

For Immediate Release
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Keystone Human Services Responds to Beslan School Tragedy

By Sending Post-Trauma Experts

Donations Desperately Needed

(Harrisburg, PA –October 6, 2004)- With an impressive track-record of crisis intervention in our local schools, and at the urgent request of mental health professionals in Russia, Keystone Human Services is sending experienced post-trauma experts to Russia to provide highly specialized training to over-burdened counselors in the aftermath of the Beslan School massacre. Since the tragedy occurred on September 1-3, 2004 approximately 200 children are hospitalized or receiving treatment in area Moscow hospitals. Many more children are receiving services in Kiev, St. Petersburg and other cities as well.

Although effectively trained in general mental health services, members of Russia's professional community are welcoming the extraordinary insights and experience of Keystone's Student Assistance Program (SAP) specialists in trauma management. Throughout greater Harrisburg, Keystone's experienced team members have been called on to intervene in support of school professionals, students and family members during crisis situations related to suicide, violent deaths and critical events affecting community life. Emilia Chervinskaya, Director of the Association of Experts on the Problems of Children and Alexander Makhnach Ph.D., a respected expert in children's services in Russia, will be welcoming Keystone with an eye on strengthening their crisis counseling capabilities so that affected children and families can return to normal routine as soon as possible.

Representing Keystone Human Services will be Ms. Connie Kennedy, a highly experienced SAP mental health consultant, and Ms. Ann Tapman, a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) with extensive Red Cross disaster mental health training. Also part of the team will be Dr. Karin Jordan from Oregon's George Fox University. Dr. Jordan is noted for her experience in Post-Trauma Supports and has been part of previous teams working to aid professionals, children and families of the "911", Columbine and Oklahoma disasters. Specialized materials are being provided by many caring experts in the field of post-trauma intervention including Dr. Mary Margaret Kerr, Associate Professor of Education and Psychiatry and Director of "STAR Center Outreach" (Students and Teens At Risk) at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic. The Keystone team will fly to Moscow mid-October and begin training ten psychologists from Beslan and twenty psychologists from Moscow immediately upon arrival.

"The situation is grave," states Dennis W. Felty, President of Keystone Human Services. "Not only have families lost beloved children and endured unimaginable emotional strain, but scores of innocent children will now have to re-enter society with new physical and mental disabilities that will fundamentally reshape the rest of their lives." To fortify the intense services being required, Keystone's first objective will be to support the professionals who are assisting the families and children affected by this terrorist act. By supporting the work of Russian professionals, Keystone hopes to help stem the immediate emotional trauma for the affected families. Keystone will also encourage authorities to consider providing supports necessary to allow severely wounded children to return to their families, school and community rather than being placed in specialized residential schools.

It is integral to Keystone's overarching mission to foster whatever supports are necessary so that individuals with disabilities can lead fulfilled and independent lives in their homes and communities.

In light of these challenging goals, funds are desperately needed to provide immediate support to the professionals serving the children and families who endured three days of life-altering horror. Felty continues "As if the emotional trauma wasn't enough, the profound financial drain on these Beslan families due to extended travel to major medical centers throughout Russia, not to mention disrupted employment etc. is nothing less than overwhelming." And to further complicate this endeavor, community and

non-profits like Keystone are not able to use many of their program funds to meet the unexpected costs of providing emergency supports abroad.

As such, Keystone Human Services is asking for emergency community support for this critical humanitarian mission. If you ever felt the desire to respond in some fashion to the horrors that took place in Beslan that fateful afternoon, this is your opportunity to take action. All monies collected will be carefully managed and used exclusively to help defray the costs of providing Keystone's expert resources to local Russian professionals, while providing emergency funds to support the children and families involved. Be assured, community service organizations within Russia are also taking strong supportive action. The Lion's Club of Moscow, Lion's International in particular, has committed \$100,000 toward rebuilding the school and plans a major appeal to raise as much as one million dollars more.

Please forward all monetary donations to Keystone Partnership, 124 Pine Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101, and Attn: Beslan, or visit us on our web site at www.keystonehumanservices.org. Monies donated will be audited and disseminated through the Keystone Partnership. Further information is available by calling KHS at (717)232-7509 and asking for Ann Moffitt at extension 133. With its headquarters in Harrisburg, Keystone Human Services is a 501©3 non-profit agency that operates in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Eastern Europe. Keystone provides a complete spectrum of personal supports to individuals with mental retardation, autism, to those experiencing mental illness as well as teens, children and families at risk.

There are many opportunities for people to participate in this project. Financial support is greatly needed and donations will be used to sponsor the training, translate professional material and most importantly to provide direct support to the children and families of Beslan.

Donations may be made as listed above!