



God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

Ps 46: 1

Dear Peeteli children's friends and supporters!

MTÜ Peeteli Kiriku Sotsiaalkeskus/ NGO Bethel's Centre of Pastoral Care has been supporting children in need since 1997, offering them care, opportunities for development, and a safe learning and living environment so that they can continue their education. We are sending you a summary for AD 2025.

Everyday life at Peeteli. During the year, 14 children lived at Peeteli, and 39 children received support through the day centre. For most children the day centre's support is enough, but there have always been some whose lives began to change for the better only after they came to live at Peeteli. The reasons children need help can be very different.

In photos everything looks beautiful and joyful, but in reality, many children have serious issues. For example, two children whose mother had lost their home came to live in Peeteli. Both children struggled with strong screen addiction. The older child should have been in fourth grade but had only completed first grade. In the following years she had rarely attended school. Bringing her back to school was a long process that required good cooperation with child protection and teachers. It was an emotionally difficult journey for the child. At first, our educator took the child to school, but since the teachers and classmates were very welcoming, she soon started to go on her own and willingly. The younger child was expelled from kindergarten because of unpaid fees and was therefore behind in her development compared to others. With the help of donors we paid the debt and found a place in kindergarten. Unfortunately, the preparation time for school was so short that she was not considered ready for school and had to repeat the last year of kindergarten. We could see joy and sparkle return to the children's eyes once they started taking part in our daily activities together with the other kids. Both children have developed remarkably — they are smart, curious and quick learners.

Often the biggest obstacle in school is children's limited or missing Estonian language skills. Some don't understand what the teacher is saying, and their homework remains undone because they don't get the assignments. Their motivation to go to school drops, stress level increases, and results decline. In this situation learning support is very important. With our small team we try to help the children as much as we can, and we are glad they can learn and practice Estonian at Peeteli.

As in previous years, we handed out school supplies and backpacks. Every week we have singing and dancing lessons. There used to be kids who were afraid to go on stage, but now they do it gladly. Instead of Halloween we celebrate "Victory of Light," a party about light overcoming darkness. The children say they like this choice. At Christmas time our supporters organize fairs where children sell items and baked goods they have made themselves. One former Peeteli child, now the owner of two hair salons, has been coming with colleagues and friends for over ten years to cut and do our kids' hair. In spring several children who had received support from Peeteli finished school and started independent life. We know that at least 82 former Peeteli children have already become parents themselves, and more than 130 children are growing up in their families.

Adventure and work education and camps. At our Saaremaa camp centre, we organized 42 days of camps during the year, with 37 children taking part. At the beginning of the school year, several new younger children joined us. For some of them, the autumn camp was the first in their lives. Friends from Norway also organized a wonderful summer camp for us on a small island in the middle of the big sea. The trip lasted 13 days. On the way we stayed overnight at our Swedish and Norwegian friends in prayer houses and churches. We agreed with the children that we wouldn't use phones during camp. At first they didn't want to agree with this, but after the camp they said it was a necessary and good decision. 11 children and 5 adults participated in the camp. Sixty people joined our annual canoe trip.

In the camps we gathered strength and energy for the new school year. Together with the children we cooked, went swimming and hiking, collected plastic waste from the sea and made art from it, learned how to use different tools, cleaned the camp area, visited an animal shelter, the zoo, and museums. We taught the children teamwork and how to resolve conflicts peacefully. One 9th grader said he had never learned and practiced so much Estonian as during those 13 days in camp. On their way to camps, the children picked from the greenhouse tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers they had grown themselves.

It brings us great joy to see children's progress and to hear words of gratitude from parents, teachers, and from the children themselves. With one child's permission, we are adding the text from her public Facebook post from the end of summer: *"My beloved and homely camp in Saaremaa. Every year, when I come back from there only good and vivid memories remain, with a warm feeling in my heart. Each time I discover something new for myself there. These two camp shifts were awesome. I learned to enjoy every minute I live, to value moments, and most importantly — I became more social and less withdrawn. Thank you to every educator and every person who was with me during these two shifts, you made my summer this year less grey and boring. I hope that next year I can be in two shifts again, discover something new, and at the same time gain new fun and bright memories"*



Dear friends and supporters. All our gratitude belongs to You! We are thankful to God for sending such faithful friends to our children. You are truly important!

We wish you and your loved ones good health, a beautiful Christmas season, and God's blessings for the coming year!

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Suur tänu toetuse eest! * Thank you very much for your support!

