



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS DURING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

Introduction:

Ukraine has a system for providing Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services. Today ECI is available in 10 regions of Ukraine. In the Odesa region there are 6 teams operating and 4 teams training.

With the beginning of the war in Ukraine, from February 2022, ECI specialists in the Odesa region, in addition to their regular duties, began to provide psychological support to families affected by the war, internally displaced persons, people subjected to violence, and began to work with trauma.

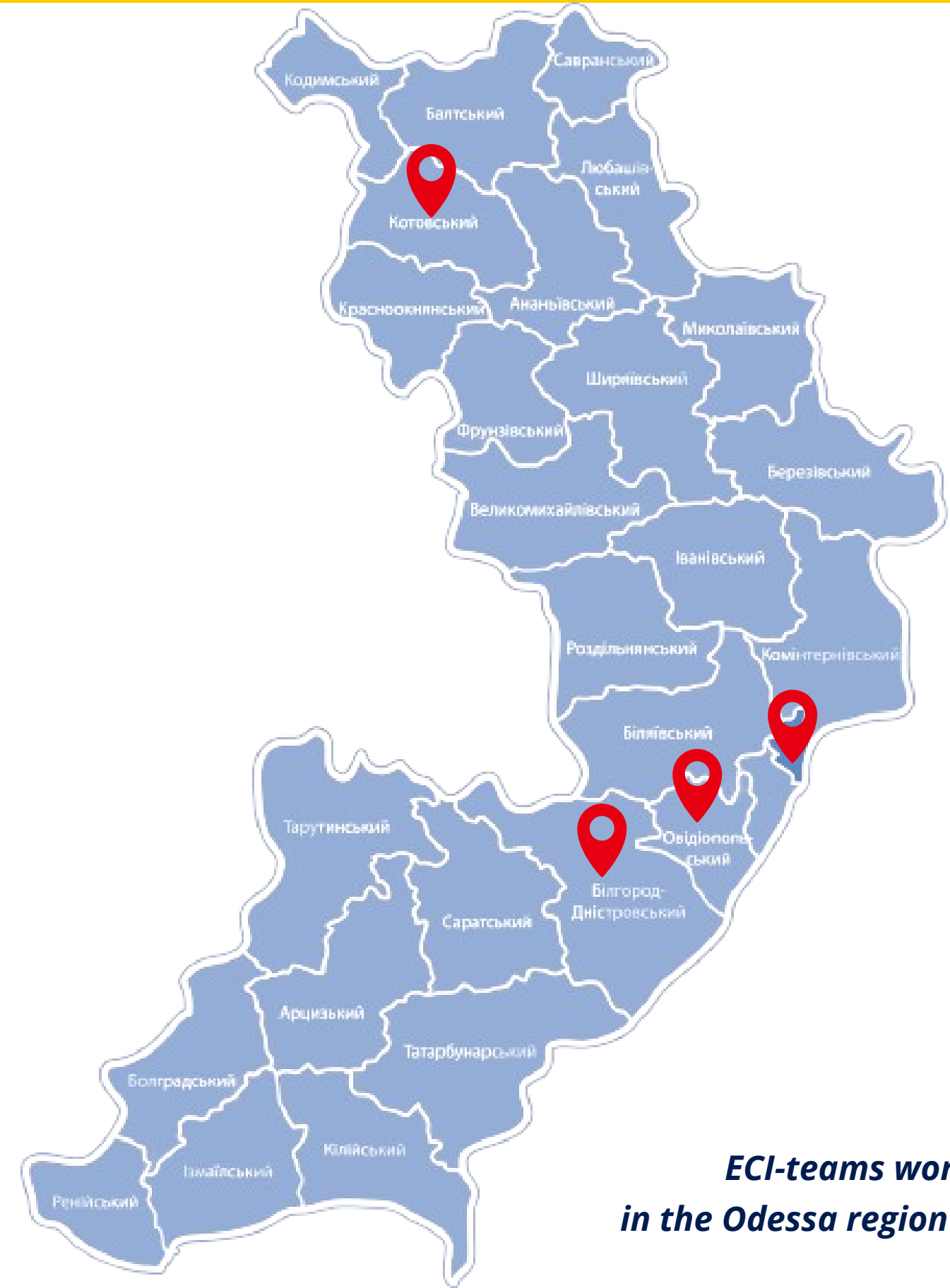
ECI specialists continue to live and work in the Odesa region, which, although not on the front line, is constantly subject to airborne missile bombing, which, in turn, has a negative impact on the psycho-emotional state of the specialists themselves.

Objectives:

The purpose was to study the psycho-emotional state of ECI specialists who live and continue to work in Odesa and the Odesa region, the influence of various factors that contribute to the stabilization of the psycho-emotional state and to formulate, based on the data obtained, general recommendations for specialists who continue to work in ECI in the conditions of severe stress and threat to life and health. We hypothesis that the experience gained can be adapted to work in other stressful situations.

Methods:

The study used the method of statistical data processing, comparison in a group of subjects. For the assessment, the *Maslach-General Burnout Questionnaire*, the *Test for diagnosing the level of emotional burnout by V. Boyko*, as well as a questionnaire survey of the subjects were used. To process the results, the method of mathematical data statistics was used.



**ECI-teams working
in the Odesa region 2024**



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS DURING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

1 AT WORK

- *change of species activity*
- *clear division of duties*
- *team trainings*
- *inspiring work results creative tasks*
- *creating coziness*
- *group ENGLISH*

2 AT HOME

- *sleep mode*
- *hobby*
- *tea ceremony*
- *coffee ceremony*
- *diary of emotions*
- *full nutrition*
- *full sleep*
- *vacation*
- *support*

3 WITH FAMILY/ FRIENDS

- *cozy conversations*
- *walks*
- *games*
- *family tradition*
- *celebration*

4 WITH COLLEAGUES

- *team building*
- *joint lunches*
- *meeting new seasons of the year*
- *travels*
- *working with metaphorical ones cards*

5 ONLY FOR ME

- *an hour for yourself*
- *massage*
- *sport*
- *playing musical instruments*
- *YOGA*
- *individual psychotherapy*
- *drawing*
- *singing*

Methods of psychological self-help:

After testing, participants used psychological self-help methods that they had chosen together. This work lasted 5 months. Each participant could use everything from the proposed list or individual elements.

An information poster was created for the teams listing the types of psychological self-help. Each team could design their own poster, taking into account the needs of each participant.

Since all members of the ECI-teams study psychology to one degree or another, the specialists understood the importance of working to stabilize their own psycho-emotional state. But in a difficult stressful situation, they could not always find time for simple actions that could improve their psychological state.

Joint collage of activities of ECI-teams of the Odesa region, 2024

Results:

The results obtained indicate that before the experiment, ECI-specialists in the Odesa region did not monitor their own psycho-emotional state and level of professional burnout. The results recorded a high level of professional burnout and an unstable psycho-emotional state. During the experiment, the subjects were offered various types of activities and personal participation to reduce these indicators and stabilize the psycho-emotional state. The experiment lasted for 5 months. Monitoring the results after the intervention records an improvement in the psycho-emotional state and a decrease in the level of professional burnout among ECI-specialists in the Odesa region.

Conclusions:

ECI-specialists are a reliable support for families in stressful situations, but they themselves also need psychological support, prevention of professional burnout and supervision. Activities as mentioned above are especially important for specialists who work with trauma, being themselves in a constant stressful situation. The experience of Ukrainian specialists working with their own psycho-emotional state can be useful and applied in practice by other specialists and adapted to work in other stressful situations.

References:

Maslach, C., Jackson S.E. The measurement of experienced burnout // Journal of Occupational Behaviour. – 1981. – № 2. – P. 99–113.