



## CARE FOR THE SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING IN MOLDOVA

Moldova is a small country in Eastern Europe nestled between Ukraine and Romania. The poorest country in Europe, the majority of Moldovans leave the country illegally to find work in other countries. **Experts estimate that nearly half of all Moldovans working outside the country (300,000) are victims of human trafficking or illegal migration.**

Unfortunately, that means over 30 percent of Moldovan children are social orphans—children of parents who have illegally left the Moldova to find work in another country. In many cases, these parents send money, but will never return to Moldova to parent their children. **Given these dynamics, trafficking rings in Moldova now export tens of thousands of children into the global sex trade each year.**

The government does not have the capacity to intervene, and that's where Children's HopeChest steps in.

HopeChest has provided care and support for over 4,000 orphans in western Russia for nearly 16 years. Our programs serve children living in orphanages and teens who have left the orphanage. All HopeChest programs serve to lay the groundwork for future success in fulfillment of our mission: *That every orphan has the right to know God, experience the blessing of a family, and have the opportunity to develop independent living skills.*

As we launch ministry in Moldova, HopeChest is partnering with national leaders involved directly in the prevention of sex trafficking, and the critical aftercare/reintegration needed for survivors of sex slavery.

### GOAL

Restore victims of sex trafficking through the **Beginning of Life Safehouse** by providing:

- **Safe living conditions in a transitional living facility**
- **Therapy, counseling, and relationships with caring Christian professionals**
- **Food, clothing, and medical care**
- **24-hour supervision**

Up to 6 girls will live in the transition home and receive services, although the home has capacity for 12 if the current office is renovated into living quarters. Depending on the level of abuse and violence they have experienced, the program ranges anywhere from 3-12 months.

### PROGRAM

The Beginning of Life Safehouse works directly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM)—the only organization with permission from the Moldovan government to meet the victims of sex trafficking at the border. They are taken into a shelter for up to 30 days while the IOM seeks a stable transition facility like Beginning of Life.

Each woman's needs vary depending on their background, education, family status, type of abuse, and length of abuse. Beginning of Life creates a specific counseling plan for each woman, and starts the process of rehabilitation and reintegration. In general, all participants receive the following care:

- **Accommodations.** The safehouse provides safe and complete accommodations, including a bedroom, bathroom, food, and medical care for up to 12 months.
- **Counseling.** The staff psychologist identifies each woman's unique needs and develops a specialized, individual counseling plan.
- **Social Assistance.** The social workers live with the girls 24-hours/day, taking care of all their needs and educating them basic life skills. These might include tasks such as cooking, cleaning, personal hygiene, and other daily routines.
- **Cultural Services.** The staff organizes special events for the girls, inviting them to local theatres, concerts, and public events. The goal is to teach the girls to see and experience the good parts of society, and to begin integrating with other people in society.
- **Group Activities.** Once each week, the girls watch a movie with the social workers and then discuss the themes and applications for their own lives within a group context.
- **Bible Study & Church Attendance.** Beginning of Life invites a local pastor to provide Bible instruction classes for the girls. He teaches lessons and helps the girls develop a prayer life. All residents are invited to worship at local churches. Most choose an evangelical church, and attendance is purely optional.
- **Art Therapy.** Victims of sex trafficking struggle to find their gifts and self-worth. Art therapy is a tangible way to show the girls they have special gifts. A professional art therapist helps the girls identify their talents, and helps them create jewelry, cards, paintings, and clothing items. Beginning of Life also organizes exhibitions to sell their artwork. This aids the healing process when the women discover that their artistic gifts are valued by others and purchased as gifts. This provides them not only with a self-esteem boost—but a small source of income.
- **Drama and Role Play Therapy.** Sex trafficking victims struggle with depressed emotions, and have tremendous difficulty sharing their past experiences. At the start, these young women are closed up within themselves almost completely. Dramatic role playing helps the women experience and relate

Tatiana, was trafficked into Turkey, where she worked as a prostitute in a brothel.

Thankfully, a police raid closed that brothel, put the pimp into prison and returned the girls to their home countries.

Tatiana lived the Beginning of Life Safehouse for four months.

She finished trade school and now works in a bakery and lives on her own in an apartment.

**Less than 2 percent of sex trafficking victims are ever rescued.**

to the emotions of others that are similar to their own. This allows the women to open up and relate to others. Processing the similar emotions in the “third person” helps the women understand themselves and begin to open their hearts again.

- **Trade schools.** Beginning of Life has relationships with a variety of different trade schools. We attempt to place the girls in a good trade school to receive professional training and the opportunity to work in the future.
- **Reintegration.** As graduation from the program gets closer, our staff help the women make the first steps toward independence, housing, and employment. Once a good job is located, the girl must maintain employment for thirty days before she can leave the safehouse. After this point, the staff help locate a safe apartment or dormitory for the girl to live in, and the program pays the rent for a few months while the girl fully transitions back into society.
- **Follow-Up.** All of the Beginning of Life graduates are invited to spend the holidays at the safehouse, as well as just stopping by. The home is a place where they can always come for help—even after graduation.

## **PROGRAM RESULTS**

**In the past year, 10 girls have graduated from the program, and currently 6 women are living in the Beginning of Life Safehouse.** Other results include:

- Two national days of prayer that drew over 300 churches and 20,000 adults to pray for victims of sex trafficking.
- Over 23, 000 people received prevention information detailing how sex traffickers operate and how to avoid their traps.
- Approximately 1,500 individuals received training through partnerships with local churches.

## **PROGRAM TESTIMONIALS**

Natasha was abandoned to an orphanage by her parents shortly after she was born.

Having grown up in an orphanage, Natasha followed the footsteps of many other orphans into a technical school where she was to learn baking.

One day, the director of the school invited a young man to come and meet with the girls. He developed a close relationship with Natasha, and after about two months offered her a job in Moscow. He promised to take her away from Moldova and provide her with a better job than she could dream of.

**She agreed.**

When she reached Moscow, Natasha was locked in an apartment, and began to realize that the teacher from the technical school and her boyfriend had worked together to kidnap her and bring her to Moscow.

That night, she entered the sex trade. As a forced prostitute, she was raped and brutally beaten when she tried to resist. The brothel owners would torture Natasha by burning her with lit cigarettes and cutting her with knives. **Natasha still has those scars today...**

One night, Natasha boldly and secretly called one of her own clients for help. He was a builder from Tajikistan who took an interest in rescuing Natasha—even while using her as a prostitute. He had been afraid that Natasha’s owners would kill him if he helped her. But he acted anyway.

He paid for Natasha for the entire night, and then put on her a train back to Moldova.

Natasha entered the Beginning of Life Safehouse and there she received help to overcome her fear, sense of guilt, nervousness and a emotional withdrawal. The team offered Natasha sincere love, kindness, and caring.

She is now studying to become a baker, and is beginning the hard road to full healing and integration.

### **OPPORTUNITY**

Children’s HopeChest desires to provide services to 12 girls by expanding the Beginning of Life Safehouse. Currently the building is a duplex that contains offices on one side and the residential space for 6 girls on the other. HopeChest will renovate the office into living space, provide for a full year of office rent to transition the office to a new space, and a used vehicle to transport the girls to and from activities, and medical appointments.

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Furnishing and Renovation of Duplex	\$7,500
Program Support for Girls in the Program	17,500
Office Rent for 1 Year	15,000
Vehicle	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

To make a gift to support the Beginning of Life Safehouse in Moldova, select the “GIVE” button on the top right corner of our Web site: <http://www.hopechest.org>. Please put “BOL Moldova” in the note. Or, you can mail a gift to Children’s HopeChest, P.O. Box 63842, Colorado Springs, CO 80962-3842. Thank you.