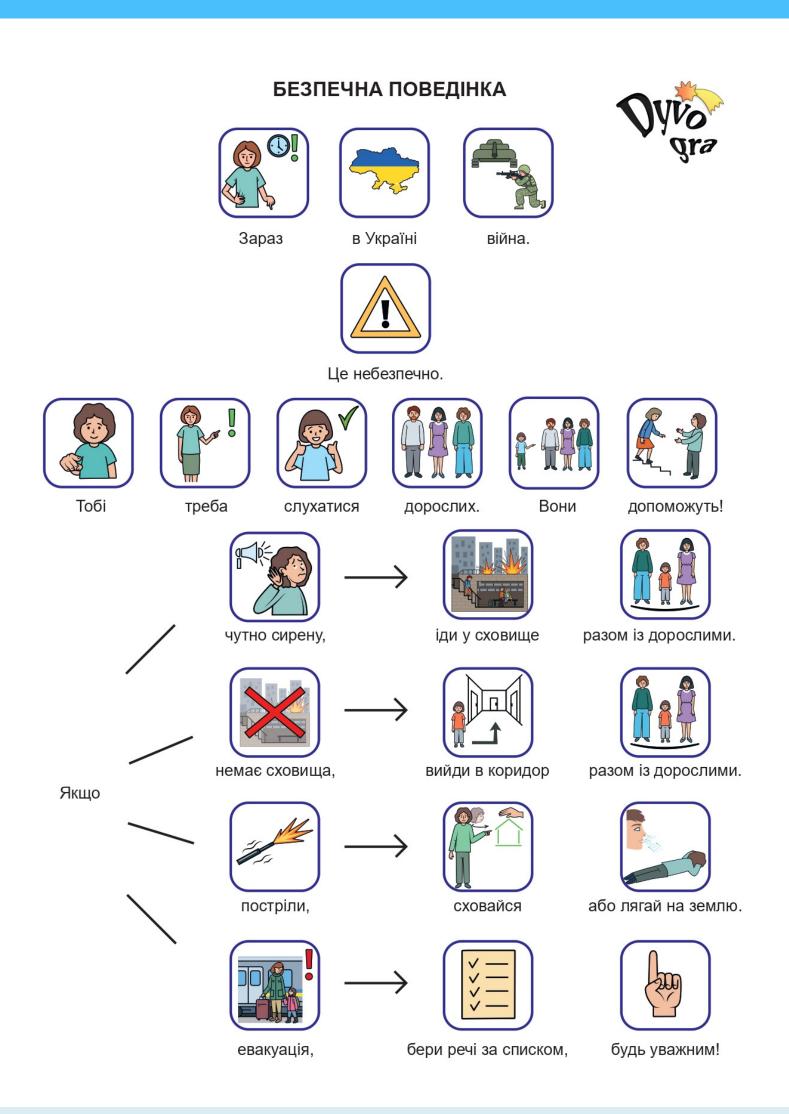
# MARHARYTA CHAIKA OKSANA KRYVONOGOVA

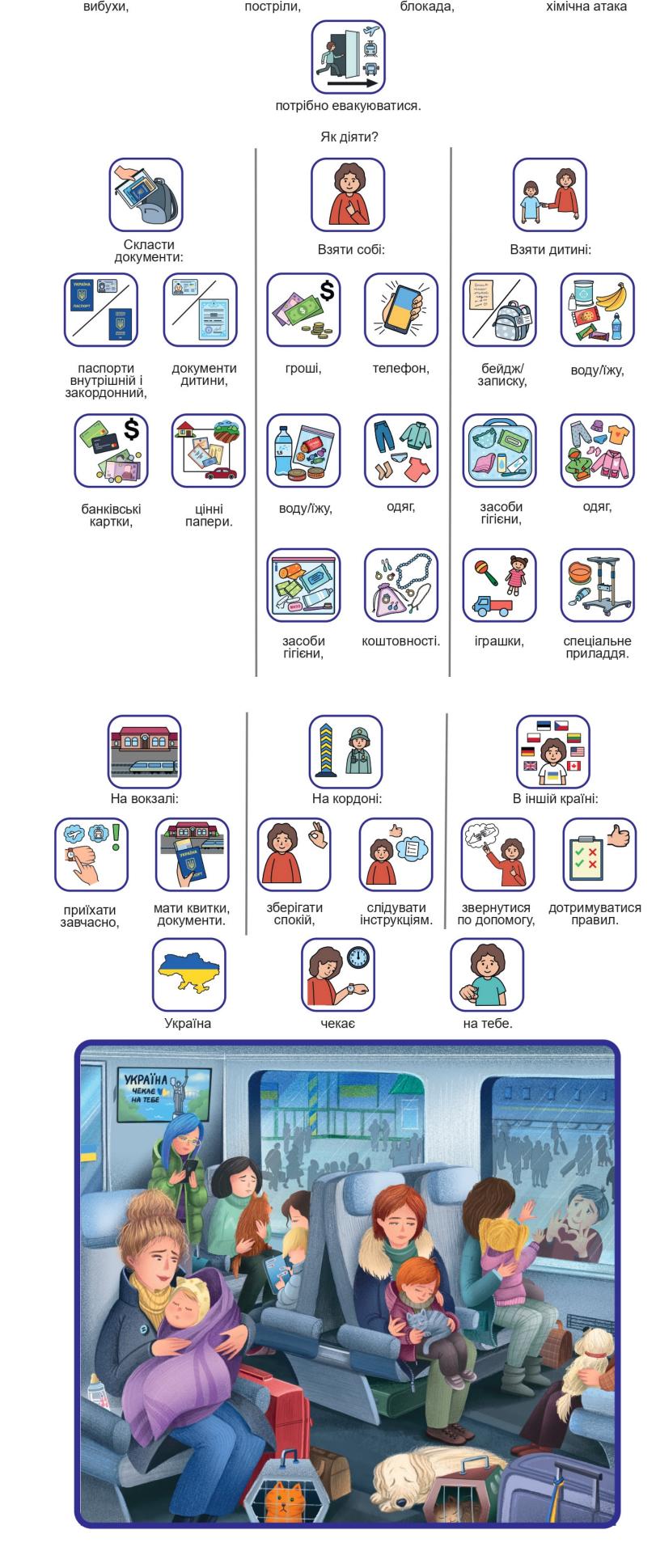
# Experience of using visual aids of AAC with families in the Early Childhood Intervention Service

According to official statistics, **4.8 million children** were evacuated within Ukraine. More than **700,000 Ukrainian children** have left the country since the beginning of the war and have been forced to evacuate to European countries.

## Families' difficulties Early Childhood Intervention Services after the war started

- children do not know and do not understand the meaning of the concepts of war and evacuation
- afraid of explosions, crying
- they are hard to calm down
- there are many fears
- do not know the rules of behavior in emergency situations





- parents experience fear and anxiety
- do not know how to explain complex concepts to a child
- do not know how to help the child regulate emotions
- worry about the emotional state of the child

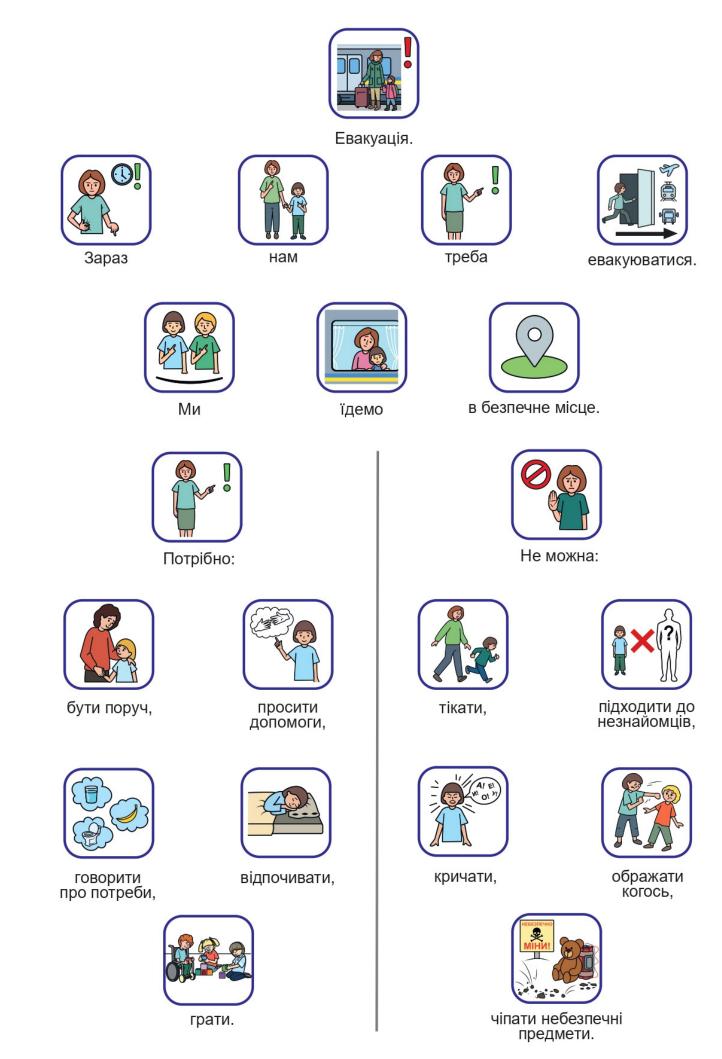
### **Description of posters**

In Early Childhood Intervention, specialists train parents to develop the necessary skills in children. During the war, we taught parents how to work with social stories and individual cards. Using this experience, parents were able to explain complex concepts and rules of behavior to children.

The study involved two posters called Evacuation and Safe Behavior. Both posters are aimed at developing children's ideas about the names of objects and actions about responding to emergency situations. The posters are arranged in such a way that children from an early age can consider the presented symbolic images, understand their meaning and differentiate between them. All symbolic images and illustrations used in the posters are designed taking into account disorders possible of psychophysical development in children or the risk of their occurrence. The posters used such concepts unfamiliar to children, the work on which required additional explanations: war, siren, shelter, shots, evacuation, safe place, unsafe items.

#### Conclusions

Since the beginning of the war, Ukrainians have been forced to use such concepts as: air raid alarm, siren, shelter, evacuation and respond to signals in a timely manner. Also, each family had to develop an algorithm for consistent actions in the face of various dangerous factors and explain to the children how to follow these algorithms. For children with impaired speech and communication development, this has become an extremely difficult task under the influence of potent stress factors such as fear and panic. Now shelter and an adequate response to an air raid signal are the usual routines of Ukrainians. We conducted a study where we provided families with the opportunity to use social story posters that contain algorithms for keeping children aged 0-4 safe. All subjects showed progress in using new concepts, which had a positive impact on the behavior and emotional state of children from the Early Intervention service.



## Guidelines for Using Posters in Early Intervention

#### IN SAFETY

- consider each card separately
- parse individual phrases and rules
- study social history
- repeat the entire social history over and



#### over again IN AN EMERGANCY

- use only the necessary segment of social history for a particular situation
- quickly draw the attention of the child only to the important
- demonstrate social history in parts
- take separate cards with you
- prepare a printed version of the poster in advance and use the electronic version in the same way