

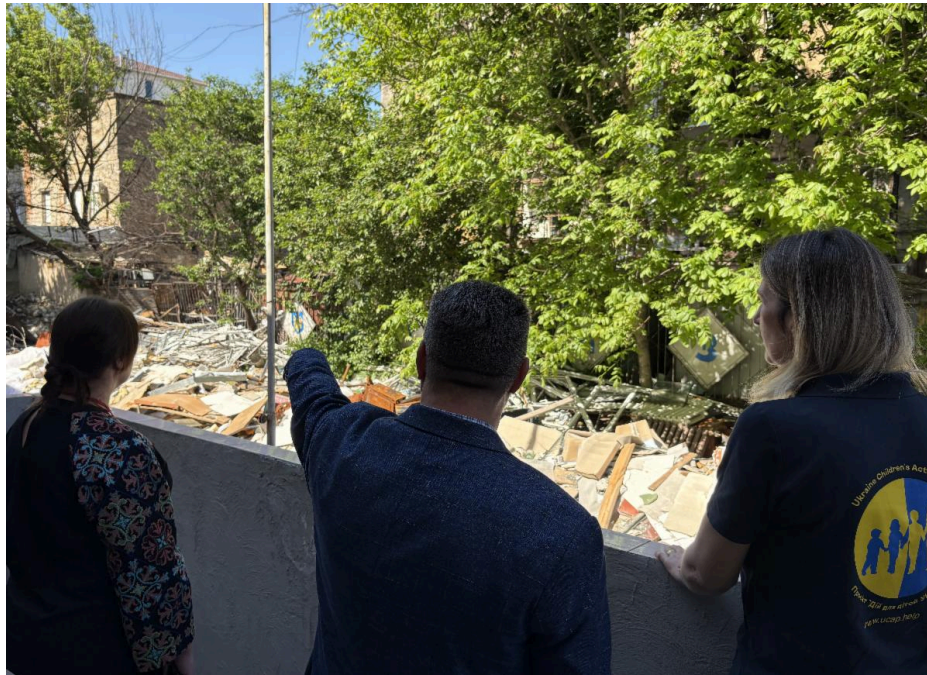


Ukraine Children's Action Project (UCAP)

May 2026

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*On the ground, hands on,
transparent*



UCAP's Report from the Frontlines...

Greetings!

KR: Last week, **UCAP's Regional Director, Yuliia Kardash** traveled from her home in Lviv to Odesa and the surrounding region to visit several programs supported by [Ukraine Children's Action Project](#), including **Digital Learning Centers (DLCs)** serving over 1000 youth in Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Pivdenne. She was originally scheduled to make the trip two weeks earlier, but her travel was postponed after a large-scale missile and drone attack across Ukraine made it unsafe to travel. **Following is her report:**



Report from the field

By Yuliia Kardash

Regional Director, UCAP

Although I live in Lviv, where air raid alerts remain a regular part of life, visiting southern Ukraine is a very different experience. **In Odesa region, the war feels much closer.** Because many attacks originate from occupied Crimea, missiles and drones can reach their targets within minutes. Air raid alerts often leave little time to react, and schools frequently interrupt classes as children and teachers move to shelters.

During my visit, I met with students, teachers, school administrators, and program coordinators in Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Pivdenne. **What struck me most was not only their resilience, but also their determination to continue creating opportunities for children despite constant uncertainty.**

One of the most memorable visits was to Odesa Construction College. The campus was severely damaged during winter attacks because of its proximity to an energy facility that was targeted twice. Much of the college remains unusable, and students continue their studies online. Yet the Digital Learning Center, located in a protected shelter area, survived.

Today, that center has become much more than a classroom. It is one of the few places where teenagers can safely gather, reconnect with friends, receive academic support, and experience a sense of normal life.

In Pivdenne, I spoke with Alla Porkhovniuk, one of the program coordinators and educators. She described how years of war have affected both students and teachers.

“Every winter brings new challenges — power outages, lack of heat and water, and constant attacks,” she told me. “Near New Year, a drone exploded close to our school, shattering more than 200 windows. It was frightening, cold, and difficult. But we recovered, restored the building, and welcomed children back.”

What stayed with me most was another reflection she shared. Many people say they have become accustomed to war, but she disagrees.

“There is nothing normal about hearing a drone flying overhead or a missile passing above you. Children should not have to grow up with those sounds.”

Yet despite these realities, educators continue showing up every day for their students.

Through catch-up learning activities, enrichment programs, and summer programming, they are helping children recover educational losses caused by years of disruptions, frequent air raids, and periods of remote learning.

One message I heard again and again during my conversations with teachers, coordinators, parents, and students was simple: these programs matter. Families spoke about the importance of having a safe place where children can learn and socialize, while educators shared how meaningful it is to know that international partners continue to stand with them.

Educators consistently emphasized how much they value UCAP’s support, which has allowed these programs to continue serving children at a time when such opportunities are needed most.

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Kindergarten reaches out for help

Last December, Olha, a mom of a 4-year-old living in Ukraine's Kyiv region, reached out to UCAP via our website. She explained how Russian missile and drone attacks on the region's electrical grid frequently knocked out power to her daughter's kindergarten. The classrooms - and the underground shelter - would go dark, terrifying her daughter and her classmates.

Olha wanted to know if UCAP could help the school which has six classrooms and provides a secure and loving educational home for 120 young children. After a visit by regional director Yuliia Kardash, UCAP approved funding for "Energy Resilience Kits", a backup battery powered lighting system, which was immediately installed by the school's maintenance team. And the children are no longer afraid.



Matviy - at Kids Club in Lviv



Meet Matviy - at the Kids Club

The Ukraine Children's Action Project (UCAP) funded the renovation and furnishing of Kids Club in Lviv, Ukraine. Since opening in November 2023, the center has served as a community hub for hundreds of displaced children from embattled cities in eastern Ukraine, providing much needed educational and enrichment support to address war-related learning disruptions.

[Watch Video](#)

Irwin's oped in The Hill, May 26, 2026



Continuing his advocacy on behalf of Ukraine, Irwin urges Congress to expand support for the country's ability to stop the unrelenting attacks on civilian targets and end Russian occupation of Ukraine's eastern regions.

"Defending Ukraine's democracy, is in America's interest", he writes in The Hill, one of Washington, DC's most influential publications.

[Read More](#)

Thank you for your on-going generosity and caring. It continues to bring the courageous Ukrainians hope and strength to go on.

With gratitude,

[See UCAP's 2025 Report Here](#)

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*After 48 months of operation, we want to share that our administrative overhead is just 16%. The respected Charity Navigator considers anything under 25% worthy of it's highest rating!



www.UCAP.HELP
kredlener@gmail.com

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