

Global Day of Parents 2016 celebrated by UPF-Russia in Novosibirsk and Ryazan

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Moscow, Russia -- Global Day of Parents 2016 was celebrated by UPF in two Russian cities: Novosibirsk in Siberia and Ryazan in European Russia.

Novosibirsk

In support of the United Nations initiative, on June 1 parents gathered for the annual celebration of the Global Day of Parents. Public figures who already have grandchildren and great-grandchildren discussed the idea of supporting young parents and related their personal experiences in raising children. Short films about parental love and sustainable development were shown.

The performing group *Mnogaya Leta* (Long Life!) opened the meeting with several folk songs about family life.

Dmitry Officerov, secretary general of UPF's Siberian chapter, spoke about the history and the purpose of Global Day of Parents. Here are the main points of his speech:

"In every culture, at all times, the family has acted as the most sustainable human institution. The family is the starting point of life; it protects and teaches love. The family begins with the union of husband and wife, who then become parents. ...

"The strongest human vows are relationships between a parent and a child. Loyalty to the family has always been considered a core value. Sadly the loyalty, this universal value recognized for centuries, is nowadays rare as never before. While our nation is struggling with the effects of family breakdown, violence among young people, and a number of other pressing problems, we increasingly hear voices calling for a review of priorities and fundamental values. ...

"Too often we are overcome by worries interfering with our parental responsibilities. But what could be more important than raising children? Unfortunately, the desire for self-realization and self-satisfaction has become a popular trend in modern culture. This trend is contrary to the very essence of parenthood, which is rooted in unconditional love. Global Day of Parents offers a chance to emphasize once again that education of children is the main vocation of parents. This day is not just a holiday; it encourages us to think about what is really important for our society, and perpetuates a positive tradition with emphasis on the important role of parents in the upbringing and development of children, the efforts that require investment of both effort and means, as well as care and commitment."

Mr. Officerov proposed that a Global Day of Parents Council be established with the participation of parents, community leaders, and government officials focused on promoting Global Day of Parents. This

council could work as follows:

- Recognize the best parents at annual events;
- Create and implement educational programs on the role of parents, parental duties and responsibilities;
- Establish and implement educational programs for young people to strengthen families, encourage marital loyalty, and promote sexual purity before marriage;
- Encourage the participation of parents in the activities of different authorities, public entities and religious organizations.

Nadezhda Latrygina, president of the Women's Initiative creative association, suggested a motto for the state family policy: "Russia without orphanages and nursing homes." She called upon Siberians to promote the following points in the society:

- Recognize marriage as the fundamental form of the family living order;
- Recognize maternal and paternal labor as the most important profession of women and men;
- Increase state support for families, especially large families, as a guarantee of the country's security and for continuity of the human race.
- Recognize the family of the Russian Federation to be a legal entity. Recognize the work of a family, or that of a parent, in giving birth and educating children up to coming of age, as socially important, necessary, and paid work; enter needed amendments and additions into the Labor and Family Code and the Employment Act, taking into account all forms of parental labor, including birth and raising children, caring for elderly parents, in the calculation of pensions and honorary titles;
- Recognize the family to be a subject of legal relations with the state, and give the family the rights to private property, land, housing, and family capital.
- Promote in the society the priority of a human being, his family, physical and mental health through: a) preferential housing loans—for the first child to write off 30 percent, at the birth of a second to write off 60 percent, for the third to write off 100 percent of the housing loan; b) granting land to families who wish to possess it as family property; c) pay to fathers half of maternity leave allowance for the child care.
- Establish Father's Day in the Russian Federation to be celebrated annually on the first Sunday of December.

Rimma P. Zvereva, president of the Siberian Academy of Traditional Folk Culture and a professor at the International Slavic Academy, presented historical facts about the birthrate in Russia: "The family is the academy of life. In earlier times, there were five to nine, or more, children in the families, in which they learned unity and often embraced each other. These days, families usually have only one or two children, and these children live in disunity. In this regard, the state raises the question of how people can achieve unity, if they have not learned it in the family?"

Professor Zvereva advised young parents: "First of all, teach your child to enjoy, then teach them other things! Remember that the taste of your mother's soup is the best!" The smell of traditional food activates the body's immune system, she said. Many people have not been able to utilize this program of immune defenses, which protected previous generations. The family is a model of the universe, the father being the sun, the mother being the earth, and the children – the stars; no wonder that parents were called "sovereign Mother" and "sovereign Father."

After watching the short films on parental love, the participants recalled the role of their parents in their own lives. "In our family we were nine children, and the parents never punished us physically. We all grew up, and none of us did violate the law," said Valentina Y. Kotegova, author of an artistic and documentary film *Miracle of the Vyatka Wedding*.

The meeting was followed by a tea party and the singing of songs.

Ryazan

A celebration was held at Municipal Kindergarten No. 25 by volunteers of UPF and kindergarten teachers on Monday, May 30, 2016. The event was meant to observe not only the UN-designated Global Day of Parents but also the internationally celebrated Children's Day—both of which occur on June 1.



Thanks to the storybook character Karlsson, the children with their parents, teachers, and guests were transported to the Land of Childhood, where they visited the City of Goodness, City of Minstrels, Sports City, City of Music, City of Artists, City of Poets, and City of Fairy Tales. Together with adults who were costumed as storybook characters, the children and adults recited poetry, solved riddles, drew pictures, sang songs, played musical instruments, participated in contests and relay races, and learned to help each other and perform good deeds. The sunny weather in the Land of Childhood inspired a wonderful atmosphere!

Next the participants of the festival were agreeably surprised when a “Professor Cryogen” demonstrated some scientific experiments with liquid nitrogen. In front of all the children and adults, the professor created fog and performed experiments with balloons.

To end the celebration, there was the sound of gunfire and many colored balloons flew up into the sky. Parents and children thanked the organizers for the wonderful celebration.

