



MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

SUMMER CAMP

GIVE THE GIFT OF A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE.



BIBLE LESSONS



WARM BED



ADVENTURE



FOOD



FRIENDSHIP



At just 12 years old, Anatol is already the man of the house. If you looked at his calloused hands you would see the years of his hard work on the local farm and in a carpentry workshop next door. With his father imprisoned and every memory of him erased from the family home, Anatol felt the weight of responsibility to step up as a man before he was ever a child. He shared, **"I want to help Mum more because I see how hard she works for other people – only to buy us a piece of bread! She never says that she is tired, or that she is working too much, but I can just tell. I love my mum and sisters very much."**



Oxana, his mother, two sisters Marina (11) and Eugenia (9), and Anatol fight every day to survive. They work hard to scrape food together so they don't go hungry and desperately try to find a sense of normality in a world engulfed by poverty – life in their village is tough. Their one small room is barely furnished with the essentials, but it is the love and laughter shared between them that fills their home. Oxana's eyes alight with joy as she shares with the MWB Coordinator, her children's mischievous adventures – constantly choosing to see the joy in the hardest circumstances – you can clearly see her adoration for her children as she tirelessly works to create a better future for them. She said, **"These three wonderful children are my life, they are my treasure, all that I have on this earth! They are like beautiful flowers for me – two bright pink tulips and one big red rose that I love so much!"**



Last year, this struggling family were enrolled in Mission Without Borders Family Sponsorship program. The Coordinators in their community could see how eager Oxana was to work so her children would not face the same fate and difficulties that she found herself in. Through MWB's support, her dream could now be their future in just a few years' time. This program supports the family, giving them new opportunities and equipping them with the resources they need to break out of the poverty cycle - but there is nothing quite like the experience that each child has during their time at Summer Camp. So you could imagine the excitement that exploded through the Cernea household on the afternoon they found out that they would all be going to camp in the summer! As they jumped up and down a flood of questions came pouring out.

"Are we going to just eat, sleep, and have fun for entire days?" Marina said.

"Will we have a swimming pool there?" said Eugenia.

"I can't believe this is for real – a summer camp for us?" said Anatol. "Are we going to have ice cream there?"

Oxana joined in with her children's excitement, overjoyed that they had received such a special opportunity. She said, **"I am so grateful to MWB for giving my children the possibility to have fun with other children. I would never be able to send them to a summer camp myself. I am sure they will have a super time there!"**

For these three children, summer would have brought the same routine of working and cooking, very much aware of the struggle they were in. But now because of the generosity of MWB supporters, Anatol, Marina and Eugenia would for the first time experience a week of swimming, games, Bible lessons and delicious food.



Summer has arrived in Eastern Europe...

As Marina and Eugenia approached the campsite for the very first time their spirits illuminated with a child-like wonder and excitement – the moment they had so anxiously waited for was finally here. As soon as they arrived Eugenia instantly saw the swimming pool. Beside herself with excitement she impatiently asked “Can I go? Can I go, please?” Before long they were surrounded by happy noisy children, wearing colourful armbands, splashing in the pool, their loud laughter and excited shouts were the most beautiful sound. Both Marina and Eugenia refused to come out of the shower, soaking in the hot, rain-like feeling for the first time – at home all they had was a plastic basin filled with warm water. They giggled as they played and jumped with not a care in the world; they could hardly believe they could have so much fun, good food and relaxation without having to think about chores or finding food to cook their next meal.

However for their brother Anatol, his first experiences of camp were clouded by concern and responsibility for his mother still at home. He said, **“I wonder how she is doing there alone.”** Slowly he began to join in and started playing with the other children - the volunteers watched the weight of the world fall away and Anatol experienced what it was like to be a child for what would seem like the very first time. The heavy burden of providing for his family was replaced with excitement over winning a checkers game and the impact of chapel and learning about the God who loves him with a kind and fatherly heart, clearly moved him. There were so many seeds planted in their lives because MWB was able to create a safe and fun environment where their guards could be put down and the love of God could flow in.

This safe, loving space is where MWB gets the opportunity to truly stand in the gap between these children and their trauma - whispering words of value and importance to their broken little-hearts; it is here that profound healing comes. Not only this, Summer Camp is a gift to these children and sometimes the only glimpse they get into that innocent, joyful childhood that every mother hopes their child will have—for many of these children it is better than any Christmas or birthday gift, because here they receive warm food, friendship and wonderful adventures that will be cherished for a life-time.



Galina shares her experience...

"MWB's Summer Camp has changed many lives and one of them is mine. I met Jesus at camp and was moved by God's great love.

After the camp, Mr Nicholai, who was the MWB coordinator, invited me to church. I attended it week after week learning more about God and his love for me – I felt encouraged here and it inspired me to come back to Camp as a leader for a group of children, so, here I am.

Summer Camp is the most awaited and exciting time of the year. Children make new friends, find out about God and feel more special because all the attention is on them. Often their home is in poor condition and they do not get regular meals like they do here at camp. Maybe at home they have no one to share their secrets with, as they do with the leaders.

I believe that many children's hearts have been touched and the seed is planted here... and I'm sure one day the fruit will be seen. I was a volunteer – a leader to two groups of children, and I keep in touch with them and they ask me if I will be their leader next summer – we have an unbreakable bond because of Summer Camp.

Summer Camp is not just impacting the children but their families too because they will share everything about what happened at camp. It is a privilege to be here with these children and to share the experience of leading with my future husband Victor – he was also changed by his experience at MWB's Summer Camp some years ago."

Since meeting Jesus at camp, Galina not only spends her time giving back and volunteering as a camp leader, she has now also been enrolled in our Scholarship program, continually striving to fight for a better future.

Galina's experience shows us that Summer Camp isn't just about a holiday for these children – it is about breaking the cycle of poverty and creating a new cycle of real, sustainable change.

With your support MWB will be giving

4,000 children the
opportunity to experience
the joy and fun of
Summer Camp this year.



**"I met Jesus
at camp"**

Galina, Summer
Camp Volunteer



SEND A CHILD TO SUMMER CAMP

- ▲ \$35 = 1 day for 1 child
- ▲ \$105 = 1 day for 3 children
- ▲ \$245 = 1 week for 1 child

If you can't do it alone, why not encourage your Bible study or community group to get involved.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14



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