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**THE VOICE OF RUSSIA**  
**World Orphans Day**

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Armed conflicts, calamities and AIDS leave millions of children orphaned or displaced, especially in the developing countries. However, the issue is common to all countries including the richest. Orphanages, boarding schools or social dwellings are the home for 180 thousand orphans in Russia. Understandably, new families where these children are loved like their own are the best for them. Consequently, the government is actively supporting foster families or non-custodial families. Lately, attention has been drawn to the adoption of Russian children by foreigners. However, experience shows that this good undertaking has sometimes ended with tragedies, and children are abused in their new families.

Russia and the U.S., the citizens of which adopt the largest number of orphans from the Russian Federation, are planning to sign an international agreement on adoption. This will pave the way for Russia to render help to children who are facing a difficult situation. At present, social services have no opportunity to follow up the fate of these children although they remain to be Russian citizens until 18 years of age. Under an agreement, that the adoption agency should compulsorily present annual reports about the life of children, is not being honored.

In Russia, the future foster families should compulsorily attend seminars where experts help them to understand the entire responsibility they have to bear for a child and cope with problems of its education. However, not all orphans acquire new families. Meanwhile, volunteers do their best to provide a full-fledged life for orphans. These people are united by a charitable foundation "Zdes I Seichas" or "The Stars Foundation", says its director, Tatyana Tulchinskaya.

"The most effective way is to be involved in this creatively," says Tatyana Tulchinskaya. "We buy goods and distribute them among children. Moreover, we are involved in the implementation of social programmes of adaptation, additional education, choosing a profession for school leavers, psychological rehabilitation, conducting a series of trainings and giving additional skills," Tatyana Tulchinskaya said. Training orphans leaving school to lead an independent life is one of the most difficult and important tasks. In this case, it's impossible to carry out this task without the assistance of public organizations and volunteers, says Tatyana Tulchinskaya, the director of the charitable foundation "Zdes I Seichas", out of one thousand volunteer organizations that help orphans and displaced children.