

CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT (UK)

ПОДДЕРЖКА ДЕТЯМ БЕЛАРУСИ

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Spring Newsletter 2026

40 Years Since the Chernobyl Disaster



April 26th is commemorated every year as the International Day of Remembrance of the Chernobyl Disaster.

The Chernobyl Nuclear Power plant is in Ukraine but only just over the border. The wind was blowing northwards when the accident occurred and the Gomel Region in the south of Belarus got the heaviest of the fallout which spread across Europe and beyond.

800,000 'liquidators' were involved in putting out the fires after the explosion, building the sarcophagus to cover the reactor and attempting to clean up the nearby towns and villages. The clean-up proved impossible and 350,000 people were evacuated, many of them believing that they would soon go back to their homes.



They were never allowed to return and eventually 500,000 people were evacuated and many of their villages were buried. Our Executive Director Linda Walker visited the exclusion zone around the plant 30 years ago, but it will remain contaminated for decades to come.

Thyroid cancers in children started to appear just three years after the accident, with children in Gomel being up to 100 times more likely to develop the disease than they were before the disaster. There was also a significant rise in brain tumours and smaller rises in many other childhood cancers.

Breast cancer increased in women and the liquidators were the hardest hit with over 100,000 dying in the first 20 years from heart disease, strokes or cancer and many more suffering from multiple diseases.



As time went on, a second generation began to suffer the effects of the fallout. Children were born with genetic disorders or developed brain cancer or leukaemia in their first year of life.

We continue to work with Minsk based cancer charity '**Children in Trouble**' as they provide support for children and families during their treatment.

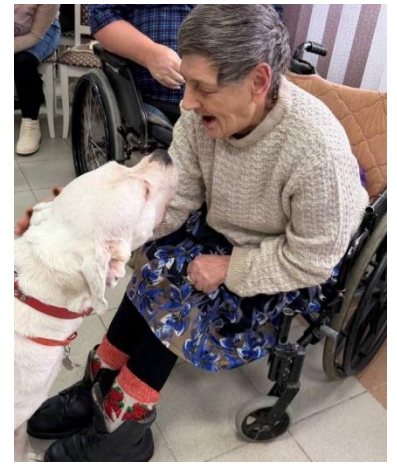


Supporting Institutions in Gomel Region



Sveta Lappo, who lived for ten years at our Family Home 2000, appears regularly on Gomel TV to promote her animal rescue campaigns. She and her volunteers regularly visit boarding homes to organise concerts and parties, and they often take dogs with them who provide a lot of joy to the residents.

We have worked at the boarding homes at **Zhuravichi, Vikov and Rechitsa** for many years



and we continue to fund an extra staff member at each of them. This is Tatiana at Vikov who makes sure that the residents get some extra attention and one to one time and helps them with crafts and activities.

Inna (below) is loved by all at Zhuravichi and the young people at Rechitsa enjoy the outings organised for them by Irina.



'Rodni Kut' Our Family Home in Rogachev

Stas, Anya and Anton continue to live happily at Rodni Kuit with Papa Sergei and their carers.

Anya dreams about the day she will be able to come to the UK again to stay with her family in Devon, who she visited twice a year for seventeen years. They remain in regular contact with her and send presents for Anya and the boys.





Thank You FoCC!

When Friends of Chernobyl Children (Herts & Cambs) had to close recently, because of the impossibility of bringing children to the UK for recuperative holidays, they kindly entrusted us with their remaining funds.



We are using part of this money to provide sanatorium holidays this summer for young people with disabilities living in Gomel Region, and for children in remission from cancer.

Children visiting the FoCC group a few years ago

Every summer between 1995 and 2019 we brought children to the UK for a four week holiday. All the children had a great time and went home happier and healthier, but it was perhaps the teenagers who came to our groups in Endon & Stoke and Solihull who got the most from the holiday. They were so appreciative of the love and effort which went into organising their holiday, and it gave them a great psychological boost on top of the benefits to their immune system.



We worked with Children's Cancer charity '**Children in Trouble**' to find children who had finished their treatment and were well enough to come for a holiday.

We are glad that we can at least help CiT to organise a holiday at a Sanatorium or Holiday Camp in a beautiful and clean part of Belarus for some of the children who have recently finished their treatment.

These are the teenagers whose holiday At Nadezhda Sanatorium we helped to fund last year.



Baby Home Project

The UNICEF-funded project which is being carried out by our partners in Gomel, 'Supporting Children Together' is making great progress. Eight babies and young children have been moved into foster families, and are being provided with support in the community.



Natasha at Zhuravichi

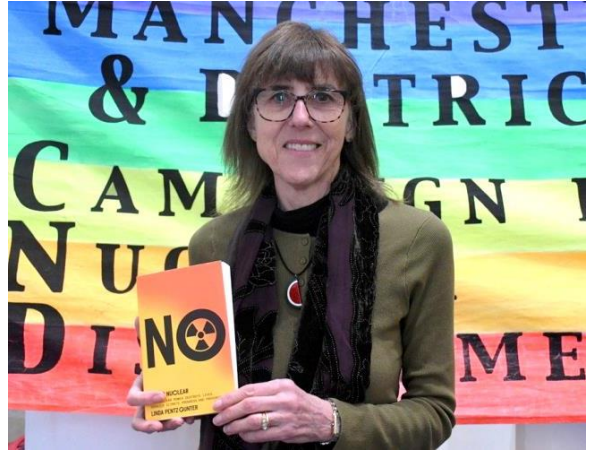
Social workers are being employed in five districts of Gomel Region to work with families who have had their babies taken away, so they can improve their situation and get their children back. Project staff are working very closely with social protection centres and children's polyclinics, and Gomel TV have been supporting the initiative.

This is the fourth project which Natasha and her team have carried out with UNICEF support, and it is likely that there will be a further initiative next year, aimed at finding and training more families to become foster parents.

No to Nuclear

Why Nuclear Power Destroys Lives, Derails Climate Progress and Provokes War By Linda Pentz Gunter

Now available to order from Pluto Press. The book covers a wide array of reasons to reject nuclear power, focusing on the human rights and ecological impacts, including the effects of Chernobyl and other disasters, while also covering many other problems including cost, time, safety, waste, and the link to nuclear weapons. When ordering, click the currency symbol in the scroll down menu to select pounds and enter NUCLEAR30 at checkout to receive 30% off.



Would you like to make a donation to Commemorate the 40th Anniversary?

- Send me a ribbon badge to wear in memory of victims and survivors of the disaster £3
- Gift for a Hospice family £20
- Gift for a Child at the Cancer Hospital £10
- A Sanatorium Holiday for a young disabled person £100
- I would like to make a donation to CCP I enclose £.....
- I am a Tax Payer. Please Claim Gift Aid Please send me a Standing Order Form



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Visit our website: www.chernobyl-children.org.uk Secure Donations can be made online

Thank you so much to Everyone who continues to support our work in Belarus

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