



2022 ACTIVITY REPORT

UKRAINE VOLYA FOUNDATION

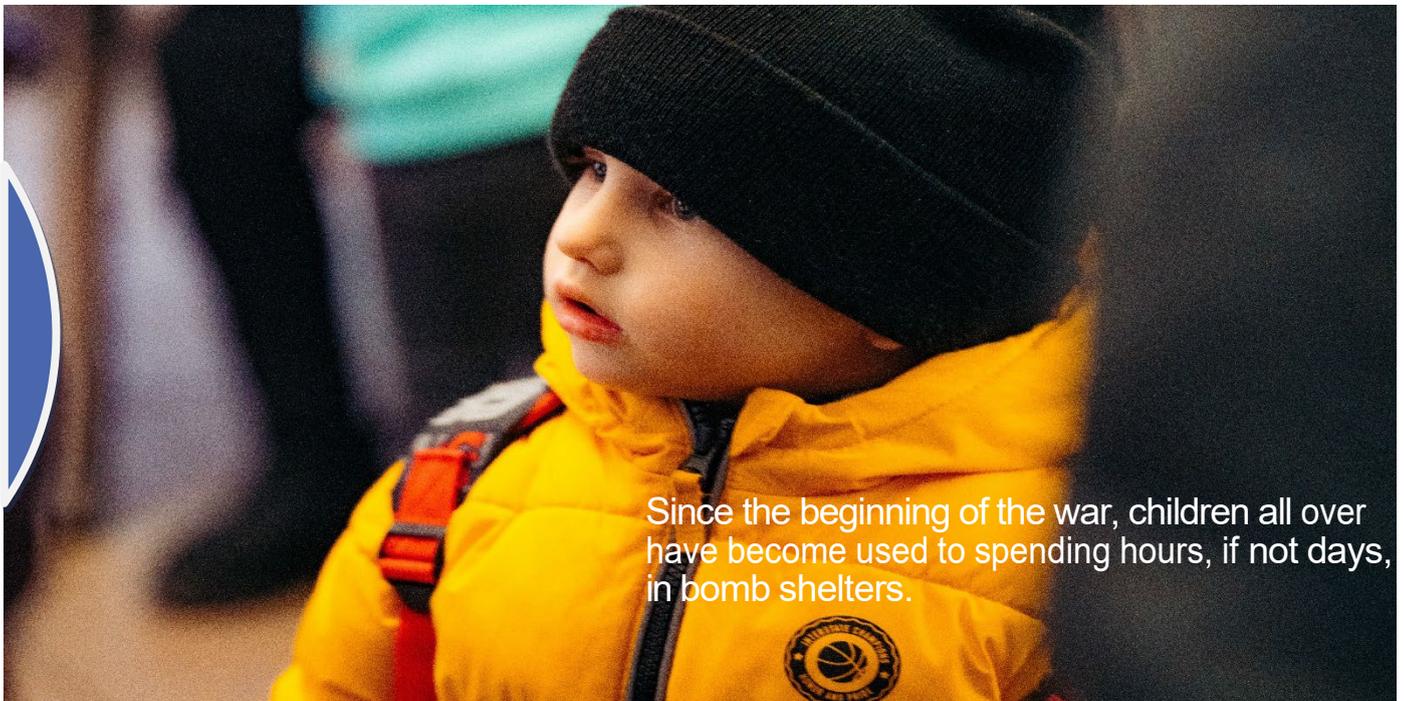
UKRAINE, AUGUST 2022 - JANUARY 2023



Ukraine Volya Foundation wants to help you realize that twinge of responsibility. UVF is committed to helping children suffering from trauma, and is able to provide it in various ways. We are committed to shining a light on the lives of innocent children and other victims of the war in Ukraine. Helping one child better their life and will make this world better forever.

Page 1 Image: One of the adult participants, with one of the children attending the Jacaranda training. Photo by Sasha Avramchuk

Page 3 Image: Father and son at a temporary shelter, Lviv. Photo by Sasha Avramchuk



Since the beginning of the war, children all over have become used to spending hours, if not days, in bomb shelters.

On February 24, 2022, during a televised broadcast, Russian president Vladimir Putin announced a special military operation in Ukraine, marking the start of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Minutes later, missiles and airstrikes hit across Ukraine, followed by an extensive ground invasion along multiple fronts.

The invasion of Ukraine triggered a forced displacement crisis. As of September 30, 2022, more than 7.5 million Ukrainian refugees have been registered outside Ukraine (Data from UNHCR), and 6.2 million people remain internally displaced.

Because of the conflict, millions of children are likely to suffer from mental health impacts now and in the future. War subjects children to constant fear and hopelessness, increasing their immediate stress responses and increasing their risk for specific mental disorders.

Studies show that in conflict-affected areas, one person in five (22.1%) are estimated to develop depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. In the context of Ukraine, that would mean 4,595,591 people, 1,531,864 of them children¹.

Children experiencing distress are at risk of permanent changes to brain architecture, epigenetic alteration, and modified gene function. Implications for long-term health and developmental effects are critical, including increased risk for stress-related diseases. Witnessing violent conflict results in distress, overwhelms the victims, and profoundly impacts many areas of a child's life. This often leads to toxic stress with lifelong ramifications².

Before the conflict, Ukrainian orphanages, boarding schools, and other institutions for youngsters housed more than 91,000 children, around half with disabilities³. These children are particularly vulnerable, as they are at increasing risk of being left behind or being permanently separated from family members as the war continues.

Children are resilient and can cope if provided with adequate support. But if left unattended, their symptoms will have long-term impacts. This could have extreme consequences. It is, for example, possible that in the future, a large percentage of the nation's workforce could suffer from emotional or mental disorders. It could mean that for individuals, families, and the Ukrainian society at large, this will inevitably have a long-term economic impact on the country.

So, a crisis like the one in Ukraine will impact individuals today and an entire nation in the future. Therefore, investing in prevention and support for children and families affected by the conflict in Ukraine is not only a clear humanitarian imperative but a good investment in the country's future. This is why Ukraine Volya Foundation focuses on mental health and psychological support in Ukraine.

1 Charlson, Fiona, van Ommeren, Mark, Flaxman, Abraham, Cornett, Joseph, Whiteford, Harvey, Saxena, Shekhar. 2019. "New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis."

2 Matiashova, Lolita, Tsagkaris, Christos, Yasir Essar, Mohammad, et al. 2022. "Children growing up in conflict zones in Ukraine and beyond need urgent mental health support."

3 <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/ukraine-war-response-children-disabilities>



*One of the adult participants conducting healing play with one of the children attending the Jacaranda training.
Photo: Sasha Avramchuk*

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Ukraine Volya Foundation endeavors to strengthen children in war-torn communities, focusing on their healing or recovery from trauma and mental health. Our goal is to build resilience in children who have experienced trauma and stress in different ways.

The Jacaranda programs.

The Jacaranda program is a ten-day training program developed by PsyD, Licensed Clinical psychologist Timothy Friesen. The training manual incorporates 25 years of training and experience to address the needs of children exposed to the trauma of cataclysmic disasters such as a tsunami or children living in a state of chronic trauma, including exploitation of children or psycho-social insecurity due to poverty, consequences of war and displacement, or loss of primary caregivers.

The program aims to bring children healing through individual, small-group, and community engagement. A local coordinator must be selected before the program's implementation to ensure follow-up and long-term sustainability.

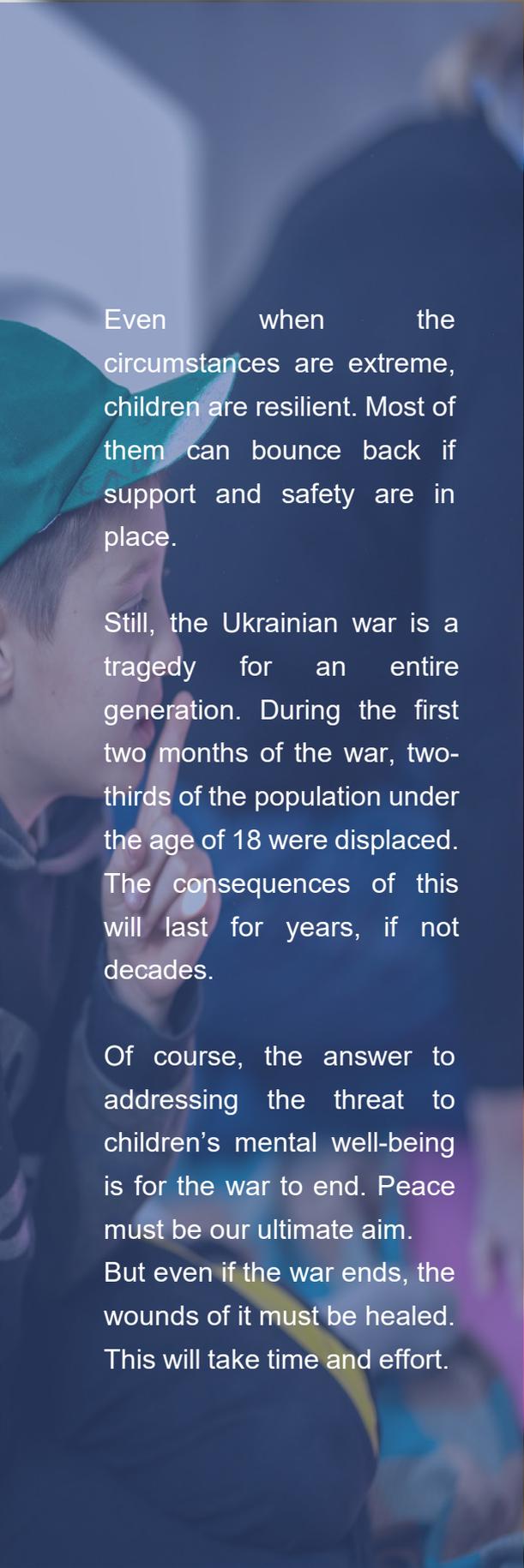
On October 10, 2022 we started the first Jacaranda training in Lviv, Ukraine. The training was done in collaboration with Twelve12:Hope, The Novi, and UVF. The training was held at the Hnata Khotkevych Palace of Culture, and the location was partially

sponsored by the city of Lviv. There were 18 adult participants, 9 of them were professional psychologists, and all but two had attended a previous training conducted by UVF and Novi.

The first week of the training was frequently disrupted by regular air raids and the need to take cover in the basement of the building. The problem was eventually solved by conducting the training in the bomb shelter rather than moving in and out of hiding. Towards the end of the week, there was less activity in the air, and the air raids were less frequent. It did, however, cause some of the participants to be concerned about their families' safety as well as their own, thus affecting the training quite a bit.

The first week of training consisted of classroom and skill development focusing on healing from trauma. These are some of the components covered during week 1:

Trauma and stress introduction. Definition and tools to identify stress and trauma. Effects of trauma on children. Common symptoms. Trauma and our brain: How the brain holds trauma



Even when the circumstances are extreme, children are resilient. Most of them can bounce back if support and safety are in place.

Still, the Ukrainian war is a tragedy for an entire generation. During the first two months of the war, two-thirds of the population under the age of 18 were displaced. The consequences of this will last for years, if not decades.

Of course, the answer to addressing the threat to children's mental well-being is for the war to end. Peace must be our ultimate aim.

But even if the war ends, the wounds of it must be healed. This will take time and effort.



*Children attending the Jacaranda training.
Photo: Sasha Avramchuk*

CHILDREN ARE RESILIENT AND CAN COPE IF PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE SUPPORT.

memories and emotions related to trauma. Empathic listening skills. Communications blockers and communication enhancers.

Child-centered trauma care with children: components of trauma healing, including telling one's story with associated emotions. How to structure a healing play session.

Child-centered storytelling. Teaching children emotional regulation skills.

During week 2 of the training, the participants interacted with children. Two orphanages agreed to let their children attend the week of Healing play-camp. There were 36 children in the first two days. Seventeen came from the Children's Shelter of the Children's Service of Lviv Regional State Administration, and 12 little kids came from Children's Home Number One. In addition, seven children were children, relatives, or friends of the participants. The training and the week's schedule were set up so that each adult would have healing play time with two children each.

Again, the war and constant air raids caused some stress and challenges. The children often arrived late because of early morning air raids, and there were challenges with transportation and other logistics. A misunderstanding between the orphanage administration and our team transpired resulting in only half the children attending for



One of the children in the Jacaranda training is welcomed by two adult participants. Photo: Sasha Avramchuk

the second part of the week. In spite of the challenges, the camp was carried out and was a great time of play, interaction, and healing for the children. These are some of the activities the children were a part of:

Big circle time: The purpose of big circle time is for all children to collectively feel they belong to a larger community with a focus on being cooperative rather than competitive.

Small group/Family color groups: Children stayed with the same group during all five days of camp. Two stories were shared each day during the family color group. In addition, the children spent time in their color family group each day to build a sense of belonging.

Individual Healing play: Each worker who was trained was assigned two children to meet with each day individually to provide an opportunity for the child to share his/her story through play and drawing.

Snack time.

At the end of the week, there was a formal end to the camp, first with a pizza party with pizza sponsored by Soup Kitchen. After the party, the children spent time in their small color groups, saying goodbye to the adults with whom they had spent the most time during the week. Seeing the children leave was emotional for both the adult participants and the children who had attended.

Days of training: 10

Children affected: 36

Adults trained: 18

Food delivered: 10 days

Number of air raids: 20

Men in training: 1

Age of children: 4-12

Hugs: Uncountable



A child is whispering something to one of the adults at the Jacaranda training. Photo: Sasha Avramchuk



Participants at Rivne training drawing themselves during the *Helping Hands* activity. Photo: UVF

Lecture and Training in Rivne and Lviv

With State Humanitarian University (RDHU) and Rivne Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education (ROIPPO), and psychologists in Lviv

Our aim was to provide advanced training for the treatment of children with Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) for a select group of qualified professionals who do clinical work and or supervise clinical work with children.

The two-day seminar for psychologists took place on August 11-12 in Lviv, for RDHU took place on October 17-18th, and for ROIPPO on January 3, together with our translators, Bohdan and Nataliya.

The lecture “Traumatic stress and PTSD for children and adolescents” had four main sections Understanding grief and trauma, including:

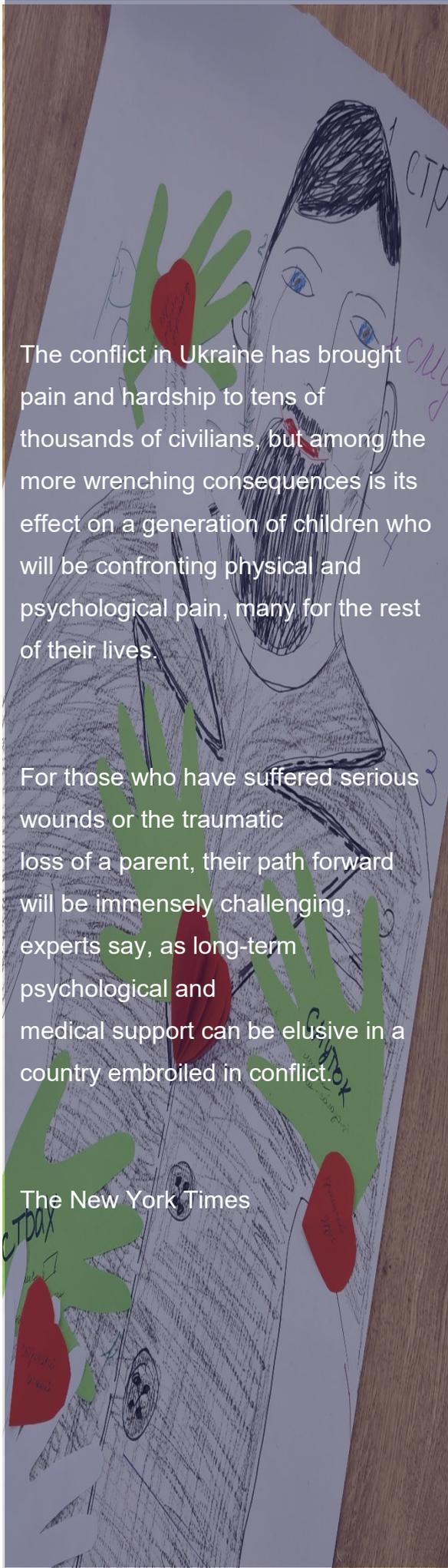
1. “Taking care of the helpers.”
2. A Safe Base for Treatment and Care
3. Mechanisms of Emotional Trauma
4. CBT-based interventions for PTSD

The practicum included training in psychoeducation, “Writing to heal,” and the “Helping Hand model.”

We had the air raid alarms during each day of the training. After consulting with the managers and participants, we decided to continue the training each time without paying attention to the alarms. Due to air raids, there were problems with public transportation, which made it difficult for some of the participants to attend on time. All of the groups were active and involved. Therefore, taking care of the helpers was justified, and the groups joyfully participated in the *Helping Hands* method.

After the seminars, the presentation and *Helping Hands* were translated into Ukrainian and mailed to the participants. We received highly positive feedback for the seminars. The translators were also praised for their ability to precisely translate psychological terms and their emotional involvement.

The University and Institute invited us to collaborate on future projects, and we are currently discussing plans for March 2023.



The conflict in Ukraine has brought pain and hardship to tens of thousands of civilians, but among the more wrenching consequences is its effect on a generation of children who will be confronting physical and psychological pain, many for the rest of their lives.

For those who have suffered serious wounds or the traumatic loss of a parent, their path forward will be immensely challenging, experts say, as long-term psychological and medical support can be elusive in a country embroiled in conflict.

The New York Times



Participants at Rivne training with their certificates . Photo: UVF

NUMBER TRAINED: 75

CHILDREN WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM TRAINING: Hundreds



Participants in training in Lviv, Photo: UVF

“We need help right now because, after the war, it will be too late,” said the director of ROIPPO Alla Cherniy.

Health professionals are concerned about how the war has reached the psyche of the nation’s children and youth. Many have been injured, and many have also lost family members. The fear is that the events will affect the whole generation of kids. This is why it is vital to train adults in how to deal with the stress and trauma these kids are living with.



NUTRITION

An orphan in Lviv, enjoying snack time in the orphanage. Photo: UVF



One little boy in the orphanage eating a snack that he had received from Ukraine Volya Foundation. Photo: UVF

War is causing physical and emotional stress and trauma in most of the population. In many places, the healthcare systems and social infrastructure are destroyed. An increasing part of the population is also experiencing food insecurity.

Ukraine is not a country associated with malnutrition and a lack of food. With the ongoing war, however, children's diets are also affected. In conflict areas, food is scarce, and in the shelters where refugees are hiding until they can return home, the food is insufficient and lacks many nutrients. In addition to this, stress, fear, sorrow, depression, or trauma affect the appetites of the population, children the most. For this reason, we deliver food, vitamins, and clothes to the orphanages we support.

Ukraine Volya Foundation helps **4 orphanages in the city of Lviv constantly and another 3 orphanages in Ivano Frankivs and Lviv region** on a periodic bases based on the request of the Orphanage management. We provide **300 children with** humanitarian aid and support projects in the orphanages to make their lives healthier such as building wheelchair access ramps, buying furniture, and providing necessary items for the proper operation of the Orphanages' facilities.

In the future, Ukraine Volya Foundation aims to provide nutritious meals and medical support for children in children's houses supported by UVF.



THErapy SESSIONS



TOTAL OF HUMANITARIAN HELP

Shoes: 400 pairs

Winter clothes: 200 children

Food and vitamins: one time per month delivery of fruits, snacks, vitamins, and milk for 4 orphanages (200 children)

Medical supplies: by request of the medical staff of the orphanage

In December of 2022 and January 2023 we delivered fruits, vitamins, snacks, juices, hygiene products, presents for children, lanterns, headlights, toys, art supplies, and warm clothes to 3 orphanages in Lviv and families who are located close to the front line of the war.

Nutrition is incredibly important the upbringing of children. In wartime, many Ukrainian orphanages have struggled to procure necessary food and vitamins. Children already lack love and support in life, so, helping them with very basic things such as food, is crucial.

Ukraine Volya Foundation is trying to improve this aspect for the children it supports.



THERAPY SESSIONS

Children are working on group therapy session, Lviv. Photo: UVF

The consequences of the trauma will create a society suffocated by mental illness, eventually penetrating Ukraine's social and economic structure.

Home for child № 1 is based in Tadzhytska St, 23, Lviv, Lviv Oblast, Ukraine. It is a home for **20 children** ages 2-6. Most of them were moved from Eastern Ukraine when the war started.

Two UVF psychologists diagnosed all the children in the orphanage and found that **12 needed psychological support**.

Two of the children needed individual therapy because of their stories. Please read them.

Vitaly, 6 years old.



This boy was removed from the family together with his younger brother. The boy's biological father died in the war (the child knows about this fact) During the session, he spoke sadly about the loss of his father in the war, emphasizing the fear of falling asleep in the dark. His symptoms include biting his nails, falling asleep slowly and with difficulty, sleeping restlessly, sweating excessively, having urinary incontinence, playing with body parts, fearing for his health, experiencing daydreams (thoughts are not here and now), and feeling shame, and guilt.

Difficulties that were revealed during the diagnosis: the presence of fears, anxiety, physical and emotional tension, increased vulnerability and sensitivity, and addiction. The boy has a pronounced need for acceptance, sympathetic understanding, warm attachment, a sense of security, gaining recognition, and seeking to eliminate the feeling of oppression.

Artur, 5 years old.

He is from Slovyansk, Eastern Ukraine. Through the diagnosis, we found that his pregnant mother had died. He painted her with a baby in her belly and showed that the rocket hit the house and killed the mother. Also,



he drew a lot of military equipment and named it (tanks, armored personnel carriers, shells, rockets); this child saw the war very closely. At the first meeting of diagnosis, he was speaking very, very, very quietly and was drawing in a way that did not correspond to the level of development of a 5-year-old child. This child is regressing.

Artur needs to be pulled out of a regressive state, given the opportunity to live his feelings, ground him, and give him a resource.

Children are resilient and can cope if provided with adequate support. But if left unattended, their symptoms will have long-term impacts. This could have extreme consequences.

Ukraine Volya Foundation contributes to strengthening children in war-torn communities, focusing on their healing and recovery from trauma and mental health. Our goal is to build resilience in children who have experienced trauma and stress in different ways.

If a child is exposed to several traumatic events during the war, much more serious difficulties may appear in the process of the child's development, which is already observed in many children. And the lack of timely help has a detrimental effect on the child's life both in everyday life and in education, and this affects the psychological state of the child in the future and its development. The relevance of this problem proves the need to find effective solutions in the field of development of orphans and help them in wartime.

That is why the task of the Ukraine Volya Foundation is to help children who were in orphanages before and during the war to go through this experience, heal their wounds and be reborn. It is believed that the sooner a child can be given psychological support and help cope with the horrors of war, the better they will feel in the future and the risk of difficulties in life will decrease.

The goal of providing timely psychological assistance to children is to prevent the development of destructive symptoms that appeared during the war, as well as timely assistance to children who can recover on their own. This should be done as soon as possible.

At this stage of the work, meetings were held with all leadership of the institutions, as well as with the head of the Children's Service of the Lviv Regional Military Administration, Volodymyr Volodymyrovych Lys, on the topic of implementing a system of improvement and psychological assistance to children in children houses.

Diagnostics of children in two orphanages were also carried out, based on the results of which a regular plan of work with children, individually and in groups, was drawn up. Most of the children undergoing therapy arrived at the orphanage during the war due to the loss of one or two parents. This has a very negative effect on their development and rapid degradation is observed.

The help has already been provided for 3 months to 35 children (2 orphanages) with individual and group therapy sessions. The results are already visible. Children who have had very severe trauma begin to show significant results.

Months of therapy session: 3

Children affected: 35

In working with children/adolescents, psychologists and other specialists (speech therapists, developmental correction specialists, etc.) who work with the Ukraine Volya Foundation use a comprehensive approach to processing traumatic experiences. The work uses stages and selects methods that ecologically and consistently process the traumatic experience. Establishing psychological contact with the child and caregivers, diagnosis/identification of the traumatic situation, selection of work methods and techniques, and assessment of curative effects are distinguished among the stages.

Therapy sessions will be provided for 6 months. After that, psychologists will diagnose children again and see if there is any progress or if someone needs to change the type of therapy.

Summary of Program Expenditures in USD

Jacaranda training

Event costs: Materials, Venue, Translators, Food:	\$3,112.00
Team travels and accommodations:	\$4,987.00
Team meals & expenses:	\$560.00
Total cost:	\$8,659.00

Rivne and Lviv pieces of training for professionals

Event costs: Materials, Venue, Translators, & Food	\$1005.00
Team travel & accommodations	\$250.00
Team meals & expenses	\$250.00
Total cost:	\$1,505.00

Humanitarian help

Medical supplies:	\$919.00
Food and drinks:	\$4,635.00
Clothes and shoes:	\$2,095.00
Other projects and supplies for orphanages	\$6,755.00
Total cost:	\$14,404.00

Therapy sessions

Professional Fees for six months 12 children	\$2,450.00
Professional Fees for diagnosis of 35 children	\$2,050.00
Total expenses for UVF 2022 – January 2023:	\$29,018.00

Contribution from Novi:

Professional fees for psychologist for Jacaranda training

\$12,000.00 USD

Professional fees for psychologist for Rivne and Lviv training:

\$6,000.00 USD

"The training was very structured and full of information. I felt support and safety fully. Without any hesitation, I can say this was the best studying experience I've had!"

"I will use healing play with children suffering from PTSD, trauma, loss, or violence. I work as a practicing psychologist with refugee and orphaned children. Those necessary knowledge and skills will help me heal children's souls. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your team. It is a priceless experience. I thank you sincerely for what you are doing for the children."

"I will use those skills while working with refugee children and orphans. Thank you for the great teaching."

"I can use the skills by organizing classes for children in the places where my charity works."

"I am a psychologist in a kindergarten and a rehabilitation program. I am planning to use the stories with parents (mothers) and their children and also healing play with the child (and with the mother separately)."

(All of the above quotes are from some of the participants of the Jacaranda training)

