

New help for children with mental health problems and their families

Grantee: Shapagat Social Foundation and the Komek Union

Project: to establish a rehabilitation information centre for families of young people with mental health problems in Semei, Kazakhstan, giving free consultations on legal, social, psychological and pedagogical matters.

The mission of our organisations is to provide charity and help to protect the rights of women, children and people with disabilities. We help them by providing free legal advice, transport, leisure activities for disabled women and their families, and psychological counselling.

The main part of our work concerns helping women with disabilities, unemployed women, and families with children with mental health problems, including by identifying ways of working with local authorities and civil society organisations. Our organisations have established a public citizens' advice centre which does not charge for its services. We also organise seminars for parents of children with mental illness, and a transport service for people in wheelchairs, using two adapted vehicles. To provide work places we have set up a sewing workshop equipped with modern sewing machines for the use of partially sighted people. A sports hall has been set up with exercise machines for parents to use with their children.

We have organised charitable fundraising events, and provided charity to disabled women and children with mental illnesses, and distributed food and clothes. Every year at Christmas we hold events for sick, poor and disabled children. We completed our project to establish a Rehabilitation and Information Centre for Families of Children with Mental Health Problems, with financial support from The BEARR Trust. The Shapagat and Komek NGOs continued their work with a hotline providing free legal advice. At the beginning of the new school year volunteers from the Centre visited the children's hospital, played with the children and gave them toys. More recently we have approached local businesses to ask them to support us financially to help us buy toys to give to children at Christmas.

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