

**The Benham Family
4800 Appletree Court
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Dear friends and family,

We, the Benham Family, are writing on behalf of a boy named **Kostya** whom we had the privilege of sharing our home with this summer. Kostya is a fourteen-year-old orphan living in a remote area of Russia in an orphanage for the physically disabled. He was born on March 28, 1989 to a mother that loved him very much and, in the early years of this life, he received all of the things that a loving mother so naturally gives. However, his world of security was shattered at six years old when his mother died and, for the next three years, he lived with his alcoholic, neglectful father. Living in a flat which is a Russian apartment, with the train running close to his home, a favorite pastime of the boys was jumping the train for a ride. A day like many others changed his life forever. As he hopped the train, his hands slipped and he fell on the track, severing both legs far above the knee. He would never run through the neighborhood again with his friends.

At this point, not only did he lose his legs, but he lost his father and home as well. After many months in the hospital during which time his father abandoned him, he was placed in the orphanage for physically disabled orphans. There he has lived for the past five years. He can only stay a couple more years and at that point he will be required to leave the orphanage. His future is bleak with no one to care for him. In present day Russia, it will be virtually impossible for him to become a self-sufficient man.

Now for a ray of hope – Project Hope. In October 2002, Dean Hesselgrave who is an adoptive father and professional prosthetist visited the Nizhniy Lomov Orphanage outside of Penza, Russia. Volunteering his time and expertise, he examined many children suffering from limb-related disabilities. Inspired by the children, Project Hope was born, whose vision is to give hope to these children by providing prosthetics to increase their function and mobility. By summer 2003, the first group of four children arrived in America. Kostya was one of these and we participated by being a host family for him. In four short weeks, he received his new legs, and with sheer determination and courage, is learning to use them.

Though saying goodbye to Kostya was the hardest thing our family has done, we knew without a doubt that God brought Kostya to us and that He would use Kostya in a mighty way. He has taught our family what true gratitude looks like. It is amazing how our daily experiences became so much richer when seeing them through Kostya's eyes. Through tears and hugs we knew that Kostya had to return to his orphanage and, upon his return, he could now offer his friends, the other orphans, a ray of hope for their lives. We cried, embraced and promised him "dos vadanya" which means in Russian "until we meet again".

While we thought our family was complete and this venture was a temporary measure, God had other plans. During this time, Kostya earned the love and respect of our entire family and we all rallied around him. It seems only natural that Kostya should become a member of the Benham family, so we have begun the process of adopting him.

So now the Benham family is working with determination to bring Kostya home. To do this, we need your help and support. Specifically we are asking for many miracles and abundant prayers.

- ❖ Prayers that this adoption can proceed smoothly with Nizhniy Lomov Orphanage. This orphanage has never had a child to be adopted from it. Hopefully Kostya will pave the road for those he's leaving behind.
- ❖ Prayers that the Russian Ministry of Health will approve and expedite the difficult adoption process.
- ❖ Prayers that Kostya and the other three orphans along with the two orphanage workers that made the trip will return to Russia and share their knowledge of faith in Christ. Let them give hope to the helpless by knowing that through God all things are possible.
- ❖ Prayers that the funds will be provided to bring Kostya home.
- ❖ Prayers that frequent flyer or hotel points be donated for travel to Russia.
- ❖ Prayers that other orphans can benefit from Project Hope.

As for the Benham family, we are sure these miracles will fall into place. We have been blessed beyond belief with our four adopted treasures. Now we have the opportunity to extend this blessing to help one that is truly in need of a forever family.

With love and blessings,

The Benham Family

Dave, Kim, Jacob, Samuel, Rebekah, Micah, and Kostya

Tax-deductible gifts are appreciated.

Checks made payable to: IGAA (must be designated: Kostya Fund)
c/o Dave & Kim Benham
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