The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# Moscow Region Mulls Launching 'Grandmother for an Hour' Rental Service

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August 10, 2015

The Moscow region is considering launching a program that would match impoverished young families in need of childcare with senior citizens in need of socialization, news website Moskva24 reported Tuesday.

The program, called "grandmother for an hour," is already operating in the Vladimir region in central Russia. The project organizes single retirees to look after children from low-income families for free while the parents work or run errands.

Irina Fayevskaya, head of the regional ministry for social development of the Moscow region, told Moskva24 that the Odyntsovsky district and the town of Orekhovo-Zuyevo in the Moscow region would be good candidates for a pilot program.

Early childhood experts are skeptical about the project, however.

Boris Altshuler, director of the Rights of the Child NGO, told Moskva24 "Nobody should leave

their kid with a stranger. The service must be official, with work contracts." He added that the government should pay for the retiree's services.

Yevdokia Kholostova, head of the Institute of Additional Professional Education for Social Workers, said that not everyone should be allowed to participate in the program.

"Retired school teachers could be allowed to work with kids. It's also important that the person has a stable psyche and no bad habits," Kholostova told Moskva24, adding that "grandfather for an hour" should also be an option.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/08/10/moscow-region-mulls-launching-grandmother-for-an-hour-rental-service-a48881