

THE NEEDS AND ROLE OF PARAPROFESSIONALS (VOLUNTEERS) IN SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN



OLHA BAIDAROVA

scientific consultant and trainer of the
International Leadership and Development Center,
PhD in Psychology, Associate Professor at the
Department of Social Rehabilitation and Social Pedagogy,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Presented with the support of
A Family for Every Orphan



NGO "International Leadership and Development Center" ildc.org.ua



we have been working since

2007



we improve the professional competence of specialists in the field of child rights protection

developed

25



we support organizations and teams during the war
(training, supervision, psychological consultations)

training programs

conducted training for

26 913



we prevent emotional burnout among specialists in auxiliary professions

social workers, specialists, volunteers, who work in social sphere, managers and leaders

we have

30



we provide socio-psychological support to Ukrainians during the war
(support groups, psychological consultations)

experts, practitioners, trainers in our team

SITUATION BEFORE THE WAR



Deficitary and surplus approach
to volunteering

53,1% - helping people in need, orphans and
people with disabilities*



Law of Ukraine "About volunteer
activities" and amendments to it



Gradual professionalization of the
volunteer sector



Ways of organizing volunteering: formal
and informal, organized and
spontaneous, collective and individual



Volunteer registries: official
(National Social Service Agency,
State Tax Service) and unofficial

*Ministry of Youth and Sport of Ukraine (2021).
The condition of youth in Ukraine.
A representative sociological research.

CHALLENGES IN THE WARTIME



Migration of professionals and paraprofessionals



Significant number of new and inexperienced paraprofessionals



Decreased accessibility of family-oriented services from state and communal providers



Lack of recognition of paraprofessionals on a state level



Lack of competencies



Burnout (36% of charity sector workers have visible signs, while 35% are in the stage of its formation)*

*Zagoriy Foundation, Socioinform (2023).
Research "Professional burnout of non-profit
sector employees"

FORMS AND COMMON ROLES OF VOLUNTEERS IN WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN



Forms

- Public organizations - civil (children's, youth, sports, cultural and educational, women's, veterans') and religious (Christian)
- Individual volunteers (mentors, patrons, animators)



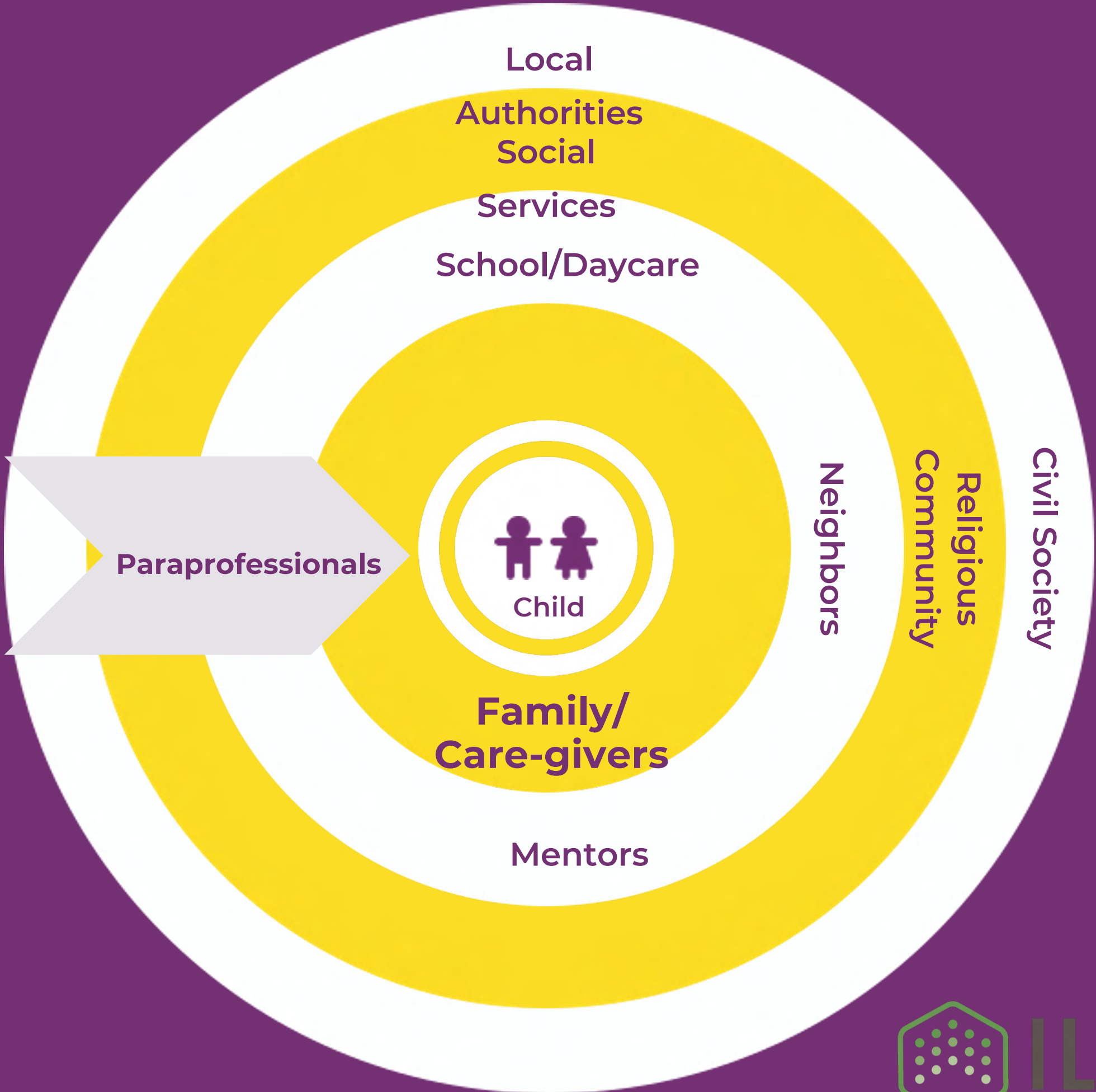
Directions of work*

- Evacuation and transportation of refugees and displaced persons
- Blood donation
- Search for children and their parents
- Seeking shelter
- Provision of clothing, food, medicine, basic necessities
- Informational support

*Kolesnyk O. Volunteer organizations currently working in Ukraine. Finance.ua. URL: [https://finance.ua/ua/saving/volonterskieorganizacii-in Ukraine](https://finance.ua/ua/saving/volonterskieorganizacii-in-Ukraine)

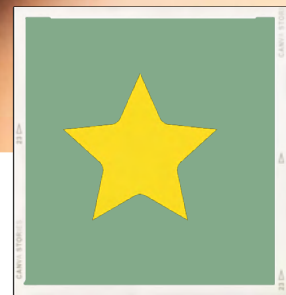


OUR VISION
THE ROLE OF
PARAPROFESSIONALS

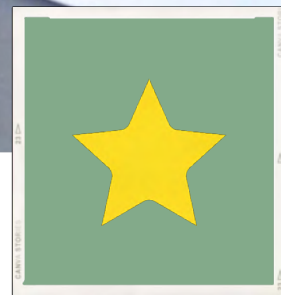


Solutions for the paraprofessionals

who work with families and children



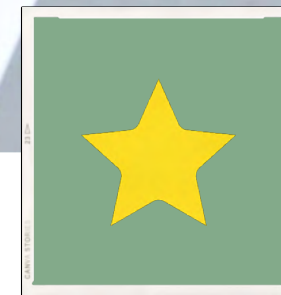
training



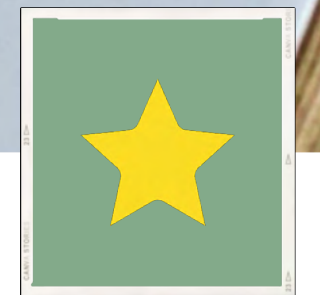
coordination



professional support
(supervision,
mentoring)



burnout prevention



creating opportunities for transitioning to paid positions

Key competencies of paraprofessionals working with families and children*

Core competencies in working with families and children

- Knowledge of the legal framework and ability to work effectively as part of the child protection system
- Ability to support families to ensure the protection and well-being of children in accordance with the strategies of the three-level model
- Ability to facilitate and maintain secure attachment between children and their families
- Ability to develop and implement child placement plan in a manner that minimizes stress, prevents trauma, and supports placement stability and permanency
- Ability to identify and respond to cases of child abuse

Approaches to the work

- Family-oriented
- Trauma-sensitive
- Resilient

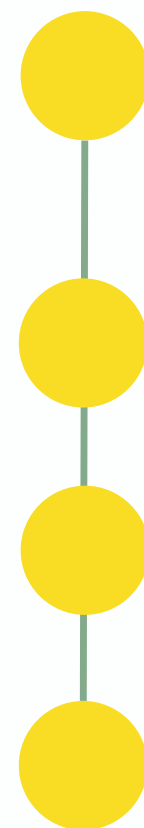
*Karagodina, O., Baidarova, O., Fedchenkov, V. & Pykalo, I. (2021). Needs in Social Workers' Training to Protect the Rights of Children. The New Educational Review, Vol. 63, No. 1. P. 38-48. DOI:

10.15804/tner.2021.63.1.03



Key competencies of paraprofessionals working with families and children

Competencies in working with families and children in the context of ongoing war



Understanding of the nature of political violence in the conditions of war, its consequences at the level of the individual, family, community and state, and the ability to use this knowledge to organize assistance

Ability to provide psychological first aid

Ability to deal with loss (of family, home, work, lifestyle)

Ability to build communication with veterans and their families, identify their needs and organize services accordingly

Training of

paraprofessionals



Developing professional competencies


Training programs

- "From risk to sustainability: work with families in crisis"
 - "Trauma, attachment, discipline: key aspects of assistance to orphans and children deprived of parental care"
 - "Organization and conducting of support groups"
-

Professional training and postgraduate qualification training in cooperation with educational institutions

- **Postgraduate qualification program** with NUKMA University "Fundamentals of social work"
 - **Educational program with the Academy of Labor, Social Relations and Tourism** "Social work with families in crisis"
-


Why are paraprofessionals critically important?



As a result of the war, Ukrainian society faced numerous social problems: poverty, internal and external displacement of families, law labor market, economic challenges, war trauma, children returning from orphanages to their biological families, etc.



The local government has limited resources to do their role.



Paraprofessionals can become a game changer to address families' needs and support the state in family-based care efforts.

Key Points

Recognise the unique role of paraprofessionals in the work with families and children in the community

Create opportunities for the professionalisation of paraprofessionals to strengthen social work workforce

Strengthen paraprofessionals through coordination, training, prevention of burnout, etc

Systematic, accessible professional training to develop professional competences that meets their needs is a main condition to the effectiveness of para-professional workforce



ILDC

International Leadership & Development Center

