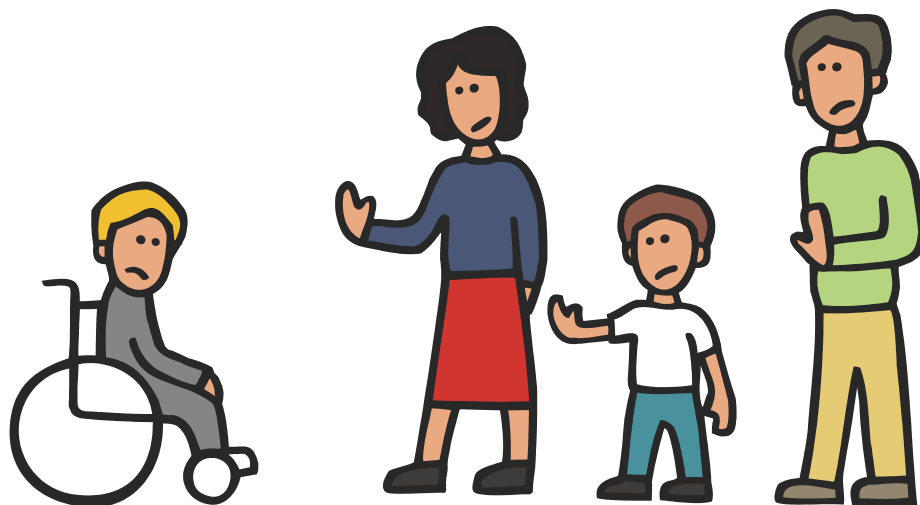


Children with disabilities living in special homes in Russia

What life is like and what needs to change



HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

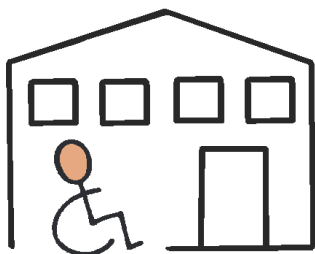
Who are we?

We are Human Rights Watch.



We work to make sure everyone in the world is treated fairly and gets their rights.

What is this report about?

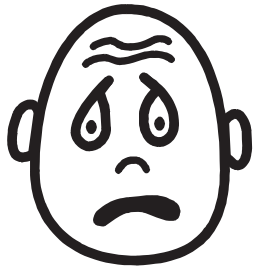


This report is about children with disabilities who live in special homes for children in a country called Russia.



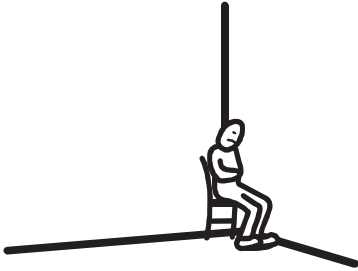
Children with disabilities often live in these homes away from their families and other people.

These homes are run by the government.

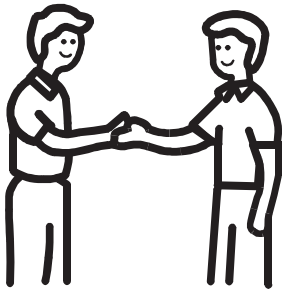


Staff there should look after the children.

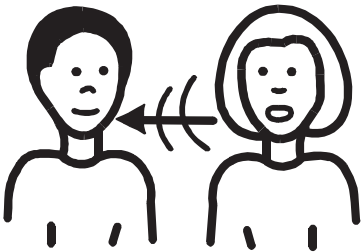
But some children with disabilities in these homes can be hurt or treated very badly.



Many children there cannot do the things other children do.

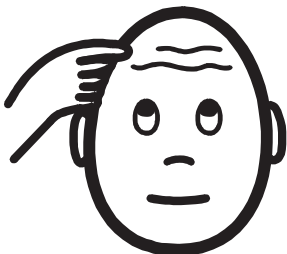


We went to visit some of these homes in different parts of Russia.



We spoke to:

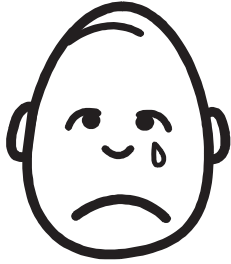
- parents
- children and young people
- people who help children with disabilities
- staff



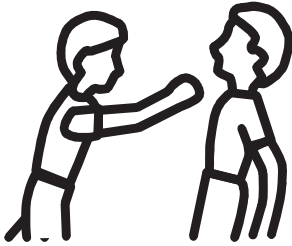
This report tells you:

- what we found out
- what needs to change.

What did we find out?



Children with disabilities told us they were often hurt or treated badly in these homes.



Staff sometimes:

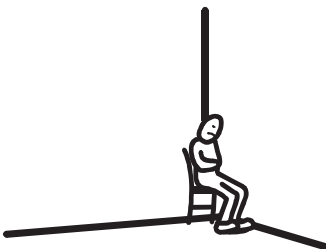
- hit them



- did not give them enough food or drink



- did not give them the right medical care

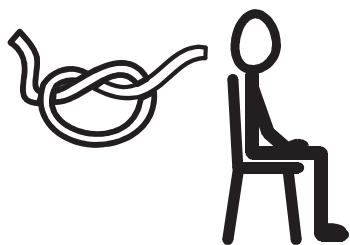


- kept them away from their friends and family

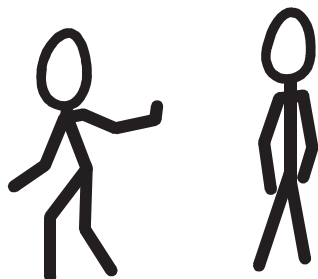


- kept them in rooms where they had to lie down in special beds all the time

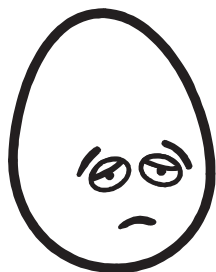
Staff sometimes:



- tied children to chairs or other things so they could not move



- stopped them playing, going to school, and doing things other children do



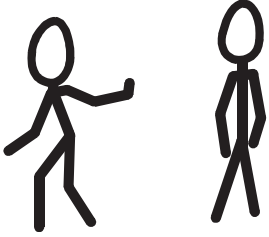
Most children with disabilities end up staying in homes like this all their lives.

This means they have a very difficult life. They do not get to meet or play with others.

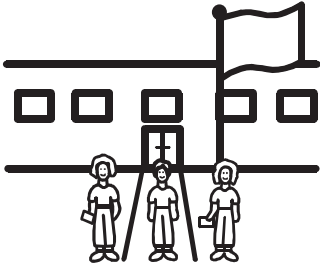


This is wrong and needs to stop.

Why is this problem happening?

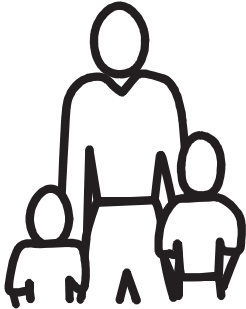


Many children with disabilities have to live in these homes because there is not enough good help for them.



For example, there is not enough:

- schools where children with disabilities can be with other children



- support for families so their children can live with them



- support for children to live on their own when they are older

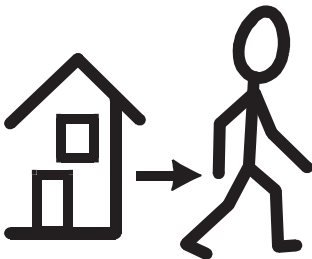
There is not enough:



- help for children to live with other families if their family cannot care for them

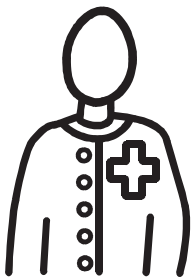


- information for families about the support they can get and the rights children with disabilities have



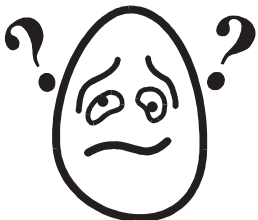
Other problems

Families often feel they have to send their children to these homes.



Health staff tell them it is the best thing to do because their child has a disability.

This is not right.



Some people do not understand it is wrong to treat children with disabilities badly.

What is the government doing?



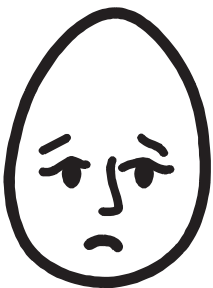
By law the government in Russia has to:

- keep children with disabilities safe
- make sure they are treated well



The government has made some plans to help with this.

For example, to help children with disabilities stay with their families.



But the plans are not happening.

The government needs to make the plans happen.

And the government needs to make sure the plans work well for children with disabilities.

What needs to happen?

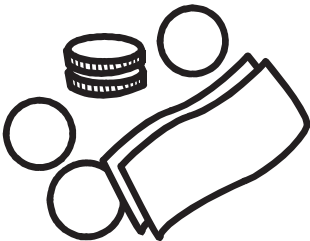
The government needs to make sure:



- families have better choices and information so they do not have to send their children to these homes
- children are not put in homes like this
- children can get care from families instead



- children only go to these homes if they really need to for a short time

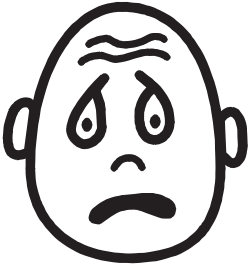


- money for care is used to help children live with families



- children have a say in what they want

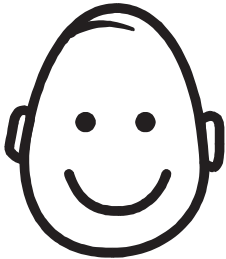
The government also needs to make sure:



- children are never hurt or treated badly



- children and families can get help when they need it



- life is much easier for children with disabilities so they can do the same things that other children can do