



SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF (SOAR)

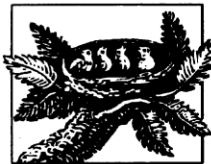
1060 First Avenue, Suite 400, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Office: 610.213.3452 Fax: 610.229.5168

Email: gyacoubian@soar-us.org Web: www.soar-us.org

Orphan Dental Care Project





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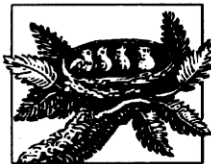
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History of SOAR



George S. Yacoubian, Jr. and his wife Erica began their adoption process in 2005. They submitted their dossier to the Armenian government that fall, received preliminary approval from the Armenian government in December, and obtained final approval in March 2006. Liliana arrived on American soil on April 23, 2006.

In late 2005, George and Erica founded the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (see Appendix A for 501(c)(3) and Armenia registration) that today provides charitable assistance to orphaned Armenians throughout the world. Through steadfast humanitarian relief efforts, SOAR strives to provide orphaned Armenians with resources fundamental to their physical, emotional, and intellectual development. Over time, SOAR aims to provide this underprivileged population with the tools necessary to become accomplished, educated, and self-supporting Armenians. In early 2006, SOAR's Executive Board was assembled, a network of in-country Partners was recruited to assist with distributions, and the web site was launched.



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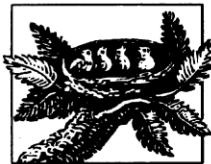
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Today, SOAR has over 80 Chapters throughout the world, all assisting orphaned Armenian children and adults in Armenia, Artsakh, Javakh, Lebanon, and Syria.

SOAR has five (5) primary aims:

- 1) **Donations:** We receive charitable donations that allow us to provide our target population with necessary goods and services.
- 2) **Research:** We conduct primary research and implement research-focused projects that ultimately improve the lives of our target population.
- 3) **Inspiration:** We inspire Armenians, both in Armenia and in the Diaspora, to embrace our mission and to join our humanitarian efforts.
- 4) **Volunteering:** We coordinate a Volunteer Program that connects students and professionals to volunteer opportunities at orphan summer camps and orphanages in Armenia; and,
- 5) **Education:** As the only international organization whose singular mission is to provide humanitarian relief to orphaned Armenians, we provide education and mentoring through a distance learning environment.



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Organizational Structure

SOAR is headquartered in the suburbs of Philadelphia with seven Executive Board members. SOAR's founder, George S. Yacoubian, Jr., has served as Chairman since 2005. Raffi Jehanian is Vice-Chairman; Sarah Selverian (Treasurer); Erica Yacoubian (Secretary); and Directors Tanya Bardakjian, Hagop Keshishian, and Asadur Minasian.

In 2009, a Board of Trustees was created to review SOAR's fiscal operations and distributions. The Trustees serve only in an advisory capacity.

SOAR's in-country Partners oversee all distributions in Armenia. Sr. Arousiag Sajonian and her assistant, Varduhi Baloyan, oversee SOAR operations in Northern Armenia. Siranoush Hovhanissyan, SOAR's Executive Director and Armenia Chapter President, is based in Yerevan and oversees all operations in Armenia. SOAR Chapters in Artsakh, Lebanon, and Syria oversee distributions in their respective countries.

SOAR has six Regional Directors who oversee multiple Chapters within their respective geographic regions: Susan Harootunian (East); Anne Galovich (Midwest); Michael Hagopian (Northeast); Kohar Mardirossian Pelter (West); and Victoria Abrahamyan (Europe).



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SOAR has more than 400 volunteers around the world. Some are parents of adopted Armenian children; others simply recognize the significance of SOAR's work and want to perpetuate our mission. Their common bond is the recognition that orphaned Armenians represent the most vulnerable population of Armenian society.



Distributions to our target population have grown considerably since our inaugural year. SOAR provided nearly \$60,000 in assistance in 2006, more than \$88,000 in 2007, and surpassed \$100,000 in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Our distributions exceeded \$360,000 in 2011, \$469,000 in 2012, \$700,000 in 2013, and \$865,000 in 2014. Annual reports are available at www.soar-us.org.



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Quality Control

SOAR has strict quality control protocols to assure that all donations reach the intended recipients. This protocol has five essential elements:

1. SOAR rarely makes cash distributions directly to the orphanages. Rather, goods and services that can be procured in Armenia are purchased by SOAR's in-country Partners and distributed directly to the orphanages.
2. SOAR implements chain-of-custody procedures for any distributed goods or services, providing assurance that these items have been received by the orphanages in the exact quantity intended. These procedures have three steps:
 - a. Partners sign for the shipments and/or attest to the type and quantity of goods or services procured in Armenia. This invoice includes an exact description of the type and quantity of goods and services.
 - b. Orphanage directors sign this same invoice, indicating that the exact quantity of goods and services received is the quantity indicated.
 - c. Both invoices are mailed to George S. Yacoubian, Jr.
3. SOAR Partners, Armenia Chapter members, and other volunteers make random inspections of the orphanages. Discrepancies are to be reported immediately to George S. Yacoubian, Jr.
4. When possible, goods donated or services provided by SOAR are engraved and/or stamped with a corporate seal. Capital projects are acknowledged with a



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dedication ceremony and plaque/sign.

5. A zero-tolerance policy for fraud, theft, and/or deception is imposed. Any malfeasance would result in the termination of assistance.

Institutions SOAR Supports

SOAR supports 21 institutions in Armenia, two Armenian orphanages in Artsakh, an orphan summer camp in Javakh, four Armenian orphanages in Lebanon, and three Armenian orphanages in Syria:

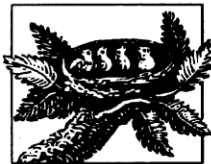
Armenian Evangelical Boarding School is located in Ainjar, Lebanon, and is home to approximately 75 healthy social orphans.

Birds' Nest Orphanage is located in Byblos, Lebanon, and has been home to thousands of Armenian children in the Middle East region for more than 80 years. There are currently 37 children housed at Birds' Nest, ranging in age from 6 months to 17 years old.

Boarding School #1 is a state orphanage in Stepanagert, Artsakh, housing approximately 35 children (both healthy and with special needs) between the ages of 4 and 16.

Boarding School #2 is a state orphanage in Kashatagh, Artsakh, housing approximately 17 children between the ages of 6 and 17.

Bzommar Orphanage is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847. Throughout the year, the Sisters carry out



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catechetical, cultural and social work with both natural and social orphans. Approximately 25 girls are housed at Bzommar.

Cardinal Aghajanian Orphanage is located in Ainjar, Lebanon. The orphanage is home to approximately 24 male social orphans.

Children's Home of Gyumri is a state orphanage in Gyumri housing approximately 100 children with special needs, ages 6 years and younger.

Gyumri Social Childcare Center is a day center in Gyumri. Since July 2006, more than 250 children have been served at the Center.



The Holy Cross Armenian Church of Javakh

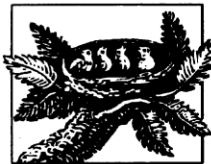
Summer Day Camp in Akhakalak, Georgia, serves 250 social orphans living at or below poverty level

in the nearby villages. The camp was created to provide the children with a safe, clean, fun, and spiritual environment during the summer.

Kharberd Orphanage is a state orphanage in Kharberd housing approximately 280 children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 18.

Mari Izmirlyan Orphanage is a state orphanage in Yerevan housing approximately 100 children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 18.

Mer Doon offers a home in Etchmiadzin for Armenian children who have outgrown their orphanage. Mer Doon offer education and a loving and compassionate family environment, thus easing the transition from orphanage life to mainstream society.



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Mer Hooy houses 15 teenage girls in the Arapkir district of Yerevan. The girls receive language and job skills training, computer instruction, college preparation, religious teaching, life skills training, psychological support, and hope, confidence and love.

Nork Orphanage is a state orphanage in Yerevan housing approximately 80 children (both healthy and with special needs) ages 6 years and under.

Nubarashen is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing approximately 68 children with special needs, ages 7 to 18.

Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen is a state orphanage in Gyumri housing approximately 83 children between the ages of 4 and 18.

Our Lady of Armenia Center is a private orphanage in Gyumri housing approximately 45 girls between the ages of 6 and 18. The Center is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847.

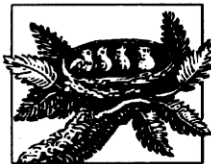
Our Lady of Armenia Educational Center in Tashir, Armenia, is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and provides meals and after-school activities to approximately 30 orphaned and otherwise needy children.

Our Lady of Armenia Center Summer Camp hosts approximately 800 children ages 8 to

15 throughout the summer, in four 16-day sessions.

The Camp provides nutritious food, physical rest, recreational activities, and religious-educational experiences both to orphan and otherwise needy children throughout Armenia.





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Saint Theresa's Little Flower Orphanage (Azizie and Meydan) is the House of Providence. After the 1915 Genocide, the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception stood responsible for the displaced and served as comforting and caring “mothers” for the lonely Armenian orphans. In 1936, “The Providence Orphanage” was founded in Azizie and was a haven for 300 orphaned children. Before March 2011, the orphanage housed up to 35 girls who lived in an environment of peace and security and who attended regular school. Because of the unrest in Aleppo, many of the Armenian orphans could no longer stay at The Providence Orphanage. Some now live in Meydan, a very poor Armenian section in Aleppo, and attend Zvartnotz school, while other orphans live in Azizie and attend Zanabek, the other Armenian school run by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.



Shengavit Kindergarten students are children whose families are living in extreme poverty or which have histories of child abuse, domestic violence, or drug addiction. The school has an enrollment of 250 students, of which 150 stay at the school full-time. Shengavit Kindergarten has become an example, setting a standard according to which other schools are now built. The facility and its dedicated staff have earned a reputation as the best



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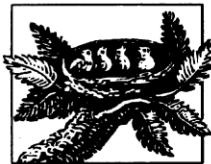
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kindergarten in Yerevan.

S.O. Khach Orphanage in Syria has been a family for more than 90 years. Before March 2012, the children lived in the Telil area of Syria. In March 2012, the children moved to a beautiful new facility in the Sis Hamaliren region. Unfortunately, due to civil unrest, the children moved to the Aram Manoogian Community Center in September 2012. The children are cared for by a couple who live with them full-time. There are currently 14 boys and girls living in S.O. Khach Orphanage, ranging in age from 8 to 19 years old.

SOS Children's Villages' Armenian Charity Foundation (Idjevan and Kotayk) is a child-centered organization whose core mission is to provide care and development for children without parental care and children in difficult life circumstances. The organization was founded in 1989 in response to the devastating earthquake of December 1988. In 1990, SOS Children's Village in Kotayk opened its doors for children who had lost their parents in the earthquake. It was the first SOS Children's Village in any former Soviet republic. SOS Children's Village in Idjevan was founded in 2009. Presently, SOS Children's Villages in Armenia operate a wide range of child care and family strengthening community and educational activities.



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Terchoonian Home is a private orphanage in Gyumri housing approximately 75 intellectually gifted children between the ages of 3 and 12.

Vanadzor Orphanage is a state orphanage in Vanadzor housing approximately 90 children 18 years of age and under.

Vardashen is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing approximately 82 children who “exhibit socially dangerous behavior” between the ages of 6 and 18.

The Voice of the Armenian Church Summer Day Camp, operating under the auspices of the Eastern Prelacy and its Executive Council, is held in the summer retreat of Tsaghadzor and hosts 50 orphaned boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 16. The Camp, held in July for eight days, exposes the children to comfort, love, compassion, and care, while simultaneously instilling in them the love of Christ and the history of the Armenian Church.

Warm Hearth, located outside of Yerevan in 3rd Village, is a private group home housing 14 adults with mental disabilities who





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have outgrown the state-funded orphanages. Warm Hearth offers holistic care in a family-like setting.

Zadik Orphanage is a state orphanage in Yerevan housing approximately 48 children between the ages of 6 and 18. After the age of 18, the children move to either Rainbow House or a farming village in Arzni.



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Literature Review



Introduction

Cavities are the most prevalent chronic disease of childhood worldwide. Further, about 100 million Americans did not see a dentist in 2007, even though regular dental examinations and good oral hygiene can prevent most dental disease.¹ Too many people mistakenly believe that they need to see a dentist only if they are in pain or think something is wrong.

Recent scientific studies indicate associations between oral health and a variety of general health conditions.² Poor oral hygiene has been associated with heart problems and infections in those with diabetes or artificial joints.³ Cavities are infections that cause demineralization and destruction of the hard tissues of the teeth. It is one of the crucial dental issues around the world,⁴ with more than 98% of people worldwide suffering from cavities.⁵ It has been estimated that the average schoolchild in the US has at least one cavity

¹ See www.ada.org (accessed January 29, 2014).

² *Id.*

³ Oliveira, C., R. Watt, and M. Hamer. (2010). "Toothbrushing, inflammation, and risk of cardiovascular disease: results from Scottish Health Survey." *British Medical Journal* 340:c2451.

⁴ See http://www.who.int/topics/oral_health/en/ (accessed January 29, 2014).

⁵ *Id.*



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in permanent teeth by age 9 and three cavities by age 12.⁶

Generally, tooth decay and gum diseases are among the most widespread conditions that affect human population and are most frequently found in children. Aside from the problem of bacteria entering the bloodstream and causing infection elsewhere in the body, gum disease takes a toll on a person's ability to fight off illness.

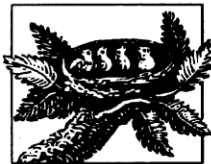


The World Health Organization (WHO) has integrated oral health into its chronic disease prevention efforts “as the risks to health are linked.”⁷ The American Dental Association recommends that dental visits begin no later than a child's first birthday to establish a “dental home.”⁸ This ongoing dental care helps both children and adults maintain optimal oral health throughout their lifetimes. Dental health education is an essential strategy to improve oral health, with early childhood the best time to begin dental care. An exposure to basic principles of healthy habits in the early years will allow building a healthy and well-rounded lifestyle in future as an adult.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Supra* note 3.



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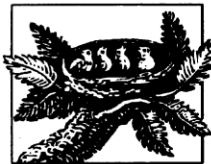


Dental Hygiene in Armenia

Under the former Soviet health-care system, Armenia had the benefits of free dental and medical services. Dental treatment centers were based in elementary schools to care for children. Polyclinics in large and small cities, towns and villages provided care without cost to millions of patients, and these facilities had educational programs to teach young people how to take care of their teeth. In the post-Soviet era, many families have struggled to provide basic necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. As a result, dental health in Armenia has deteriorated significantly, especially among children.⁹ Today all citizens have to pay for dental care, and dental care services for children are almost non-existent.

Armenia's Dental Health Epidemic

⁹ Tadevosyan, A. (2005). "Dental caries, oral hygiene skills, and nutritional skills of Sisian schoolchildren aged 12." Yerevan: American University of Armenia.



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Cavities are the most prevalent chronic disease among children in Armenia.¹⁰ The impact of the disease is reflected throughout life and affects health, employment, and quality of life. Cavities usually require intervention by health personnel to correct the resulting problems. These resources can be expensive, are subject to limited availability, and carry a significant cost to any health system. Empirical studies¹¹ have documented that:

- The average 5-year old child in Armenia has eight decayed, missing or filled primary teeth;
- Between the ages of 14 and 17 years old, the average child continues to experience dental decay at the rate of one permanent tooth per year;
- Almost 90% of all 12-year-old children have cavities; and,
- Only 20% of Armenian 18-year-olds still have all of their teeth.

Dental Suite Construction

Project Feasibility

In 2013, SOAR constructed a dental suite at Kharberd Orphanage (pictures below). Our ability to undertake the current project is thus based on past experience with a similar endeavor, our overall familiarity with orphan relief, and our strong reputation and rapport with the orphanage directors in Armenia. Sr. Arousiag Sajonian, Superior of OLA and SOAR's primary in-country Partners in Gyumri, will assist with project implementation. The

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*; Avetisyan, T. (2003). "The pilot study to determine prevalence of disorders among schoolchildren and their oral health knowledge in Metsavan Village, Lori Marz." Yerevan: American University of Armenia.



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current project proposes the construction and outfitting of dental suites at each of four facilities: the Our Lady of Armenia Center, Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen, and Terchoonian Home in Gyumri and the Our Lady of Armenia Center in Tashir.



Kharberd Dental Suite
(Pre-Renovation): 2013

Kharberd Dental Suite
(Post-Renovation): 2013



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| Dental Suite Construction Proposal | Estimated Cost |
|---|--------------------|
| Construction | |
| Our Lady of Armenia Center (Gyumri) | \$10,000.00 |
| Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen | \$10,000.00 |
| OLA Educational Center (Tashir) | \$10,000.00 |
| Terchoonian Home | \$10,000.00 |
| Supplies | |
| Our Lady of Armenia Center (Gyumri) | \$5,000.00 |
| Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen | \$5,000.00 |
| OLA Educational Center (Tashir) | \$5,000.00 |
| Terchoonian Home | \$5,000.00 |
| Annual maintenance | |
| Our Lady of Armenia Center (Gyumri) | \$5,000.00 |
| Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen | \$5,000.00 |
| OLA Educational Center (Tashir) | \$5,000.00 |
| Terchoonian Home | \$5,000.00 |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$80,000.00 |