



Visits to HopeHouse families during HH Mission Trip



A Father's Love

Brandon Dragan, team member
HH Mission Trip

Starved for love and affection' was the consistent reality our HH Mission Team experienced while ministering in seven different orphanages last June. To see their faces after they received a hug was like watching the sun come up on the dark side of the moon. A sad, lonely child's countenance would completely change when she received something as simple as a sticker from the finger of her American friend. In the face of these truly heavenly smiles and the joy of our new friendships, we knew in the back of our minds that once we left . . . these little angels would be back in their day-to-day world—alone, scared and hurting.

What amazed me was the contrast of visiting the home of a Hope House family, the Donetz Family, in the fairly remote village of Kaniv. As a team, we were allowed to enter the family's brand new home. A variety

of beautiful desserts were served, and four beaming children ran from room to room welcoming their foreign guests.

Then, for me, one of the most eye-opening moments of the trip occurred. The little blonde singer was in the second verse of her fourth song when she forgot the lyrics. She became white as a sheet, turned and ran to her father who was seated just a few feet from her. She buried her face in his chest and refused to look up—she was so embarrassed. We all clapped, but she wouldn't lift her face, *until* her loving father, who had wrapped his arms around her, bent down and whispered something quietly in her ear. Suddenly, she lifted her head, looked him in the eyes while he smiled back at her, and turned back to her audience with a look of determination on her precious face. She stepped back to "center stage," started her song over again and nailed it! Thunderous applause followed, to which she smiled politely, curtsied and walked back over into the embrace of her beaming father.

This was the HopeHouse Mission lived out in the life of this family. A father's proud, unflinching love is making the world a different place for this little angel and her older brothers. What were once lonely, scared, and hurting children have now been transformed into accepted, confident, and healthy children, given the freedom to make mistakes and the grace to get up and try again.



The Donetz family home