

Anti-Discrimination Centre 'Memorial'



SUMMER SCHOOL FOR ROMA CHILDREN



2012

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For several years at the primary school in Plekhanovo village in Tulsкая region a summer camp for Roma children takes place. For 3 weeks, about 40 pupils participate in lessons and developing exercises taught by school teachers, visit different museums of the city. During the summer camp in June 2012 ,ADC 'Memorial' organized a seminar where teachers working with Roma children in other cities could learn about the experience of Plekhanovo school.

In July 2012 ADC 'Memorial' organized a summer school for children from a Roma settlement in Leningradskaya region. For 2 weeks, about 60 children participated in sport and educational actions which were organized by employees of ADC 'Memorial' and volunteers.



BISON THERAPY

For many years we arrange excursions to Saint-Petersburg for children from the compact Roma settlement in Peri village in Leningradskaya region. During these excursions children can visit theatres and museums, learn about the history and culture of the city. These years, Roma parents showed trust in our employees and volunteers. That's why we decided to organize our own summer camp for Roma children when it became possible. And the first question was where to arrange the camp? A private leisure centre right next to Toxovsky bison farm which is just a 15-minute ride from Roma settlement, was really a good choice.

A bison farm protected by a massive fence is located on a field. Opposite the farm, across a forest road, there are a horse stable, a cafe, a children's zoological corner, a climbing training site for children, several nice garden houses and a small wooden house. Own camp occupied a very nice place.

It was during the two last weeks of July. Every morning a bus brought Roma children from their settlement into the camp. By 5 pm all activities finished and the children were taken home on the same bus. During the daytime the children were busy with different activities, they had lunch and light snacks.

The main aim of the camp was to provide a combination of entertainment and improvised summer school for pupils of primary school in N. Oselky where Roma children study during academic year. Not only our employees but also Russian and foreign volunteers participated in this project. The summer camp consisted of two shifts. The first one was for children from the first and the second grades and the second one was for children from the third and the fourth grades. As it was a new experience for us, it was very important to analyse and sum up everything that was done.

The first week in the camp was very rainy. So, we were afraid that Roma parents would not allow their children to go to the camp because of bad weather, but, fortunately, the children went to the camp every morning with great pleasure. Every day Roma women, accompanying children, helped us very much, especially Elza Mikhay, well-known activist,



who was at the camp every day during the first shift. Children's behavior was really excellent. Other visitors of the same leisure centre, including many parents with their children from Saint-Petersburg as well as the staff of leisure centre, remembered Roma children as well-behaved and smart boys and girls. We heard a lot of compliments addressed to well-mannered Roma children.

Volunteers' help was very important too. Khariton Simon is a socio-pedagogical student and works at Pechorsky children's home in Pskovskaya region. Suleyman Yanopol lives in Roma settlement in

Novgorod region and studies at 11th grade of Syabrenitsy school and is going to become a doctor. And, finally, Samik Samikov is a 15 year student of a specialized secondary school in Saint-Petersburg. The children liked him very much and didn't want to believe that he was not Roma but Uzbek. Samik spent all his time in the camp with Roma children playing and looking after them and never getting tired or angry with them.

The entertainment program in the camp was successful from the first day but the developing program did not bring the results hoped for. The children were





watching bison and listening to adults talking about these animals with great interest, were enjoying playing with animals in a small zoological nook, were happily riding ponies, crossing children's barrier line and were playing football if the weather was good. But when

they had to go into a garden or wooden house because of rain, they became less enthusiastic, got tired very quickly and were not very interested in such popular children's activity as painting. Lack of creative performance culture prevented the children from such simple amateur

activities as singing and dancing. The children were very shy, only some of them agreed to perform in front of others. Even Roma women couldn't make them be more open and less shy. And on the contrary, the children were very active during trainings with our friends capoeira-dancers. They managed to involve Roma children into fight and dance exercises.

But when it was time for educational program, Roma children became lenient again in spite of the fact that volunteers tried to make these exercises attractive. They offered them popular quizzes and guesses, simple logical, mathematical and pronunciation exercises. But Roma children were doing them not well, and knowledge level among pupils of the third and the fourth grades turned out to be lower than among younger ones.

Maybe someone can say that it wasn't a good idea to plan any educational classes for children in summer, as children should have rest in summer. But I can say that, unfortunately, there's no one who could revise school subjects with Roma children during summer period and it's definitely necessary as their knowledge level leaves much to be desired.

When the camp finished everybody was sad. The children and their parents couldn't believe that tomorrow they wouldn't have to get up early to catch a bus to the camp.



Ilya BERDISHEV

In spite of bad weather the children were very enthusiastic during capoeira exercises — martial art which combines elements of dance, acrobatics and game.





There is a rope playground on the territory of the bison farm. Participants of the camp of all ages were doing an obstacle race with pleasure. In order to overcome all obstacles you had to be not only physically strong but quick-witted and fearless as well. Everyday trainings were fruitful: those who were afraid even to try in the beginning, could overcome all rope obstacles by the end of their camp shift.





Volunteers of the camp organized sport contests for the children. They were divided into two teams and had to do different exercises with a ball and a skipping rope. It was very pleasant to watch the children supporting each other even if they were from different teams.



Photo by Lena Kovach



Every day there were writing, mathematics, modeling and painting lessons at the camp. Sitting in a wooden house the children were writing and learning new words: names of trees, plants, animals, musical instruments. They were doing mathematics too – solving problems, having personal tasks, doing exercises in groups. They also had lessons with guesses, tongue-twisters and proverbs (including Roma ones), and they were even making verses.





During breaks between writing and mathematics lessons the participants of the camp were playing different outdoor games.





Also the children had several choreography lessons. They tried to play different musical instruments, recited verses learnt at school and at home. At the end of the shift the children prepared a small concert with support of Roma women where all volunteers joined dance performance.





Once per shift the children had a training with members of a group 'Mundo Capoeira' (trainer Andrey Girko). Some children already had capoeira trainings before, which were organized in the Culture House in Leskolovo. It was a pleasant meeting for everybody: for volunteers who were met by the children with great happiness, for Roma children who attended capoeira trainings before and now could not only revise some movements they learnt last time but also meet old friends, and for small children who took part in a training like that for the first time.



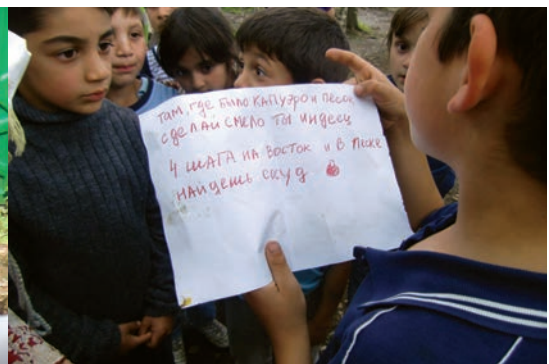


The participants of the camp could ride a horse every day. In spite of the stereotype about Roma people as horse experts, most children had never seen them. That's why they were looking forward to riding horses every day with a great pleasure. Those children who were afraid of big horses could ride a pony. But there was no one to refuse ridings.





A group of volunteers prepared travel games for the children. There was a map of the local area with different signs on it which marked places where special objects were hidden. The volunteers were dressed like different characters (Red Indian shaman, a speaking raven, a dwarf, a storyteller and others) and gave many special tasks to children which they had to do. And the children did all the tasks very enthusiastically in spite of the fact that some tasks were not easy.



All participants of the summer camp had lunch at a local cafe, and later everybody got light snacks (some juice, some yogurt and a roll). On the last day of each shift Roma mothers and grandmothers helped to organize the final dinner with the barbecued traditional Roma dish 'lutika' (salad of baked vegetables (aubergines and pepper) and fresh vegetables (tomatoes, cucumbers and onions)). Everybody enjoyed it.



CHILDREN SPEAK ABOUT THE CAMP



I was at the summer camp in the summer. There were horses, ropes and a field. We were studying there, skipping, drawing pictures of girls, writing. I liked horse riding most of all but rope skipping was quite difficult for me.

Elza



I liked the exercises on ropes very much. We were playing football, having meal. And also I liked studying. We had good teachers: Samik, Piya, Sara, Lena, Vlad, Tanya, Ilya Semenovich.

Sergey



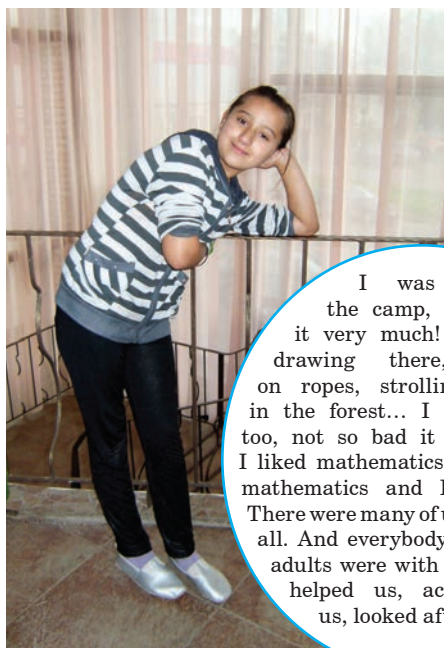
There were big bison, a big camp, there were many interesting things. It was also very beautiful there. We were in the forest too. We also were playing football, climbing on ropes. I liked the swing most of all, horses and on the ropes. And also we liked the wooden house. We were studying there!

Victoria



We were drawing, doing mathematics, writing, we saw bison... many different animals. We saw hares, horses. We saw everything there. But most of all I liked playing football.

Ganga



Serafima

I was at the camp, I liked it very much! We were drawing there, climbing on ropes, strolling, we were in the forest... I liked studying too, not so bad it was actually... I liked mathematics. Now we know mathematics and Russian better. There were many of us there. Nearly all. And everybody liked it! And adults were with us too. They helped us, accompanied us, looked after us.

I was at a camp in the summer. Far from here. There were horses there, a wooden house. Swings, bison, pony. We were drawing, writing, riding on horses there. We were dancing, singing. Most of all I liked horse riding. Though, rather. I liked everything!



Anvar



I was at a summer camp too and I liked horses there very much, tasty food, climbing on ropes, playing games, dancing, drawing. The volunteers were very good... I want you to come here to our place, to teach us and go for a walk with us. And I want to another summer camp.

Lyuda

I liked being in the camp too. We were doing a lot of things there. We were going for a walk, speaking, drawing pictures, climbing on ropes, playing football. Also dancing. And when is the next summer camp?



Hana

I was at a camp and I was riding a pony! We were playing football and drawing... fir trees for example. We tried to jump on these... swings... To model with plasticine.

Dantes



THE VOLUNTEERS SPEAK ABOUT THE CAMP

Elza Mikhail

It's very nice that we organized this summer camp. I liked very much that the children were spending time there, how everything was organized, the volunteers were very helpful to children. I liked that the children were doing sport, playing, writing, drawing during the camp. Everything that they were doing there was very good for them. All these activities are very useful for them for the school time later. They were reading, writing, running, playing football, different games. Most of all I liked that they were doing climbing exercises on ropes, it's both serious and useful for children. It was very good that they had to speak Russian much there. It's very useful for them to understand what they are writing, reading. The main thing that the children liked everything, that they are happy and are looking forward to the next summer camp.



Samik Samikov

I liked very much working with Roma children during the summer camp. I made friends with other volunteers, especially with Khariton and Suleiman and I am very glad that now I have many new friends among Roma children. It was quite easy for me to understand and make friends with Roma children because I'm a migrant and often find myself as a 'stranger' among others. People often are unfriendly to us and sometimes even aggressive.

The first week in the camp turned out to be not so hard: the children were very tidy, well-mannered and gentle, and Roma women helped us to cope with them. Other visitors of the bison farm really admired them — so polite and well-behaved they were, some people even thought they were foreign tourists.

When we were doing horse riding with them, they at first were afraid, but later they could overcome their fear and were very proud of themselves, actually. The children liked very



much 'Red Indians' game — Lena, Khariton and I were playing shamans and they were dancing around the fire. And, indeed, it was not just a game: they painted bright Indian clothes and compared them with Roma ones, learnt much about Indian traditions.

We also arranged educational classes for them in order to revise what they learnt at school. The children really did their best. But they said they liked the camp more than school and one boy even said, 'I don't care even if the school burns down. We would like to study here!'

I was at the very Roma settlement too. I understood immediately that Roma-Kotlyary like working, can earn money, can be entrepreneurs. I could notice that Roma parents are quite democratic to their children, they don't beat them even when they are naughty. Also I was very proud that they were playing 'Khariton and Samik' game, calling themselves our names. I was even invited to a wedding — it was very cheerful but too loud.

Suleiman Yanopol

This year I was quite happy to work as a volunteer at the summer camp which was organized by ADC 'Memorial'. I was very surprised how much attention was paid to our Roma children. Location of the camp was very good too — the children could see real bison for the first time, frankly speaking and me too... I was very impressed by the organisers of the camp and other volunteers.

I think it was very useful that apart from entertaining program there was an educational program as well: the children were taught to draw, write, count, play different games, ride horses and so on. Unfortunately their level is very low, I could see it with my own eyes: children at the age of 10-12 can't even read let alone write. I noticed that it was hard to study for all of them. Difficulties for 7-9 year old children were caused by low level of the Russian language, but 10-12 year old children could understand Russian well. What was wrong for them? I think it was a psychological thing. I had to translate teachers' tasks from Russian into Roma language as elder children, though they understood Russian well, couldn't get the idea clearly. But after my translation they could catch the point quite quickly. Analysing this situation I came to conclusion that 10-12 children perceived a teacher as a 'stranger', and difficulties in understanding were caused by this fact. That's why Roma volunteers were very helpful for educational process.



Photo by Lena Kovach



EVERYDAY LIFE IN A SUMMER CAMP IN A ROMA SCHOOL IN TULSKAYA REGION

In Tulsкая region in a Roma settlement there is a state primary school where Roma children study with great pleasure. A small group of teachers works very enthusiastically with children: they make up new approaches which encourage children's development, different contests, quizzes, sport competition, excursions.

In June 2012 a summer camp on the territory of the school was organized. Children liked everything there: daily routine, which was very similar to study process, and school discipline. Of course they liked also different creative tasks which the teachers had to make to interest the children. Of course they liked food in the school canteen. It's very important to remember that additional meal in summer period is a very serious support for children's health, especially because many of these children are from poor families.

There were also historical tours to Tula-city but unfortunately financing was low and many events couldn't be realized. What could we do especially when the weather was rainy? Teachers'



Photo by Lena Kovach

enthusiasm helped to overcome all difficulties. A summer school-camp became a part of a big Roma 'family'. That's why it was a home-like atmosphere at school during this summer camp. The children felt very comfortable at school. Their mothers often visited the school too as they had a lot of question to teachers about their children.

A bus excursion to Yasnaya Polyana was really a big event for all participants of the camp as for many people Tula-city is associated with the name of the writer Leo Tolstoy who lived in Yasnaya Polyana.

All the year round a lot of tourists visit the museum-mansion where the famous Russian writer lived. So it was



Photo by Lena Kovach

very important to organize an excursion to Yasnaya Polyana for Roma children. They liked everything there: atmosphere on the territory of the mansion, historical objects and so on. The children were very attentive and followed the guide's stories with a great interest.

Several weeks in a summer camp in Plekhanovskaya primary school passed. And usual everyday life in summer Roma settlement went on. And now again Roma children's life is more similar to their parents' life, which has a lot of issues and other things.

It would be better if summer period more often could be happy for Roma children in Tula, Peri, Chudovo and everywhere in Roma settlements. For children who start adult life very early, it's very important to get as much good impressions from their childhood as possible.

During the summer camp a round-table discussion about problems of additional education for Roma children took place in Plekhanovskaya school. In view of the Roma settlement where the school is situated, all activities for children are very in-demand because it's like a breath of fresh air for children who can't afford commercial extra curriculum activities. The director of ADC 'Memorial' Olga Abramenko told about ways of overcoming discrimination of Roma children in schools of the Russian Federation. Kirill Kozhanov developed the topic giving



Photo by Lena Kovach

examples of situations in schools in Leningradskaya and Novgorodskaya regions. The psychologist Ilya Berdishev gave a brief lecture about contemporary diagnostics and help in crisis situations for schoolchildren. The famous local specialist in museum pedagogics Gennady Oparin told about possibilities to learn more about historical and literature heritage of Leo Tolstoy. The teachers of Plekhanov school told how they followed the program of additional education in the summer camp, and

all participants of the discussion could watch two teams of children playing ecological contest. 'Camomiles' team and 'Bell-flowers' team answered difficult questions showing good achievements in nature study.

Ilya BERDISHEV

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ROMA STUDENTS IN MOLDOVA



At the end of August 2012 an annual international conference of Roma students, who are participating in the program of Roma educational fund on law and humanitarian sciences, took place in Moldova. According to the rules of the program, participants had to be higher education students from Russia, Moldova and Ukraine. This year, there were 14 students-representatives from Russia: from Smolensk, Pskov, Perm and Saint-Petersburg.

For two days the students were working hard in groups and individually, studying current human rights problems, ways of defense of human rights, special aspects of cases of Roma discrimination and human rights violations on base of incitement of race hatred.

During a private audience film display, only for participants of the conference, a documentary about crimes against Roma people for last several years was shown. The students could get not only theoretical knowledge. A master-class on ability to perform a speech, how to make the audience be interested in your topic, how psychologically to prepare yourself to speech performance, addressed all students. And for those who wanted to participate in the conference but couldn't, ADC 'Memorial' published presentations and photos on the website in section 'Scholarships'.

Please, remember that in order to be a participant of the program of Roma education fund it's enough to be a student of a higher education institution or a secondary specialized school on base of a higher institution (i.e. after a specialized school a student studies at a higher institution on a short program). All necessary information on application terms for scholarship contest, demands of the contest, additional possibilities for participants of the program you can find on the website of ADC 'Memorial' in 'Scholarship' section and on the website of Roma education fund in section of scholarships for law and humanitarian sciences (LHP) <http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/how-apply-scholarship-russian>.

GOOD LUCK TO EVERYBODY
and
ENJOY YOUR
ACADEMIC YEAR!

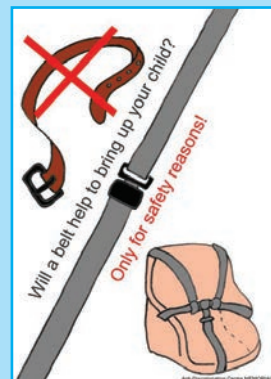
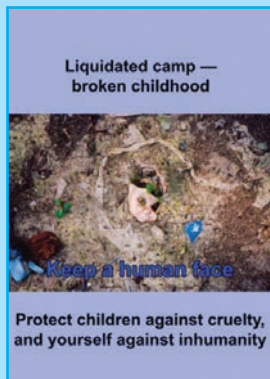


If you have any questions about higher educations for Roma people or you have secondary school-children who are thinking of further education in your family, don't be shy to ask the curator of the program in Russia any questions you have via email: chistova@memorial.spb.ru.

This scholarship can help you to get a profession, learn foreign language, see the world and make friends from other parts of Russia and abroad.

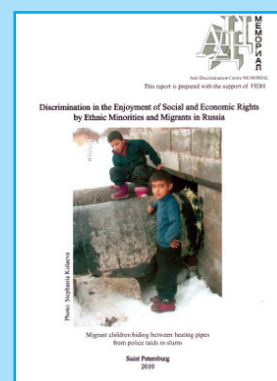
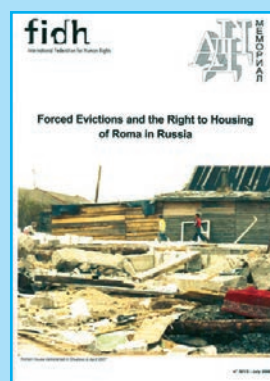
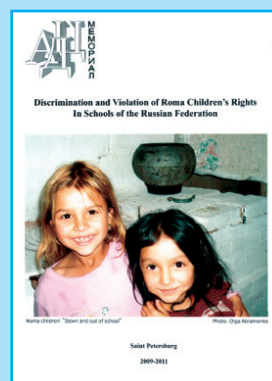
Tatiana CHISTOVA

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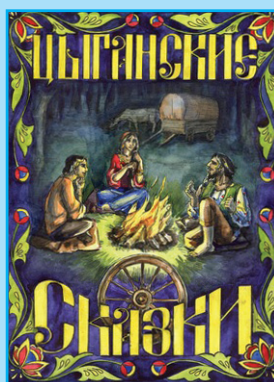
ALL POSTERS HAVE ENGLISH/RUSSIAN VARIANTS

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS



ALL REPORTS HAVE ENGLISH/RUSSIAN VERSIONS AND ARE AVAILABLE
ON OUR WEBSITE www.adcmemorial.org

MANUALS FOR SCHOOLS



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