share their expertise.

Our partner organizations, especially those in Romania, have been wonderful colleagues and friends. We have learned so much from them and look forward to new places we can go as partners. We value these relationships and know the key to our impact lies in the in-country partnerships we develop.

Please join us in celebrating our ten years of accomplishments! On the back of this newsletter, you’ll find a list of activities we will carry out from July 2008 to July 2009, our anniversary year.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS

THEIR WORDS SING THE SUCCESS OF OUR RECENT PROGRAM

*"I am a historian and my only view of Americans came from history. But now I have seen with my own eyes that America is a wonderful country populated by great people. I am convinced that America and Russia are two great countries that have wonderful people. I am convinced more than ever that there is no need to fight...I was impressed that the family is the core of society and is the object of the services. I like the fact that every child in America has a right and a solid chance to have a family."*

Victor Ellert, participant

*The best part of hosting visitors was "Traveling" to Russia (in a way) and meeting new friends. Bonding and sharing hopes, dreams and family similarities. Cooking for each other. Establishing our own little house routine. I enjoyed their joy."*

Claire Bagley, host family

*"I firmly believe our Novosibirsk group was the luckiest...to be hosted by Lift the Children. Throughout our curriculum we saw a lot of good and wonderful sites. It was amazing how welcoming all the people were, how willingly they dedicated their working hours to give us a tour and (who) were very committed to answer all our questions...my roommate and I had the most awesome hosting family. We already miss people that we now call our friends."*

Anna Tesakova, participant

**FOR THREE WEEKS THIS SPRING,** Lift the Children hosted 10 child welfare professionals from Russia through our Community Connections program. We learned so much about Russian culture and the challenges these professionals face providing services to children and families in the region of Novosibirsk, Siberia. Our local host families were extremely supportive throughout the program—offering a warm American cultural experience for our visitors. Our Russian colleagues engaged in everyday activities with their host family, while also participating in site visits and meetings with a range of local professionals who provide services to vulnerable children. This visit provided an incredible learning experience not only for them, but for the staff at the CAP Center, and the other local agencies that participated. It was a unique opportunity to share the many positive American values that seem to get lost or go unrecognized in the current international political climate. We will never forget our new friends from Siberia!

This program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through World Learning, emphasizes educational and cultural exchanges for professionals from emerging democracies. In August, through another USAID/World Learning grant, Lift the Children will be hosting 10 Ukrainian colleagues who deal with domestic violence issues.

*"'Super' was one English word Yar, our Russian visitor, learned early during our hosting experience. To share our home and daily life with Anna and Yar, who were from a part of the world we only know from pictures, made us realize at the end we are not so very different. And to quote Yar, it was 'Super!'"*

Tammy & Todd Murray, host family

*"This was one of the brightest memories of my life both personally and professionally."*

Denis Sudarikov, participant

*"...I'm bringing home three main strategies that I will be able to implement in Russia: (the) system of referrals, home visitation, and case management techniques. Now I have first hand experience and knowledge. Thank you for taking the time to arrange special visits for us."*

Tania Kachan, participant



## TEN YEARS OF HELPING CHILDREN

### BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATING A FOUNDATION OF LOYAL SUPPORTERS



**HELPING CHILDREN IN DESPERATE NEED.** That's the heart of what Lift the Children has accomplished since its founding ten years ago. We've worked to end child abuse, neglect, and abandonment. We've helped to build strong families that are free from violence. Our strategy has been to start in a single community, building partnerships with good local organizations already assisting vulnerable children and their families. We work to support those organizations, helping them build their capacity through financial and technical assistance. We include them in training programs that we conduct for large agencies such as UNICEF and World Learning.

And we're very **EXCITED** about the next ten years—and the next 20, and the next 30, for that matter. We want to continue to empower families to raise healthy, happy children. To help accomplish this, we set a goal to raise \$100,000 in **DONATIONS AND PLEDGES** by August 1, 2009—\$10,000 for each year we've helped to lift children. This funding will help us start new partnerships and sustain the partnerships we have. It will allow us to build the capacity of all our partners and involve them in more of our training programs. So, we're asking our kind and generous supporters to think of Lift the Children as you make your charitable giving decisions—and to please give.

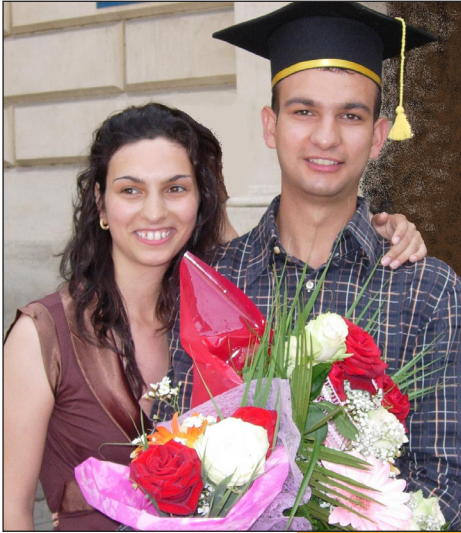
If you, or your church, or civic club can make a \$10,000 donation or pledge over one to three years, you can directly **SPONSOR A NEW PARTNERSHIP**. We'll develop new partnerships in Guatemala over the next 3 years, and are exploring partnerships in Russia and Ukraine following the success of our Community Connections programs. If we can raise the funds.

As a partnership sponsor, you will receive biannual reports directly from the program, photos from the community and partner staff, and face-to-face interviews with partners, if you are able to join one of our donor trips. We'll specially recognize individual and group sponsors in our publications and on our Web site. And you'll have the deep satisfaction of knowing you've enabled us to continue our mission to reduce the incidence and impact of child abuse, neglect, and abandonment. Please contact us at (916) 224-1929 if you are interested in more information about sponsoring a partnership.

We cherish every donation, whatever the size. We hope you will **INVEST IN OUR GOAL** to promote the basic human right of children to be loved and to live in safety and dignity.



SUMMER 2008



**Graduation...**

of attending Kati's graduation ceremony from Cluj University, where she earned a degree in social work. Sitting next to her brother, Matei, who will graduate next year, I felt the same pride I felt when my own children became college graduates. But my children, of course, had all the right ingredients for success, while Kati faced an uphill battle. She relied entirely on her own inner strength, resilience, and desire to succeed. She has the spirit, energy and idealism of youth, but the wisdom and depth of character that normally come from years of experience. Lift the Children, with the help of our wonderful supporters, gave Kati opportunity. In turn, Kati has inspired us. She has proven that it's never too late to extend a hand. I cried seeing Kati cross the podium to accept her diploma, and her tears of gratitude mixed with mine as we embraced after the ceremony.

I wish you could have been there to see her and feel her joy. Many thanks to all of you for changing the life of this child and helping us support her into adulthood. You made the difference.

SO OR

# PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR TENTH-ANNIVERSARY "YEAR OF CELEBRATION"

**Anniversary Celebration Event: Fall 2008**

This fall we'll celebrate our accomplishments and dreams by hosting a party to thank our long term friends and welcome new supporters. Details are forthcoming.

**Partner and Supporter Recognition: January 2009**

Our January newsletter will highlight the work of our partner organizations in Romania and Guatemala. We'll also recognize our outstanding Lift the Children supporters and volunteers!

**Romania Trip: May 2009**

We're planning a donor trip to visit our partners and programs in Romania. Please see insert for more details.

**Fundraising Challenge: through July 2009**

We want to raise \$10,000 to honor each year of operation of Lift the Children. Please see *Ten Years of Helping Children* inside for details about this fundraising effort—and help us get there!



*If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Lift the Children, please use the enclosed envelope, or visit our secure Web site to donate online.*

Lift the Children  
4700 Roseville Road  
North Highlands, CA 95660



(916) 244-1964  
1-800-CHILDREN  
ksmith@thecapcenter.org