



You are Protecting Unaccompanied and Separated Ukrainian Children

April 29, 2022. A teen arrives in Kharkiv in his family's car. He and his family fled active conflict in Kutuzivka village (on the eastern side of Kharkiv City, Ukraine).

Narciso Contreras/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

The UN Refugee Agency estimates that more than eight million people have fled Ukraine since Russia launched its unprovoked invasion of the country on February 24, 2022.

Today, with more than a quarter of the country's pre-war population seeking safety and protection elsewhere, we are witnessing the fastest-growing refugee crisis since World War II.

At KIND, we know that children are disproportionately affected by this kind of devastating conflict and large-scale displacement. More than two and a half million children from Ukraine are now refugees, with more fleeing the country each day in search of safety and protection. Those who fled the country alone, or with adults who are not their legal guardians, sit at the center of this crisis and are especially vulnerable.

KIND's approach to aid will combine our expertise in child protection, our 10-plus-years experience providing legal and social services to unaccompanied and separated children, our global network of pro bono partners, and our strong presence and partnerships in Europe. Together these make us uniquely suited to address the rapidly intensifying crisis with the knowledge, thoughtfulness, compassion, and long-term thinking it demands.

To support The Ukrainian Children's Response Fund, visit supportkind.org/Ukraine.

The Washington Post

"[Children] have been hurt in the very places where they should be safest — their homes, emergency shelters, even hospitals."

Manuel Fontaine
Emergency Programs Director
UN Children's Agency

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We are at a critical—perhaps historic—moment that could

KIND Is Seeking to Address the Ukraine Child Refugee Crisis by:

- ✓ Increasing our presence in the region by deploying experienced child protection staff to the areas of greatest need
- ✓ Training and building the capacity of local NGO partners and government agencies
- ✓ Creating and circulating child-centered rights information and assisting with national registration
- ✓ Preventing family separation and promoting family reunification by training volunteers, NGOs, and frontline government actors
- ✓ Replicating our proven model in the E.U. and providing free access to high-quality legal information, assistance, and representation in partnership with the E.U.'s private sector
- ✓ Leveraging our advocacy experience and relationships with policymakers to promote greater child protection policies in the E.U. and its member states, while highlighting the unique needs of migrating non-Ukrainian and stateless children
- ✓ Stressing the importance of child-safeguarding actions and raising awareness of the risks of trafficking, exploitation, and abuse

In the weeks that followed the start of the conflict, KIND worked to identify the best ways to apply our knowledge and resources.

In March, we visited four refugee reception centers, and eight border crossings in Poland, Slovakia, and Romania — the countries that had received the largest number of Ukrainian refugees. We met with NGOs and state officials to discover where we could fill gaps in service. We concluded by conducting a formal needs assessment to identify threats to the long-term safety and well-being of refugee children from Ukraine.



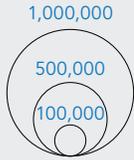
Zaporizhia, Ukraine | May 11–12, 2022. Every day, displaced people from all over eastern Ukraine flee combat zones or Russian-occupied territories to seek shelter at the Zaporizhia Center in southeastern Ukraine.

Top: Children from Pology are gathered with their belongings outside the center. Bottom: A child from Mariupol clutches some of the stuffed animals provided by the center.

Both images: Rick Mave/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images

redefine the international response to refugee situations.

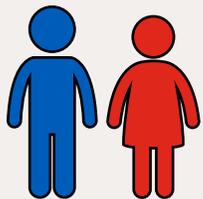
Refugees From Ukraine Across Europe



Individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe

X.X

Refugee movements out of Ukraine to neighboring countries



Approximately **30 to 40% of children arriving in neighboring countries are under the age of 14.**



Conservatively estimated, hundreds of thousands of the 2.8 million refugee children from Ukraine are **unaccompanied or separated.**

AP

“[...]Having 4.8 million of Ukraine’s 7.5 million children displaced in such a short time is quite incredible.”

Manuel Fontaine
Emergency Programs Director
UN Children’s Agency

8,792,763

Border crossings from Ukraine (since February 24, 2022)

5,650,272

Individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe

7,100,000

Internally displaced people inside Ukraine, including approximately 2.8 million children.*

To support The Ukrainian Children’s Response Fund, visit supportkind.org/Ukraine.

Notes
Migration numbers are estimates based on the most recent data available on July 6, 2022. It refers to cross-border movements, not individuals. An additional 105,000 people moved to the Russian Federation from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions between February 18 and 23, 2022. Source for migration and refugee numbers: UNHCR, July 6, 2022.

* Source for internal displacement numbers: UNICEF, July 2022

You Delivered a Historic Victory for Vulnerable Children: Grants of Deferred Action

“The deferred action policy casts a lifeline for KIND clients throughout the nation. So many of the immigrant youth we serve, who survived profoundly traumatizing pasts, can now begin building safe, secure futures. The magnitude of this win cannot be overstated.”



Jason Boyd
Senior Director, Policy

Thirty-two children, from five to 13 years old, became U.S. citizens at this 2017 ceremony held at The Bronx Zoo in New York City.

Drew Angerer/Getty Images

Whether fleeing conflict and civil unrest or escaping dangerous gang violence, KIND’s clients leave their home countries in search of a brighter, more secure future. And while many of the children we serve successfully obtain permanent legal protection in the United States, others face an ongoing threat of deportation to the same dangerous conditions they fled. Those who escaped abusive homes have been left especially vulnerable to this risk.

KIND and our partners have campaigned for years to change policy for these vulnerable youth, and now can report a significant victory. In March 2022, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that they will begin considering grants of “deferred action” — which prevents deportation — for those who have received Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). SIJS is a form of humanitarian relief for immigrant children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected by one or both of their parents and whose return to their countries of origin would not serve their best interests.

This deferred action policy represents a landmark victory for KIND clients and thousands of other youth throughout the country. In addition to lifting the threat of removal

from the United States, this historic decision will allow survivors of abuse to apply for employment permits advancing their financial stability and independence. Those permits also serve as a form of identification enabling these youth to access essential services and opportunities like medical treatment and higher education. While we celebrate this victory for children, and the resolution of the years of advocacy that helped make it possible, our work in this area is far from done. In the coming months, we will continue to engage closely with the Biden Administration to ensure that the deferred action policy is appropriately administered. And we will continue to urge Congress to make additional reforms to the SIJS program and other child-centered policies that positively impact the lives of the children we serve.

Spotlight: Working to Reunify Families from Mexico and Central America

Laura Just
Director for Legal Protection, International Programs

I began work with KIND in the summer of 2018. Since then I've spent hours talking to hundreds of separated parents, from Guatemala to Honduras, who had been deported to their countries without their children. The families were all different, but what I heard from each of them was always the same: they were urgently seeking reunification, they desperately missed their kids, and they were ready to do anything to see them again.

For some, that meant attempting the dangerous journey back to the United States, while others were willing to bear the pain of separation and watch their children grow up over video calls if it meant the children could remain safe in the U.S. Those parents talked about how hard it was to smile at the images of their kids' new rooms and new friends, when they'd lost all hope of ever being there to share those experiences in person. One mom, who was separated from her son when he was just 18 months old, was scared that he'd forget her. When we met in 2019, she'd missed two of his three birthdays, and he, sadly, had no memories of them living together.

When the Biden Administration launched the Family Reunification Task Force in February 2021, KIND was there to help some of the first families begin the process of reunification with their children in the U.S. I remember the euphoric feeling of finally being able to call a parent and tell them that for the first time in three years there was a way for them to come back to the U.S. Many parents couldn't believe that what we were telling them was real.

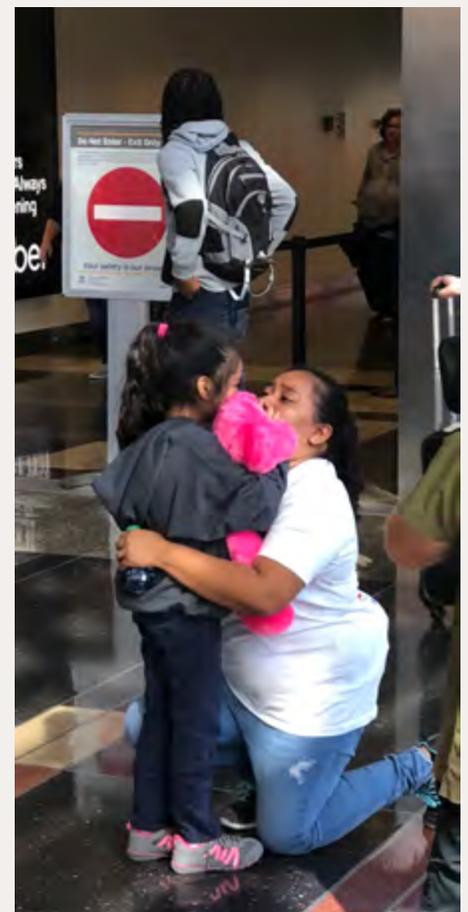
My KIND colleagues and I have worked with over 1,500 people affected by family separation, both internationally and in the U.S. We've advocated for families based on their needs, and to ensure that the process would provide a safe, fast, and dignified path to reunification. It has been deeply moving and motivating to see our work pay off and to bring families back together. While we still have a long way to go, and hundreds of families are still in need of assistance, we are committed to representing as many families as we can and to helping them get started on their journey to healing with their children.

The mom I met in 2019 was finally reunified with her son in July 2021—a real full-circle moment for me. The reunification process was brand new when we started working on her application, and she was so nervous by the time we filed it that she would call me, worried, convinced that something would change, that she'd need to provide more information, or that none of it would work out. When her application was approved, though, she was calm, like she'd known it would happen all along. She was ready! It has been almost a year since she boarded her flight to the U.S. She now works at a restaurant and has an apartment where she can sit with her son in his room and watch him play with his friends. And—after missing so many birthdays—she was thrilled to be there for his fifth.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

In 2018, the Trump Administration enacted its Zero Tolerance Policy, and thousands of children were cruelly separated from their parents and caregivers at the U.S. border. KIND immediately deployed staff to support and advocate for unaccompanied and separated children.

This is a personal recollection from Laura Just, who coordinates KIND's on-the-ground presence throughout Central America and Mexico.



A KIND client, reunited with her mother in late 2018 after months of forced separation.
Unknown photographer

Your Help Allows Us to Provide Comprehensive Support

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Making Nina's Life a Little Easier

KIND's client Nina fled Guatemala to escape the trauma of gender-based violence. She has been working since 2019 with the legal team in KIND's Baltimore office, and currently her focus is preparing for her asylum interview. She told the social services staff that she was having financial difficulties and was unable to provide some of her infant son's most basic needs, including diapers. Nina does not have a job, an added stressor. We connected Nina to one of KIND's new community partners, ShareBaby. They have continued to provide her with diapers and other daily essentials while she awaits a decision on her application.

● Baltimore

"[ShareBaby] donations aim to solve diaper insecurity and to provide other baby supplies to clients like Nina, but I have found that the program has also allowed me to connect with Nina more deeply and to involve her in the process of obtaining other services and resources for her family," says Virginia Moraleda, ShareBaby's senior social services coordinator. "The donations have allowed Nina to focus more on her legal case as well as meeting her son's other needs."



February 2022: KIND staff members Lili Eskinazi, Lynn Panepinto, and Virginia Moraleda pick up baby items from the ShareBaby warehouse in Baltimore City, Maryland.

Unknown photographer

● Guatemala

KIND's support is grounded in a holistic approach. We work hard to identify the unique needs of our clients—from fundamentals like securing food, clothing, and shelter; to gaining access to healthcare and mental health resources; to getting enrolled in school. We know it's the best way to ensure long-term safety and security. By alleviating day-to-day stressors, we can also help children be more active participants in their legal hearings.

Thanks to dozens of local and national partnerships, KIND provides thousands of clients with a wide range of social-service supports. Here are some examples:



Basic needs and benefits



Expressive arts and therapeutic groups



Education and recreation resources



Back-to-school and end-of-year events



Medical and mental health resources, and psychosocial supports



Workshops on topics including COVID-19 resources, healthy relationships, and financial literacy



Support for children transitioning out of shelter care



Caregiver workshops to strengthen relationships after prolonged separation



Crisis intervention and safety planning



Community outreach and training to increase awareness of unaccompanied child needs and best practices

You Make It Easier for Our Clients to Communicate—and to Get What They Need

Imagine leaving behind everything you've ever known to embark on—and survive—a dangerous trek alone, only to arrive at a strange new place without the ability to communicate your needs or understand how to get access to services. This is a reality for many of KIND's clients. The language barrier is just one of the complexities and challenges they face, but even with resilience and the determination to get to the U.S., it can be the one barrier that prevents them from realizing a future of safety and protection.

KIND has worked with children from 78 countries who speak a vast array of languages. While Spanish is the primary language spoken by the majority of our clients, the rest speak a diversity of languages and dialects. The most common of these are Q'eqchi', Mam, and Quiche, all indigenous to Guatemala. To serve our clients' linguistic and cultural needs, KIND collaborates with volunteers, partners, and professionals that provide interpretation and translation assistance during legal proceedings, asylum interviews, medical exams, and psychological evaluations. We do this to ensure that all children who need legal services can more easily and comfortably communicate with their lawyers and social service providers.

Increasingly, we are seeing a need for language access services in jurisdictions where free and quality interpreters are not available for judicial and administrative proceedings. Without the assistance of an interpreter, a child's hearing can proceed while the child is unable to understand a single word of what's being said. Even so, children and youth are forced to attend, alone and defenseless. This brings on added stress, confusion, frustration, and fear. Children without language assistance also run the risk of missing appointments and other deadlines. Any of these missed milestones can have drastic consequences for the children, including deportation to their homes of origin and a return to the life-threatening environments they fled.

KIND is always working to better tailor our services to our clients' needs. We value our strong relationships with the volunteers and partners who help make possible this richer understanding.

2022 Grant Award Increases Access to Indigenous-Language Interpreters

KIND's staff in California's Central Valley have seen a steadily increasing need for Central American indigenous-language interpreters. (KIND ensures access to interpreters for clients who will be more at ease speaking their indigenous language.) In January 2022, in a wonderfully generous show of support for our clients who rely on language resources, the California Dignity for Families Fund awarded KIND a \$200,000 grant. KIND will use the funds to expand partnerships with indigenous-led organizations and community interpreters in the Central Valley, while continuing to ensure that children and young people in the area have access to life-changing legal services.



Since 2014, **KIND has worked with clients who speak 24 different languages and more than 45 indigenous dialects.**

In 2019, KIND formed a language access working group to coordinate and streamline the way we provide services: without undue delay, and no matter which language our clients speak. Since its founding the group has recruited volunteer interpreters, supported local language advocacy in California and New York, and created language tools that help our clients identify the languages they are most comfortable communicating in.

KIND Welcomes Two Distinguished Members to the Board of Directors



Kathleen M. Pike, PhD

Professor of Psychology, Columbia University

Kathleen Pike is a professor of psychology at Columbia University, where she is director of the Columbia-WHO Center for Global Mental Health, deputy director of the Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program, and director of the Mental Health and Work Design Lab. Dr. Pike has pioneered initiatives on the global stage—advocating for expanded mental health services, and translating research into practice in under-resourced communities, schools, and workplaces. Her scholarship focuses on eating disorders, culture and psychopathology, global mental health, and mental health at work. Dr. Pike earned her undergraduate and master’s degrees at Johns Hopkins University and her doctoral degree in clinical psychology at Yale. She is the recipient of multiple honors, including the 2021 American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology.



Andrew Plepler, JD

Global Head of Environmental, Social, and Governance, Bank of America

Andrew Plepler spearheads Bank of America’s focus on environmental, social, and governance issues. He is responsible for a range of programs aligned with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, and he is a key driver of work across the enterprise to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050. In response to the racial wealth gap exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and to the killings of black civilians in numerous communities, Plepler helped develop the company’s \$1.25 billion, five-year commitment to advance racial equality and economic opportunity for people and communities of color. Plepler earned a bachelor of arts degree in government from Franklin & Marshall College, and a juris doctor from the University of Miami School of Law. He founded and continues to serve on the board of the Urban Alliance Foundation, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit jobs and mentoring program that works with economically disadvantaged high school students.



KIND has a long-standing commitment to fiscal responsibility and is proud to receive the highest possible ranking from Charity Navigator for our finance and accountability practices.

Thank you for your investment in our effort to protect children and reunite families.

KIND is the preeminent U.S.-based nongovernmental organization devoted to the protection of unaccompanied and separated children. KIND envisions a world in which every unaccompanied child on the move has access to legal counsel and has their rights and well-being protected as they migrate alone in search of safety.

supportkind.org
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