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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Children Are Celebrated Throughout Russia Today

The first day of summer is Children's Day.

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

Children's Day, like several other Soviet holidays, actually began in the U.S. In 1857, Reverend Dr. Charles Leonard held a special service dedicated to children in his Chelsea, Massachusetts church. He first called it Rose Day, and later Flower Sunday, and finally Children's Day.

In 1925, the World Conference of Child Welfare in Geneva founded International Children's Day, and then in 1949, June 1 was declared the International Day for Protection of Children by the Women's International Democratic Federation in Moscow.

In Moscow the day will be celebrated with all kinds of games, tours, readings, quests, and classes at the city's museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions. Theaters and concert halls have special events for children, and the zoo is allowing visitors to help feed the pandas.

The Obraztsov Puppet Theater is celebrating in a big way: by opening a park — the Obraztsovpark — that was envisioned way back in the 1970s but never fully carried out. Today there will be music, a market, performances and other events. The theater plans to keep the park open all year round.

Many events are designed to be inclusive of all children, such as the concert "The Little Prince and His Friends" in Cheboksary, which is being organized with Svoboda, a Chuvash non-governmental organization to support people with disabilities.

In other places, the emphasis is on local culture. In Yoshkar-Ola children aged 7-12 with high scores in the Mari language, history and culture will be front in center in a program held in Mari. Characters from Mari fairy tales will entertain the children.

Children in Tula can watch "The Samovar Tale," a version of a story by Kornei Chukovsky about Mukha-Tsokotukh, told by his Majesty Samovar Samovarych. It is billed as a "thriller about the life of insects." The performance will be shown outdoors — naturally — in the Tula Kremlin, with an online broadcast to all municipalities of the region.

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In Novosibirsk, the local Puppet Theater and Soyuzmultfilm are hosting a festival in honor of the studio's 85th anniversary. The almost two-week celebration will take place by the Puppet Theater.

And finally, in the "nerpinary" in the village of Listvyanka, Irkutsk Region, the nerpa seals of Lake Baikal will demonstrate their abilities to draw, count, play musical instruments and football.

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