

## KARIN DOM FOUNDATION

Center for children with special needs  
Training and resource center

HELPING OUR LITTLE SUNS RISE

## Bulletin 2015



**Dear friends,**

Thanks to you we send off a successful year! We all together made a lot of efforts so that our little suns at Karin Dom be able to grow step by step as independent as possible in a more tolerant society.

We thank the children at Karin Dom who showed will, strong mind and character! For some of them the ability to make their first step, to walk without adult support or to say the word “mommy” requires strenuous effort – both physically and mentally.

We believe that nobody will say for Karin Dom’s children “they are missing the first seven”! They give everything from themselves! Each of these children goes through hundreds of hours of therapy and rehabilitation. No one will say for their moms and dads “they gave up”. They know what fight is!

With this bulletin we would like to tell you in short what we have achieved together in 2015 – all of us – children, parents, professionals, partners, donors and volunteers.

Thank you!



Mariana Nikolova,  
Executive Director  
Karin Dom Foundation



# KARIN DOM IN NUMBERS

Children and their families from Varna, the country and abroad included in the different programmes of Karin Dom:

## Number of children and families in 2015

For Karin Dom in total	335
Therapy centre	189
Early Intervention Programme	146
„Support a family“ of SG Expressbank	47
Included in kindergartens and schools	20

## For the period 1996 - 2015

Children and families totally for Karin Dom	1820
Children integrated in mainstream schools and kindergartens	295
Volunteers from Bulgaria / abroad	283 / 220
Students from Bulgaria / abroad	1338 / 76

## NEW IN 2015 !

**Little+ Group** we offered to the little children with communication disorders/autistic spectrum and their parents. Thus we made it possible for the parents to take part and to implement interventions by following directions and strategies suggested by the specialist. The results are first words, playing with friends and more confident, knowledgeable and competent parents.





Encouraged by the success of this group we opened up a second group **Little+2** where young children with a variety of specific needs and their parents are trained together how to interact and to communicate with the support of the specialists. It was possible thanks to the collected 29 thousand leva at the **Smile Karin Dom festival**. With the plenty of smiles we received from the festival participants we created

**Smile group** – a unique opportunity for therapy of children with complex needs (physical and communication disorders with accompanying conditions), which will help them express desires and learn more about the world around them. This group is also a result of our practice exchange with 8 organizations in Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.



**Breastfeeding area** which offers to the mothers comfort and coziness, was opened in the garden of Karin Dom. The idea is not only to support breastfeeding but also to show that Karin Dom is open to all the children and their families.

And because our ideas for more and more are abundant, we decided to structure them in a **Strategy for Development of Karin Dom 2015-2020**. We determined the major directions in the future work of the organization: development and sustainability of services; dissemination of good practices through training; information campaigns and advocacy; capacity building and partnership development.



# KARIN DOM IS EVERYWHERE IN BULGARIA!

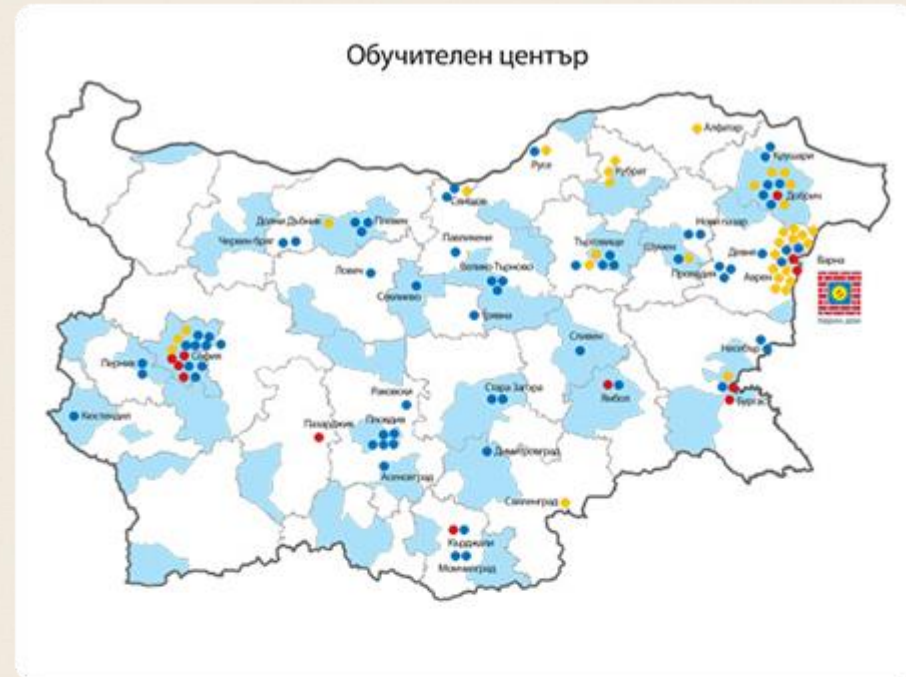
## TRAINING AND ADVOCACY

Until now we never had so many participants in Karin Dom's training events for a single year – 1652 people from more than 90 organizations!

We delivered trainings to the Centres for Early Intervention of Disabilities in 47 municipalities, which the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy created under Social Inclusion project financed with a loan from the World Bank. Services for the youngest are our priority and we will keep working for sustainability of the Early Childhood Intervention in Bulgaria.

We believe that the methods applied at Karin Dom should be accessible for learning by specialists and students from the country. That's why we organized series of trainings, some of which with foreign trainers:

- ✓ Gillian Stern from the UK, President of the European **Bobath** tutors Association
- ✓ Feodora Stancioff – co-founder and directress at the International **Montessori** School in Toulouse, France
- ✓ Eleana Logotheti and Heleni Scouris from Greece, trainers on **PECS** – a method for children with communication difficulties
- ✓ Cathy Hyslop – **Early Intervention** specialist and autism consultant from the University of Oregon, USA





Priority for us was the **interaction with the medical community**:

- ✓ We conducted a training together with the Medical University in Varna,
- ✓ We presented our practice at the conference “Current paediatric aspects of autism” in Plovdiv Medical University,
- ✓ We engaged paediatricians to participate in Karin Dom’s research of the screening tool Ages and Stages Questionnaire,
- ✓ We continued our collaboration with the both maternity hospitals in Varna,
- ✓ We advocated for the availability of a psychologist, responsible to support medical professionals and parents when delivering the news about child’s condition. We will keep insisting that this is one of the steps for prevention of abandonment of children born with disabilities.



# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

## SUPPORT TO NURSERIES AND KINDERGARTENS

In more than 15 nurseries and kindergartens in Varna our specialists led more than 600 consultations to teachers and parents, conducted training events and discussions, in order to create an inclusive environment for 80 children with special needs. By request of teachers kindergartens from Bourgas and Dobrich were included in our trainings.

Karin Dom conference presented “how to create supportive educational environment in kindergartens” to almost 220 participants. The outcomes from the conference are delivered to the responsible authorities and working groups.

The formula for success = trust, motivation and tolerance + relevant changes in organization and financing of the process of inclusive education.



## EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS AT KARIN DOM

Our children, like all children, love joint celebrations with friends from kindergartens and schools, as well as surprises from volunteers and corporate partners, learn how to celebrate traditional Bulgarian customs, draw and paint our Christmas cards and calendars. Their dads demonstrated what they can do in the national campaign “Being a father”.

Our yearly campaign for the persons with Down syndrome had a great success. The smiling emoticons of kids with messages reached people from 3 to 73 from all over the country! Knowing better the Cerebral palsy was the goal of another media campaign we organized.

The most significant event of the year remains **Smile Karin Dom festival**. Its organizers – volunteers proved that all necessary for a change is one dream, a lot of faith and enormous work. The appeal of these inspirers “Smile!” united business, media and the citizens of Varna. So many smiling faces! So many happy moments and memories that will keep us smiling! We are grateful for the support and the incredible emotions!

The “Smile!” message will stay in our hearts and souls for a long time and in the new 2016 we will expect you again in Karin Dom garden with more ideas for shared moments.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SUPPORT

We received the First prize in the category for a best partnership between business and an NGO for our joint programme with **Societe Generale Expressbank** “**Support a family**” as part of the annual awards “Together” of Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation with a chairman Konstantin Penchev, ombudsman of Republic of Bulgaria.

We are glad to share that Karin Dom has a new partner for the programme “Early childhood development and school preparation” – **Cargill** company. This programme for children with special needs from 4 to 7 from the whole country will start in 2016 and will offer one-week free consultation and therapy at Karin Dom.

We greeted the decision of **Bon Marine** company to receive its presents on the occasion of its 25th birthday in the form of donations for Karin Dom and the Home for medical-social care for children in Varna. The sum of 28 580 leva was officially handed to both organizations.

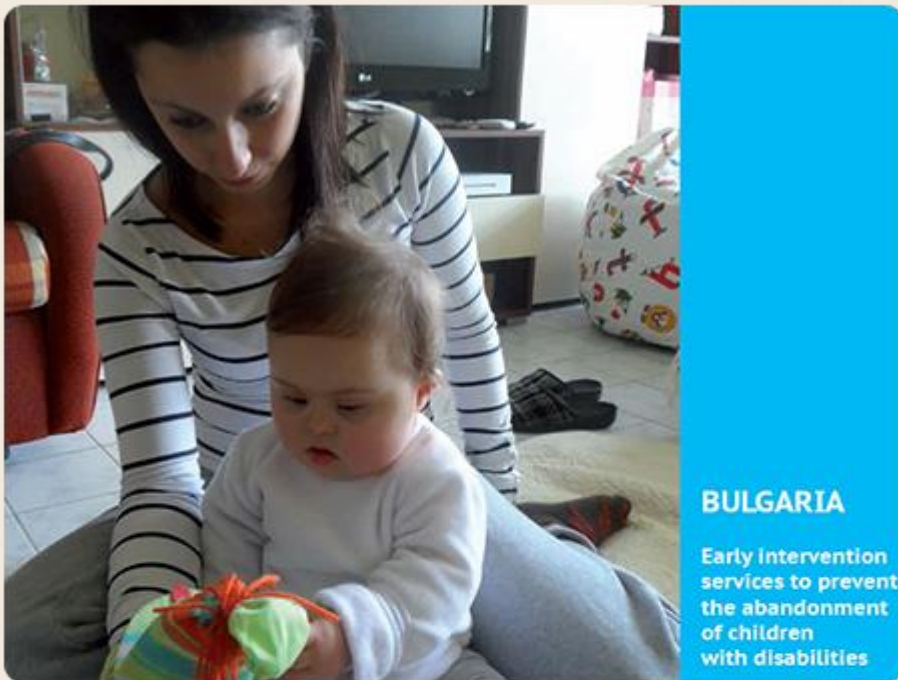


## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SUPPORT

Karin Dom's **Early Intervention Programme** was included in UNICEF collection of good world practices supporting children under the age of 3 to grow in secure and supportive family environment. The edition is a compilation of the most encouraging initiatives in the field of prevention of child abandonment applied in the region of Central and Eastern Europe.

One of the children from our Early Intervention Programme who is already 6, won **two gold medals** from the Third Balkan sport games for children with special needs.

There are many more friends who included us as a cause for their celebrations and events which motivated our staff to give their best. We are grateful to all of you!



# ***We wish you a Merry Christmas & a Happy New 2016!***

*Karin Dom would like to thank all  
friends, donors and parents for the  
appreciation and confidence  
in our abilities!*

