Russia’s Abduction of Ukrainian Children

**To the Editor:**

Re “[Russia Signals Intention to Deport More Children](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/18/world/europe/putin-arrest-warrant-children.html)” (news article, March 19):

Many of the teens and toddlers abducted by Russia from Ukraine have been taken from orphanages, but are not orphans at all. They have parents and extended families.

Most end up in these custodial settings because families lack the support to take care of a child born with a disability. Or, mired in poverty, they wish for a better life for them in an orphanage.

Sadly, children across the world — [an estimated eight million living in institutions](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-slavery-conference-orphanages-factbox-idUSKCN1NJ0AG) — are also in grave danger of being illegally adopted or trafficked for pornography, organs and labor. And those with disabilities in these facilities are often left to die — lonely and painful deaths.

These nefarious horrors are only exacerbated during times of conflict.

All children need the love and protection of a family. And most families would keep their children if they could.

As Russia continues to kidnap children from Ukrainian orphanages, governments, donors and international aid agencies should shift funds to support families.

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