

Iconic Actor Michael Keaton and Singer Joan Baez Join New Initiative to Support Children Impacted by War in Ukraine

The Ukraine Children's Action Project will provide urgently needed mental-health and school support for children who have fled combat zones in Ukraine

NEW YORK, CA, UNITED STATES, June 28, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Ukraine Children's

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Joan Baez, singer, portrait artist, social activist and philanthropist

Action Project (UCAP) was launched today as a new initiative to support the critical needs of traumatized children. More than 5 million children have been displaced by Russia's devastating invasion of Ukraine.

UCAP, established with the Entertainment Industry Foundation, will focus on urgently needed mental health support for psychologically traumatized children. It will also fund intensive efforts to help ensure that all children who are fleeing the humanitarian crisis and on-going, devastating attacks are able to continue their education.

UCAP was founded by Dr. Irwin Redlener and Karen Redlener, leading public health advocates for children. Its

advisory committee includes well-known professionals in education, media, government and entertainment, including actor Michael Keaton and singer-songwriter and human-rights advocate Joan Baez.

UCAP is working with the cities of Lviv, Ukraine, and Warsaw, Poland and other local and international organizations on the ground to address the critical and growing needs of the Ukrainian children at high risk. The mayor of Warsaw is also a member of UCAP's Advisory Committee.

UCAP will be raising funds to hire Ukrainian-speaking mental health workers to counsel and support thousands of traumatized children living in Warsaw refugee shelters and with host families in Poland and western Ukraine.

It is also seeking to identify and help place Ukrainian-speaking teachers in Warsaw schools and

raising funds to support special intensive-service schools for vulnerable children in both cities.

In Lviv, UCAP will work with the mayor and his senior staff to support special facilities for traumatized children who may also need rehabilitation for war injuries.

Summer camps for children are needed in Lviv and Warsaw, as are health-screening programs to identify and treat medical conditions that can interfere with learning. These programs, developed by the Redleners in their years with the Children's Health Fund, which they founded with legendary singer/ song-writer Paul Simon, include extensive screening for and management of vision problems, psychological stress and hunger.

"These displaced and traumatized children urgently need psychological support, access to health care and, for virtually every school-age child, access to language-compatible education," said Irwin Redlener. "This is precisely the work and mission of the Ukraine Children's Action Project."

"The invasion of Ukraine is causing the largest forced migration of children and families in Europe since World War II," said Michael Keaton. "I have known Irwin and Karen for years and I am very aware of their dedication to humanitarian causes, especially those involving children. That's why I want to help them bring awareness to and do something for the millions of young people affected by this catastrophe."

"The stories coming out of Ukraine are heartbreaking. One displaced, abandoned, injured, psychologically and spiritually battered child is enough for our concern. In the ruins of Ukraine are thousands," said singer portrait artist, social activist and philanthropist Joan Baez. "Choosing wisely where we put our time and money to best support these children is essential. I can say with absolute certainty the Ukraine Children's Action Project is providing a powerful way to help."

Karen Redlener stated, "We are hopeful that the displaced children, for the most part, are getting needed food and emergency medical care. But now we need to pay attention to emotional support for highly traumatized children and make sure they are back in school as soon as possible. Sustained, untreated stress and trauma, as well as loss of academic momentum, can devastate a child's future."

In addition to Michael Keaton and Joan Baez, advisory committee members include:

- oHarold Koplewicz, MD founding president, the Child Mind Institute
- oRandi Weingarten, president, the American Federation of Teachers,
- oNicolle Wallace, anchor, MSNBC's Deadline White House
- oRafal Trzaskowski, Mayor of Warsaw, Poland
- oTerry Press, media consultant
- oJeffrey D. Sachs. PhD, University Professor at Columbia University, President of the UN, Sustainable Development Solutions Network

o Timothy Snyder, PhD, author, social commentator & professor, Yale University

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