



# KI Reporter

*"Together we can make a difference for a better tomorrow"*

First Quarter 2003

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## *More Sponsors Make Expansion Possible*

The revolution in Romania occurred over 13 years ago. Shortly afterwards the West was allowed its first glimpses into Romanian orphanages. Images of countless children crammed into understaffed, underequipped, and poorly maintained government-run institutions stunned viewers. Children were seen rocking themselves; some were not able to speak, walk, or function normally. Ceausescu's bitter legacy was finally unearthed. This was the Romania of 1989. A Westerner would assume that after the media exposed the horrid conditions of those orphanages, and after the significant emphasis on international adoptions, the orphan "epidemic" should be nearly a thing of the past. This can't be farther from the truth. More than a decade has passed since Ceausescu's population growth policies, yet thousands of children remain in state institutions.



**Infants, abandoned by their parents, live sad lives in government orphanages.**

One segment of the Romanian society that has reached into and is making a difference in this seemingly hopeless situation of abandoned children is the local Christian church. Evangelical churches have taken seriously God's command to care for orphans by starting small, Christian orphanages where children are loved, cared for, given a good home, an education, and a Christian upbringing. One of these Christian orphanages, the Bethesda Home, was the springboard that brought Kidstown International into existence. Pledging to help the Bethesda Home, Kidstown began providing resources desperately needed for the children. As support for Kidstown grew, it became clear that additional orphanages could be helped. Now, seven years later, 150 children (living in six orphanages) are supported through Kidstown's sponsorship program. It is amazing to see what God has done!

During recent presentations in churches and at a music festival about Romania's orphan situation, many people embraced the vision of caring for orphans and joined Kidstown's team. This is exciting because more children now have sponsors and because it makes it possible for Kidstown to begin actively searching for a seventh orphanage to help!



**The Berge Family, a Gospel Bluegrass band, helped bring many people to hear about Romanian orphans.**

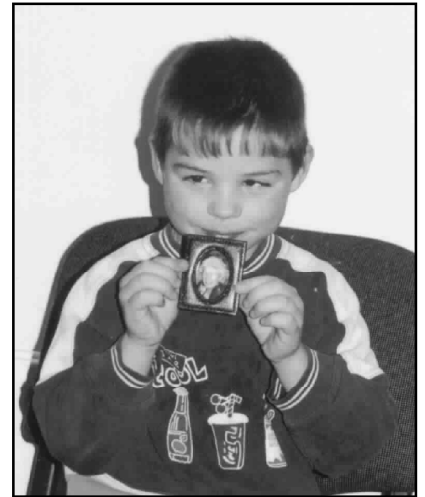
### **KIDSTOWN International**

Our organization is committed to supporting orphans in Romania. Our goal is to receive these children in love, provide for their daily needs, encourage their hopes for the future, and let each child know that God loves them. Your contribution makes you a partner in caring for these needy children, supplying resources to equip them to meet life's challenges.

# Someone Cares

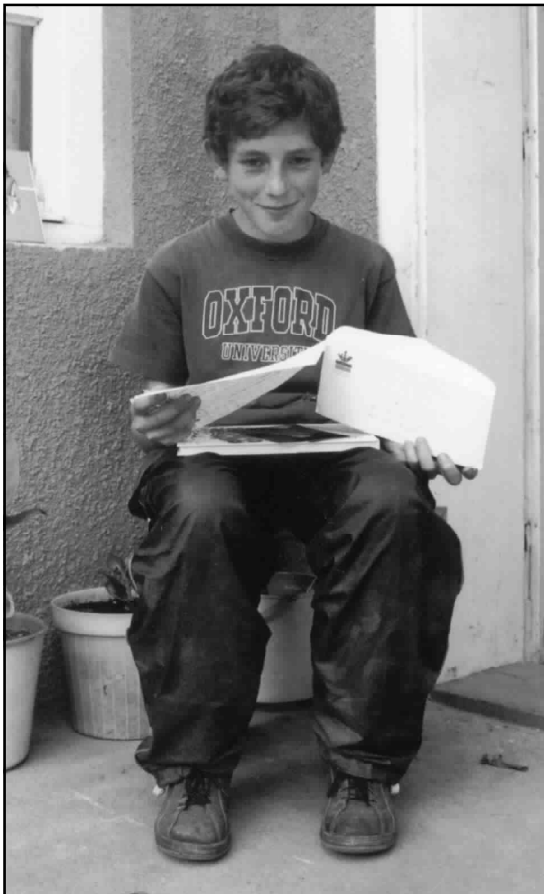
We want to send our heartfelt thanks to all sponsors who have helped children in Romania. We trust that both sponsors and children will continue to be blessed by this experience. Perhaps you have received correspondence from your child in the last year. We would like to encourage you to write back to your child when you have an opportunity. All children need to know they are loved, but for the orphan child the need for love is especially deep. The fact that they have been abandoned by their parents sets them on life's journey with a strike against them. Instead of going through childhood well-balanced emotionally and psychologically, many of these children suffer deeply from feelings of worthlessness. In their young minds, many perceive themselves as unlovable outcasts.

Kidstown's sponsorship program is made up of three parts: financial, spiritual, and emotional. First of all, finances that sponsors give help to provide physical needs such as food, clothing, shelter, etc., for the children. Secondly, prayers that sponsors offer up for their children help in the children's spiritual growth. The third aspect of the sponsorship program, the emotional aspect, is also very important, and one through which sponsors can profoundly impact their children. This can be accomplished through the sending of letters, cards, pictures, and small gifts. When orphans receive such items from their sponsors, they begin to question their false self-image. They begin to ask themselves questions such as "Why does this person care about me?" "My mom and dad didn't care about me, but this person does. Why?" The fact that these questions are being asked is an indicator that healing is taking place in the emotional lives of the children. They begin to believe, although perhaps hesitantly at first, that perhaps they are valuable; that perhaps they do have worth; that maybe someone does love them. As letters and gifts continue to arrive over time, this hesitation disappears, and the



**Orphans treasure small items like photographs.**

children become sure of their sponsor's love. Another key point is that when children live in an orphanage the sense of individuality is often times lost. The children just become one of many. So when sponsors write specifically to their children, asking specific questions, remembering their birthdays, etc., the individuality of the children comes into focus. The children cherish their sponsors, claiming them as their own. The following letter, from a boy to his sponsor, demonstrates the impact a sponsor can have:



**Vasile Ples, from the Casa Dorca orphanage, holds a letter he received from his sponsor.**

*How are you, brother? How are you in America? I hope you are well and in good health. I was a little sick with a cold, but now I'm better. What do you do in your spare time? In my spare time I like to listen to music, to play on the computer with my best friend from school, and to play soccer. I'm doing well in school. Most of the time I spend in school. Do you have snow in America where you live? We had a lot of snow here this winter. Thank you for all that you are doing for me, and I want to tell you that I love you very much. I consider you like my older brother who teaches me very good things. I read every day in the Bible before going to school and I pray for myself and for my sister and especially for you. Thank you for all that you do for me and I know someday God will reward you for it.*

*Love,  
your brother*

# Casa Otniel Spotlight

In a country devastated by communism, one in which the plight of the orphan seems almost hopeless, light shines in the form of Christians who are faithfully endeavoring to look after some abandoned children. Progress may be slow, but it is constant. Take a brief glimpse into the world of Casa Otniel, a small Christian orphanage supported by Kidstown.

*About the orphanage:* "A group of representatives of the British Government has been visiting Romania and one of the "sights" of their visit was our orphanage. It was a great privilege for us to be on the list of the official state visits, but to be sincere, a big source of stress too. We worked hard to make everything look perfect. At the end of the day, they congratulated Casa Otniel, and indirectly you (Kidstown sponsors) who have sponsored this social project. The Romanian Government representative from Bucharest who accompanied this visit was very appreciative for the way we presented ourselves and for all we have done so far in Casa Otniel."

*About the children's spiritual development:* "The children in our institution (Casa Otniel) are declared Orthodox, Catholic, or Evangelical. So all we can do for them as a religiously diverse group is to furnish their souls with common religious values, that is, the Word of God and to bring them up in love and attachment to His Name."

*About the children's emotional development:* "All the children who can already speak go to the state (public) kindergarten in the village everyday, except for the week-ends. Then the child psychologist takes groups of three to four children with whom she can work for periods of two to three hours. The other children remain with the other child psychologist and spend time in leisure activities. In the evening the psychologist works through a Bible program with all the children. The psychological work is designed according to a topical plan and according to the disabilities and emotional/psychological problems of the children."



**Adrian Stan explains a Bible story to Cosmin.**

The preceding was reported by Adrian Stan, founder of the Casa Otniel orphanage.

## Thank you from Romania

We gladly pass on the following encouraging message to all who have helped Kidstown through sponsoring a child, donations of finances and/or time, and prayer:

*Thank you very, very much for the funds which you wired again to us! I'm very amazed at how God helps you to raise so much money for us... We feel so small and weak before so much kindness from our Lord and how he works for our children through you. We never, ever can repay you but at the least we try to pray for you every day that God will guide and protect you every day and that he will bless very, very much your organization.*

By Florica Iuga, director of the Casa Sperantei orphanage.

## KIDSTOWN International Reply Card

**YES! I/we can sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ KI child(ren) at \$35 per month.**

My one-time gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the ministry of Kidstown.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly sponsorship to be paid by:  check  credit card

Credit card no. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature for credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Please have the sponsorship charge appear:  monthly (\$35)  quarterly (\$105)

semi-annually (\$210)  annually (\$420)