

Religious Groups Push for Russian Schools to Teach 'Family Values'

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Vladimir Filonov / MT

Under new proposals from religious groups, Russian children could soon see compulsory classes on family values added to the curriculum, [the Interfax news agency reported Monday](#).

The plans to introduce classes on family values are backed by the Russian Orthodox organization The Sanctity of Motherhood.

The group's leader, Natalia Yakunina, told the Fruits of Faith television program that similar classes were already part of the curriculum in a number of individual Russian regions.

Read more from The Moscow Times: [Inside Russia's new abortion debate](#)

The Sanctity of Motherhood would work with the Ministry of Education to investigate rolling out the classes nationwide, she said.

Yakunina also revealed that the group wanted all pregnant women to speak to psychologists

in a bid to stop them from choosing to have an abortion.

“We are optimistic about the future,” Yakunina said. “We have been able to enlist the support of the Ministry of Health, so I think we could see [these referrals] happen soon,” she said.

The country's most powerful cleric, Patriarch Kirill, called on the Russian government to stop supporting abortions in September this year.

Despite repeated calls from the church, 72 percent percent of Russians are against a total ban on abortion, a poll published by the state-run pollster VTsIOM showed in October.

More than half of respondents – 51 percent – said that poor financial conditions were the main factor driving women to undergo abortions.

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