



Summer-Fall 2011

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Thank you for taking a few minutes out of your day to read about some of the exciting initiatives underway at the KidsFirst Foundation. In this issue, we'll span three continents to highlight where your donations are being put to work in the world. We'll share some creative ways to engage your children in giving back to the orphanages that they once called home. And we'll provide some information about upcoming events where we can all get together to celebrate our kids and the gift of family.

We hope that you find the following stories to be informative and inspiring. We have so many exciting initiatives underway and we'd love to engage even more families in our efforts. If you are interested in helping us raise funds for a specific orphanage or you'd like to get involved with one of our committees, we'd love to have you on our Foundation team. We have a lot of fun and it flat out feels amazing to take part in programs that help kids in need.

I want to personally thank you for your kindness and generosity. We all have so much for which to be thankful and it is through our collective efforts that we will continue to experience the awesome feeling that comes from helping orphaned kids around the world.

I hope that the rest of 2011 brings happiness and opportunity to your family. We look forward to seeing you and your family at one of our KidsFirst Foundation events in the near future.

Sincerely,
Mike Marker
KidsFirst Foundation Board President

Tver - Teremok Orphanage Update

Our partnership with the Teremok orphanage in Tver, Russia, continues this year and we are encouraged by the number of KidsFirst families that have expressed interest in helping the kids in that orphanage thrive. Earlier this month, the Foundation donated \$5,000 to support a nutrition program that will provide healthy meat, fruits, vegetables and Kefir to children living in that facility.

Next month, we will host our annual Russian Dinner and funds raised from that event will go to support more programs at the Teremok orphanage. Please see page 2 for more details and plan to join us for a great evening that supports a great cause. We hope to see a lot of our Tver families in attendance as it promises to be an especially meaningful night for them.

Next year, the Foundation will focus on another orphanage that we can support throughout 2012 and we are interested in hearing from families who would like us to focus on the orphanage where their kids are from. Please contact us if you are interested in discussing who our 2012 orphanage partner will be.



Three Ways Your Kids Can Give Back

KidsFirst families have been creating all kinds of interesting family fundraising projects to help raise money for kids in need. The projects have come in all shapes and sizes, but the constant theme has revolved around finding fun and simple ways to engage kids in giving back to the orphanages they once called home. The Foundation applauds all families for their efforts and we thank them for supporting our mission. Some of the fundraising projects have included:

1 Spare change drives: several families recently went door-to-door in their neighborhoods to collect spare change for KidsFirst. Some parents even collected spare change at work. Altogether, the families raised nearly \$400 to support our orphanage partners.



2 Garage sales: this has been a hit with KidsFirst families over the years. The parents pledge to donate all, or part, of the garage sale proceeds to the Foundation and the kids take part by selling some of their stuffed animals, slightly used clothes, old games and more.

3 Neighborhood parties with a purpose: some KidsFirst families have hosted kid-friendly parties in their neighborhoods and asked families to donate \$20 or more to help support orphaned kids through the Foundation. Some families have even rented spacewalks and hired singers to add to the fun.

If any of those ideas sound like they'd work for your family, we'd encourage you to give them a try. Or, come up with some ideas of your own. One family is considering taking a few dollars from their kid's weekly allowance and setting it aside for helping others as a way to encourage their child to give back. And another family is planning a dinner party where they will ask guests to donate to the Foundation in their kid's name.

Whatever you do, we hope that you consider the Foundation in your efforts. Family fundraising projects provide a great way for you to do things together and give back to kids in need.

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future." JFK

KFF FUNDS HAITIAN SCHOLARS

In recent newsletters, we've told you about the mission trip that several KidsFirst parents took to Fondwa, Haiti, in the aftermath of the tragic earthquake of 2010. On that trip, we built a temporary school, painted shelters and provided clothes, food and toiletries to help the orphaned children living in that community.

On our trip, we also learned about the positive work being done at the University of Fondwa. We heard about students eager to earn degrees in hopes of breaking out of poverty and making a brighter future for themselves and their country.

Two of those students live in the orphanage in Fondwa and the Foundation is pleased to announce that it has awarded two scholarships (\$4,500 each) to cover tuition expenses for the upcoming school year. The scholarships require the students to maintain good grades and report back to us on how they are progressing. We are proud of our scholarship winners and here is some brief information on them.

Ruth Geneste: Ruth entered the orphanage in 2011 and she is now studying business management at the University of Fondwa. Ruth is the top student in her class and her teachers say that she is a role model for other students. She says that she wants to become a *femme d'affaire*, which means businesswoman in French. Ruth also wants to invest in her community to give back what she receives.



Wilda Fleurimon: Wilda came to the orphanage in 2002 and she is now studying in the field of agronomy. She takes great pride in being able to tell others in the community about the differences in plants and the need for rich soil for Haiti's future. Wilda started her studies in 2009 and she is well on her way to graduation. She wants to help her community invest in the land to help make it prosper so that they can export all that they can.



Helping Orphans in Peru

Last month, KidsFirst Foundation board member Deb Rigney and her husband and former board member, Scott, traveled to visit the Hogar Orphanage outside of Cusco, Peru. In partnership with Peruvian Hearts, the Foundation donated \$2,500 to buy 30 new mattresses, pillows, sheets and blankets for the girls living in the orphanage. Prior to our donation, the girls were sleeping uncomfortably on thin foam pads that were very old.

"The girls were so excited to pick out the color for their mattresses and their new sheets that you would have thought it was Christmas," said Deb Rigney. "They couldn't wait to go to sleep that night and they were also thrilled with the laptops, vitamins, underwear, socks and soccer balls that were donated by the Foundation and mutual friends. It was such a great experience to help meet some of their needs."



The Rigneys were travelling with 10 other people on their trip and the group was so inspired by the Foundation's support that they pitched in too. The group of 10 raised an additional \$1,000 to purchase 30 blankets and backpacks for the girls.



KidsFirst Foundation

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Include KFF in Your United Way Giving

If you donate to United Way, you can help support the KidsFirst Foundation too. We've set it up so that you can easily designate contributions to help kids in need around the world. Simply list the Foundation's account number (#4167169) on your annual contribution form.

And if you don't give through United Way, please visit our website at www.kidsfirst-foundation.org and make a gift online. Thanks for considering the KidsFirst Foundation as part of your annual giving plans.

Come to our Russian Dinner Party

Saturday, September 24, 2011 at 6 p.m.

The Marian Center • 1011 East Saint Claire Street • Indianapolis, IN 46202

Please plan to join us for our annual fundraising dinner as we celebrate Russian culture. The food, drink and music will all have a distinctly Russian flair and our D.J. will have you up and dancing to some fun Russian favorites. All proceeds will go to the Teremok orphanage in Tver, Russia, to help fund a nutritional program, build a playground, update a room where HIV children live, and more.

Dinner is \$100 per person and table sponsorships are available for \$1,200 which includes dinner for eight people and special recognition in the dinner program. **Please register online at www.kidsfirst-foundation.org by September 7, 2011.**

Put Father Frost on Your Calendar

Saturday, January 14, 2012 at 10 a.m.

Creekside Middle School • 3525 W. 126th Street • Carmel, Ind.

We will host our annual Father Frost party according to Russian traditions. Snacks will be served and all children will receive a holiday bag of Russian candy. Children will also have the opportunity to share a song or dance with Father Frost and there will be singing and dancing around the tree. This is always one of the KidsFirst Foundation highlights of the year and the event is free to all families.

Bringing Nutrition to Ethiopia

Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa and it's estimated that more than five million children are currently orphaned across the country. The needs far outpace the resources in Ethiopia, but one of the greatest needs is providing better nutrition to young children.

That's why the KidsFirst Foundation has committed to working with an orphanage in Ethiopia to help support a program that helps orphaned babies receive the formula that they need to live. The Foundation has donated \$2,000 to the cause and we hope to share more information in future newsletters about the effectiveness of the program.

FIND THE KIDSFIRST FOUNDATION ONLINE AT
www.kidsfirst-foundation.org