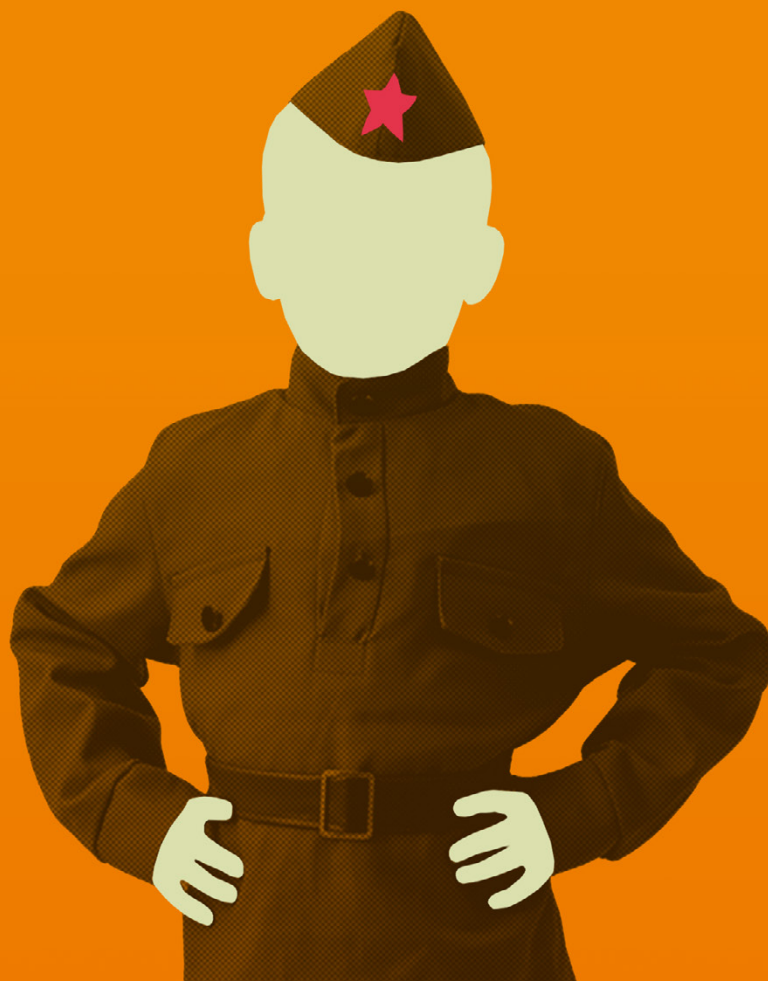


Monitoring report

"UNIVERSAL SOLDIER"

**OR EDUCATION AS A WEAPON OF RUSSIA
IN THE OCCUPIED SOUTH OF UKRAINE**



Kyiv, October 2022

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The Centre of Civic Education “Almenda” (CCE “Almenda”) is a nongovernmental organization registered in Yalta in 2011. Until 2014, the organization’s priority was an education in the field of human rights. In 2014, due to the occupation of Crimea, the organization was forced to move to Kyiv. Today, the organization’s priorities are to ensure the systematic collection of accurate, timely, verified data on brutal violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict.

The CCE “Almenda” is guided by the principles of objectivity, reliability and timeliness in the preparation of its monitoring reports.

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SUMMARY

In October, in the occupied territories, the Russian Federation used the system of formal and informal education to destroy the Ukrainian identity, promote support for the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and militarize children.

First-graders were enrolled in the cadet classes of the Ministry of Emergency Situations for the first time in occupied Crimea. Thus, 30 first-graders were accepted into the ranks of cadets of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation at School No. 60 in Sevastopol. Also, in October, 36 first-graders of Lyceum No. 3 named after Makarenko were ordained as cadets in Simferopol. The children took the oath and became pupils of the Main Directorate of the Investigative Committee. Such actions are aimed not only at the militarization of Ukrainian children as current, but also at creating motivation for children from the occupied territories to voluntarily join the armed forces of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation moved children from the territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions deep into the occupied territories and into the territory of the Russian Federation under the guise of recreation in health camps. In addition to the fact of displacement itself, the camp program is also aimed at forming Ukrainian children's patriotic feelings towards the Russian Federation.

These actions of Russia violate the following international norms:

- **Article 26** of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which establishes that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups;
- **Article 13** of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which also raises the issue of education;
- **Article 20** of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stipulates that any propaganda for war must be prohibited by law;

- **Article 29** of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which indicates that the children’s education should be aimed at preparing him for a conscious life in a free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of men and women and friendship between all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups, as well as persons from the indigenous population;
- **Articles 38, 39** of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which regulate the protection of children in conditions of war;
- **Article 50** of the Convention Relative to the Protection of the Civilian Population in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), which prohibits the occupying power, in particular, from including children in the lists of formations or organizations under its control, as well as Article 51, which prohibits the promotion of service in the army of the country that occupied the territory.

METHODOLOGY

This monitoring report covers the period from 1 October to 30 October 2022.

Fields of research are the following: the militarization of children in the occupied territories, involvement of children in actions aimed at supporting the so-called special operation in Ukraine, destruction of Ukrainian identity, assimilation of the population of the occupied territories, destruction of the Ukrainian education system.

Geography: temporarily occupied territories of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Monitoring is based on the information from the following sources:

- governmental bodies of Ukraine;
- reports of non-governmental organizations;
- open sources of temporarily occupied territories, namely:
 - information posted on official websites and official pages in social networks (including VKontakte network) of the so-called
 - Ministry of Education of the temporarily occupied territory;

- official statistical data of the Russian Federation;
- information posted on the websites of secondary schools in the temporarily occupied territories;
- local mass media publications of the temporarily occupied part of the Kherson, Zaporizhzhia regions, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol;
- information published in social networks.

LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY:

In this research, the authors used only the sources available to them. Work with sources and analysis of information continued until 10 November 2022

Information and reports that could not be verified as of the date of publication of the monitoring report were not included in it.

While preparing the report, the authors used data from the Vkontakte social network. This is due to the fact that after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, most of the information of the representatives of the occupation authorities was published in this social network, and thus, the search there is actually the only possible source of access to it.

The information is presented in the report to record the crimes of the Russian Federation and combat disinformation spread by it.

TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF THE AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC OF CRIMEA AND THE CITY OF SEVASTOPOL

The Russian Federation continues to systematically work on the formation of a Russian identity in Ukrainian children, to involve children in activities to support the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and to engage in the militarization of the population of the peninsula starting with preschool children.

FORMATION OF RUSSIAN IDENTITY IN UKRAINIAN CHILDREN

In October, the conference «Education of preschoolers based on traditional spiritual and moral values» was held in Sevastopol, which was attended by more than 300 educators, methodologists, heads of preschools, specialists and heads of educational authorities, practitioners and experts in the field of preschool education, childhood researchers from Sevastopol and Crimea. During the conference, the main attention was paid to the formation of patriotic feelings towards the Russian Federation in children of preschool age. The head of the Committee of the Council of Federations on Science, Education and Culture, Lilia Gumerova, said:

*«The Federation Council pays the most close attention to the issues of education. The topic of patriotic education is becoming particularly relevant today, when our country is facing enormous pressure. We see how in a number of states historical truth is being questioned, concepts of good and evil, fundamental moral and family values are changing. It is important that during the conference close attention will be paid to the education of our young citizens».*¹

1

[source](#)

In October, the contest «The Army and the people are united!», which is held by the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea, as part of the Patriotic Action of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Kazakhstan «We do not abandon our own», continued. The age of the participants of the competition is 12-35 years.

To participate in the Contest, poems are accepted in the following nominations:

- «The people and the army are one!»
- «Letter to a Russian soldier»
- «We do not abandon our own!»
- «Patriotism is the soul of the people...».

The contest runs from September 26 to December 1.

ПАТРИОТИЧЕСКАЯ АКЦИЯ ОБЩЕСТВЕННОЙ ПАЛАТЫ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КРЫМ

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24
КРЫМ

МАЙЛЕТ

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АРМИЯ

ТРОЛЛЕБУС

Russia continues to actively use children's and youth movements to destroy the Ukrainian identity in children and to form a Russian one.



In October, the first meeting of the All-Russian Movement of Children and Youth (hereinafter: ARMCY) was held in Sevastopol with the participation of Mykhail Rozvozhaiev (representative of the occupation administration, the so-called governor of Sevastopol). According to the data announced at the meeting, as of October, 25,000 children have been covered by ARMCY, and the movement includes representatives of the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren, «Yunarmy» and «The Big Change».²

2 [source](#)



The festive events dedicated to the Day of the birth of the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren took place on October 28 in Sevastopol. The final of the regional competition for the best dance flash mob «Children of Sevastopol - the future of Russia» was held as part of the celebration.³

3 [source](#)



INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN SUPPORTING THE ARMED AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AGAINST UKRAINE

Children continue to be involved in collecting things and writing letters to the military of the armed forces of the Russian Federation in Crimean schools. For example, at school No. 17 in the city of Sevastopol, children from the younger grades were involved in collecting things for servicemen of the Russian Armed Forces. Together with the collected things, they plan to hand over the letters written by the students of the school to the military. In addition, the school museum has a stand with the heroes of the so-called «special operation»⁴, which is used to form children's respect for the participants of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

4

[source](#)

Also, in connection with the «Letters to a Soldier» campaign, «Courage Lessons» are held in the schools of the peninsula. In these lessons, children are told about the exploits of Soviet soldiers, and they analyze the chronology of military events on the territory of Russia until today. Similar lessons are held in all classes of Crimean schools, and during these lessons children are involved in writing letters to soldiers of the Russian Armed Forces. On October 17, the director of «Krym Patriot Center», Dmytro Polkovnikov, gave a lesson on courage at Simferopol School No. 28. After the lesson, in an interview with Crimea 24 channel, he noted: «We need to spread the propaganda of our way of life, our ideas to the masses not only among our teenagers, but to broadcast them to the whole world.»⁵.

5

[source](#)

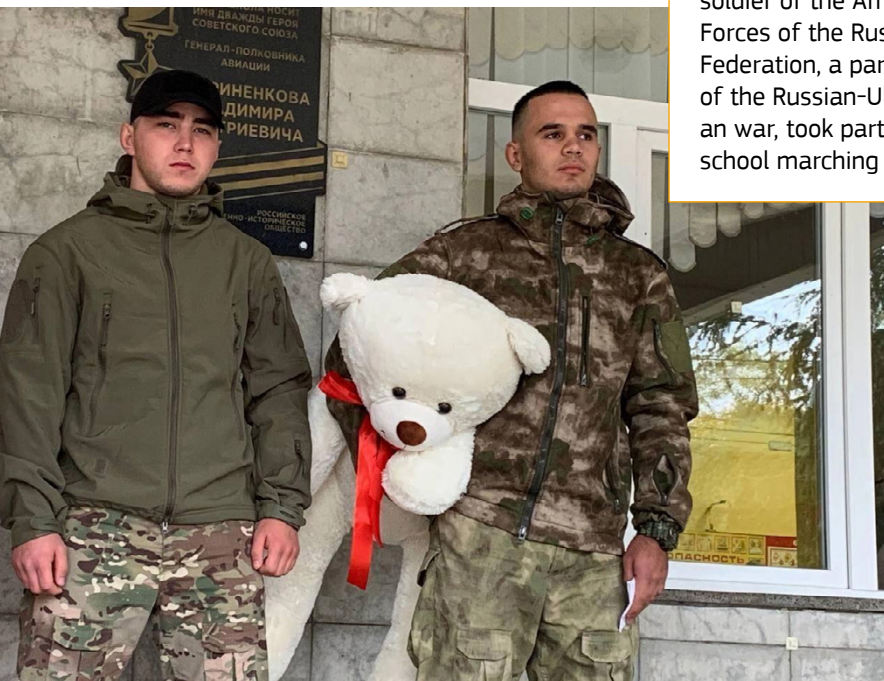
The campaign «Letters to a Soldier» continues actively in the schools of the occupied Crimea. Soldiers who received their letters also began to be invited to the children, in order to encourage the children to participate more actively in the action. Since the spring schoolchildren are involved in a monthly letter-writing campaign at school No. 43 in Sevastopol. Renat Kovalevskyi, a soldier of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, a participant of the Russian-Ukrainian war, took part in the school marching band, during which the flag was raised and the anthem of Russia was played. During his stay in the war zone, he received a letter from a 4th grade student at school No. 43. During the event, he thanked the children for the letters they wrote.⁶

6

[source](#)



Renat Kovalevskiy, a soldier of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, a participant of the Russian-Ukrainian war, took part in the school marching band.



MILITARIZATION OF CHILDREN

Militarization of children takes place actively in both formal and informal education on the territory of the occupied peninsula.



On October 9, 70 students of Sevastopol School No. 60 were accepted into the ranks of the cadets of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation. For the first time, 30 first-graders were accepted as cadets of the emergency department. The ceremony of acceptance into cadets took place at Malakoff redoubt. During the ceremony, the children took an oath of loyalty to the Motherland, honesty and hard work.⁷

On October 24, in Simferopol, 36 first-graders of Lyceum No. 3 named after Makarenko were ordained as cadets. The children took the oath and became pupils of the Main Investigation Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol. **This is the first time that first-graders were enrolled as cadets at the Lyceum.**⁸

8

[source](#)



In general, as of October, there are 7 cadet classes working in the schools of the peninsula, which are under the auspices of the Main Investigation Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol.

On October 13, the cadet corps of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation opened in Sevastopol. 137 cadets study in the corps: 98 boys, 39 girls, including **54 orphans and children left without parental care**. There are three children from the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and also children whose parents were wounded during the Russian-Ukrainian war.⁹ Children who have completed their studies in the 7th grade of a general educational institution or another grade in accordance with the decision of the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation can enter the corps.¹⁰

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[source](#)

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During the opening ceremony of the case, the head of the educational work department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, Major General of Justice Serhii Petrov noted:

«Our cadet corps are distinguished by the fact that they are engaged in early professional orientation of children in the professions of an investigator and a forensic investigator. [...] we give them the opportunity to get acquainted with this profession and make the right decision for themselves: whether they are on their way with us or not. We have special additional programs. We have a forensic testing ground. The guys have the opportunity to meet with our current employees, who directly introduce them to their profession in practice».



In October, there was news that a mandatory module devoted to initial military training was planned to be added to the school curriculum for the Basics of Life Safety. According to the information agency TASS, on October 28, the corresponding document was published on the portal of projects of regulatory legal acts. **It was not possible to check the information on the portal itself, as of the date of publication of the report, because the portal page does not open.** According to information from the information agency, the module «Elements of initial military training» is placed in the section dedicated to the content of the educational subject of life safety. The document states that students should master: «Combat training and military salute. Build and manage them. Drill. Performing a military salute on the spot and on the move. The

infantryman's weapon and the rules for handling it. Kalashnikov assault rifle (AK-74). Fundamentals and rules of shooting. The device and principle of operation of hand grenades. F-1 hand fragmentation grenade (defensive). Hand fragmentation grenade RGD-5». ¹¹ The module also provides for the study of actions in a modern combined-arms battle, the composition and armament of a motorized rifle unit on an infantry fighting vehicle, the engineering equipment of a soldier's position, methods of movement in battle when acting on foot.

11 [source](#)

In addition, it is planned to acquaint schoolchildren with means of personal protection and first aid in battle, various ways of transferring the wounded from the battlefield, facilities for the protection of personnel.



Militarization occurs through already traditional actions in non-formal education. Thus, the «Watch of Memory» campaign continued in October. In particular, on October 19, the «Remembrance Watch «Post No. 1» was opened near the memorial «No one is forgotten, nothing is forgotten» in the village of Chervonogvardiyske. The «Honorable Watch» was opened by students of the Center for Patriotic Education of Youth «Heirs of Traditions» and the Crimean regional historical-patriotic, research public organization «Union of Heirs of Traditions». The competitions in military training and honor guard carrying were also held as part of the opening, in which students from 6 schools of the Red Guard district took part. ¹²

12 [source](#)

On October 28, 2022, as part of the events dedicated to the 81st anniversary of the beginning of the defense of Sevastopol in 1941-1942, a city memorial hour was held with a ceremonial laying of flowers at the Memorial Wall in memory of the second defense of Sevastopol. School-children and the members of «Yunarmy» took part in the event along with others. Acting Director of the Department of Education and Science of the city of Sevastopol Larisa Sulima said during the event:

*«Patriotic education has always been important, because it determines which generation we will educate. It is probably no coincidence that Sevastopol was called the patriotic capital of Russia, everything here is filled with heroism and the struggle for every inch of Russian land. Today, our children, the great-grandchildren of the victorious people, must preserve the historical memory, be grateful descendants and worthy defenders of the Fatherland».*¹³

13 [source](#)



OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF ZAPORIZHZHIA AND KHERSON REGIONS

In October, along with the trends that were described in the previous monitoring reports of «Universal Soldier» for August and September (integration of educational institutions into the Russian education system, pressure on educators, destruction of Ukrainian identity in children), the Russian Federation began moving children deep into the occupied territories and dispensation of the children.

MOVING CHILDREN DEEP INTO THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND INTO THE TERRITORY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

The main movement of children deep into the occupied territories, in particular to the Crimea and to Russia, took place under the guise of autumn health recreation during the holidays. In his address on the occasion of Teacher's Day, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, said that education workers should think about how to organize rest in «new» territories, which are now restless and even dangerous.¹⁴

14 [source](#)

Autumn holidays in the occupied parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions were announced on different dates, depending on the intensity of hostilities. Thus, in Kherson, Belozerst, Beryslav, Kakhovsky, Navokakhovsky districts, holidays were announced from October 6. on 21.10.¹⁵ In the Velikolepetykhsy, Henichesky, Kalanchaksky, Novotroitskyi, Skadovskyi and Chaplinskyi districts holidays were announced from 12.10 to 25.10.¹⁶ Later, the holidays were extended until November 7 (with the exception of Kherson, Oleshkivskyi, Beryslavskyi, Holoprystanskyi, Bilozerskyi, Kakhovskyi, Novokahivskyi, Velikolepetykhsy districts - in which the date of the start of education was not announced).¹⁷ In the occupied part of the Zaporizhzhia region, holidays were announced from October 31 to November 14.¹⁸

15 [source](#)

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Vacation and wellness changes took place in the occupied Crimea, Krasnodar territory, Stavropol territory, Rostov Region, Kabardino-Balkaria.¹⁹ According to the statement of the occupying temporary acting governor of the Kherson region, Volodymyr Saldo, each region was ready to receive up to 10 thousand people (children and their parents).²⁰

19 [source](#)

20 [source](#)

Among the places of placement of children, which were identified:

Kabardino-Balkaria: social rehabilitation center «Raduga»

Crimea: «Druzhba» (Yevpatoria), «Luchystiy» (Yevpatoria), «Zdravnitsa» (Yevpatoria) camps²¹, «Youth» (Zaozerny), «Seagull» (Evpatoria), «Dream» (Evpatoria)²², «Artek» (Gurzuf)²³.

In general, it was reported that 15 camps in Crimea will accept children from the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

According to various information, it was planned to receive from 4,500²⁴ up to 6000²⁵ children from Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions in Crimea. On October 11, there was the information that 2,000 children from the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions had already arrived in Crimea.²⁶ Also, on October 11 and 12, there was the information that the children were brought to the Anapa district of the Krasnodar territory.²⁷ At the same time, the number of children who were moved to the territory of the Russian Federation is not specified. At the end of October, information about the continuation of the changes began to appear. Volunteers of the «United Russia» party began to deliver warm things to the children in their locations.

“Many people gathered their children for a vacation, counting on a 2-week shift. However, later the vacation time was extended and some children were left without warm clothes. We helped and brought the children a bag with things that their parents had given them,” said one of the volunteers.²⁸

The occupation Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the Kherson Region, the Ministry of Tourism of the Kherson Region, and the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kherson Region²⁹, the government of Crimea, as well as deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, in particular Ihor Kastiukevych³⁰ and the head of Kabardino-Balkaria Kazbek Kokov³¹ were involved in the organization of the removal of children for the so-called children's vacation.

The students of Crimean universities were invited to work as educators to organize placement of children in camps.³² At the same time, the Crimean Federal University promised that «there will be no problems with attendance at the university.»³³

The occupation and Russian authorities also encouraged the travel of parents with their children to the occupied territories and to the territory

21 [source](#)

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of Russia³⁴, thus creating conditions for a change in the demographic composition of the occupied south of Ukraine and assimilation of Ukrainian citizens into Russian society. In particular, in mid-October, videos began to appear with children from Crimea, where they ask their parents to come to them on vacation in Crimea.³⁵

34 [source](#)

35 [source](#)

In addition to moving children as such, «holiday-health» changes were also used to destroy Ukrainian identity in Ukrainian children, to instill patriotic feelings towards the Russian Federation, and to promote Russian narratives about the «liberation» nature of the war that the Russian Federation waged against Ukraine. Russian and occupying officials have repeatedly stated that in the course of cultural and educational changes, a large cultural and cognitive program, attendance at optional and educational classes is provided.³⁶ Representatives of children's and youth movements of the Russian Federation were also invited to join the children, in particular the «Young Army», the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren and «Big Change». Thus, representatives of these movements visited the camps in Yevpatoria, where children from the Kherson region are accommodated, and conducted an interactive program for them on the traditions and symbols of the Russian Federation.³⁷ Excursions were organized for children from the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions in Sevastopol with the aim of popularizing the history of Russia.³⁸

36 [source](#)

37 [source](#)

38 [source](#)

In addition to holiday and health changes, in October there was a movement of the population under the guise of evacuation. The movement takes place through Crimea and further into the territory of the Russian Federation. There is a temporary accommodation center in Dzhankoy in Crimea.³⁹ According to Russian media, about 9,000 people were displaced in the Krasnodar territory, including children.^{40,41} The displaced children began attending Russian schools. For them, the authorities organized transportation from the points of temporary location.⁴²

39 [source](#)

40 [source](#)

41 [source](#)

42 [source](#)

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Also, children from orphanages in the Kherson region were moved deep into the occupied territories and into the territory of the Russian Federation.⁴³ Among the displaced children of boarding schools, there are children with disabilities.⁴⁴ In particular, about 50 children aged 4 months to 4 years from the Kherson Children's Home were taken to Crimea, including children with disabilities.⁴⁵

MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF CHILDREN

In October, the medical examination of children began. The President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in his address on the occasion of Teacher’s Day, said: *“It is necessary to carry out a mass medical examination of children in the new territories. Many of them not only did not really study for many years, but also did not receive proper medical care. Part of this work should be organized by mobile teams from various regions of the Russian Federation right in kindergartens and schools.”*⁴⁶

46 [source](#)

The medical examination of children aged 1.5 to 17 years has already begun in Melitopol from October 10. According to information from the occupation authorities of the city of Melitopol, the medical examination takes place with the consent of the parents.⁴⁷ At the same time, as of the publication of the monitoring report, no confirmation of the mass dispensation and forced nature was found.⁴⁸

47 [source](#)

48 [source](#)

On October 24, the head of the Government of the Russian Federation, Mikhail Mishustin, signed an order on the allocation of more than 353.2 million rubles for conducting an in-depth preventive medical examination of children in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. More than 80,000 children are planned to be examined at the expense of funding. The money in the form of a subsidy will be sent to the National Medical Research Center for Children’s Health of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation. The source of funds will be the reserve fund of the Government of the Russian Federation.⁴⁹

49 [source](#)

