

# Detska Kushta

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## Plovdiv

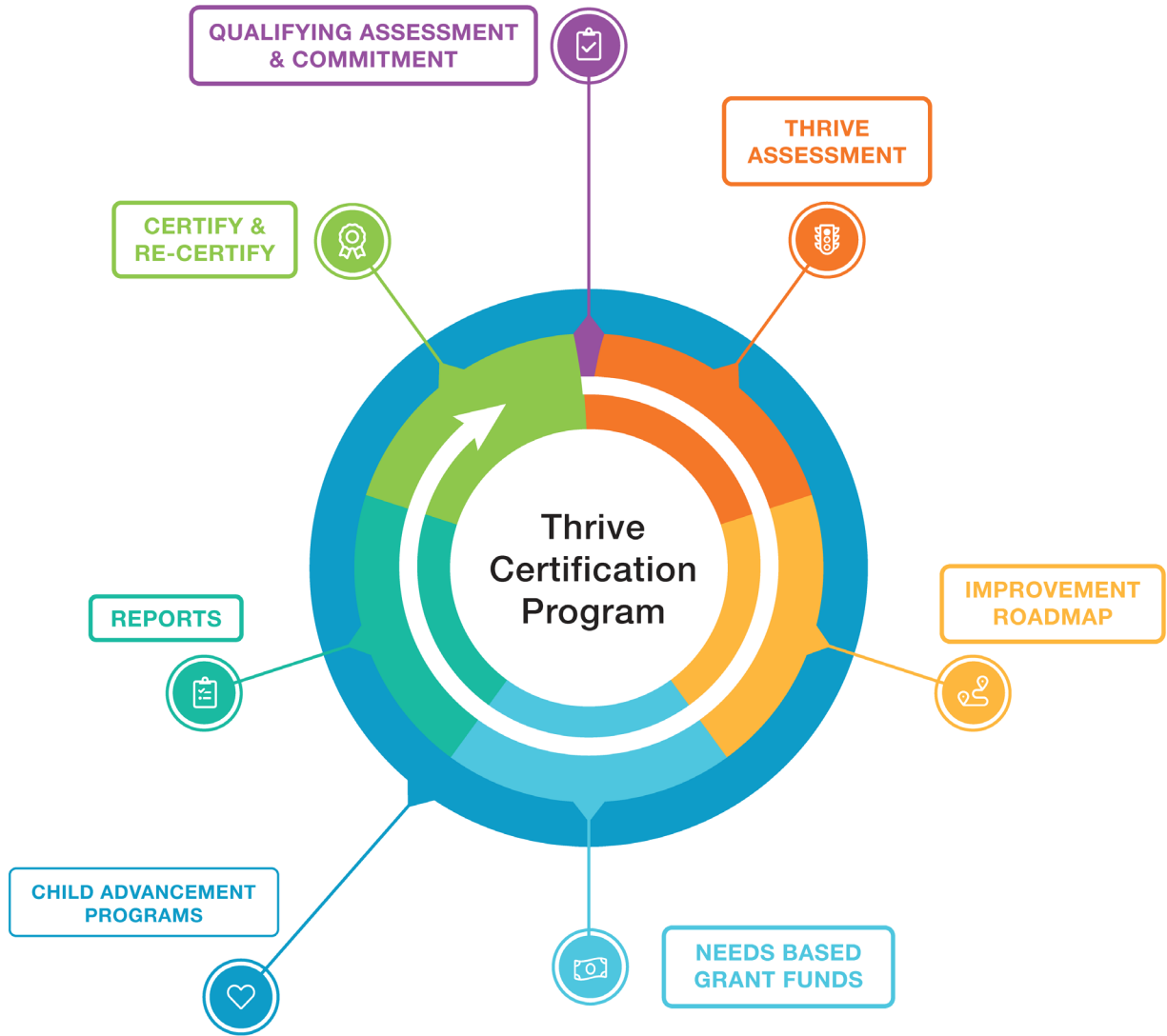


# HOME IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

November | 2022



# The Thrive Plan



## QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT & COMMITMENT

The Qualifying Assessment is the first step in partnership with an orphanage home. It measures an orphanage's ability to manage, to be transparent, and provide quality care.

*This step only occurs once.*



## IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

The IR is a guiding document for the orphanage and other partners, with outlined priorities to help the orphanage reach *thriving* in each of the 15 Standards of Care.



## CERTIFY & RE-CERTIFY

Certification is achieved through various observations, a financial review, minimum thrive score, access to therapy, and caregiver training. Homes recertify annually to ensure standards continue to be met.



## THRIVE ASSESSMENT

The Thrive Assessment measures an orphanage's ability to meet the needs of its children in 15 categories called the Standards of Care, based on the United Nations Rights of a Child. Each standard is assigned a level from "surviving" to "thriving."



## NEEDS BASED GRANT FUNDS

Grant funding to address needs and administrative support is made available with the regular completion of the Improvement Roadmap.



## CHILD ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMS

Partnering with experts in the areas of Therapy, Education, Caregiver Support, and Family Placement & Mentorship paves the way to implement Child Advancement Programs. These are available based on availability of partners.



## REPORTS

Reports and documentation are required of the orphanages and partners we work with so impact can be communicated to donors regularly.





## Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lift Orphans from Surviving to Thriving.” We are dedicated to programs that offer long-term success. Through vetted relationships and clear priorities, we help connect donors to programs that are already working.

Each Improvement Roadmap (OIR) is built with the home's leadership after reviewing the results from the Thrive Assessment. In order to provide children with better outcomes, the leadership prioritizes initiatives and works with A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) to create a plan for the next six months and beyond. The result is a document that allows donors and other parties to clearly see how they can contribute to improving the environment that will allow orphaned children to thrive.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the home's leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most homes, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our orphanage partners, and we demonstrate that commitment through grants made to help achieve strategic initiatives, coordinating with a network of partners to help address needs, and building strong, ongoing relationships with the home's leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Homes will be recertified annually, using the Thrive Assessment and building a new OIR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then reports back to donors, sharing the home's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with home's leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.

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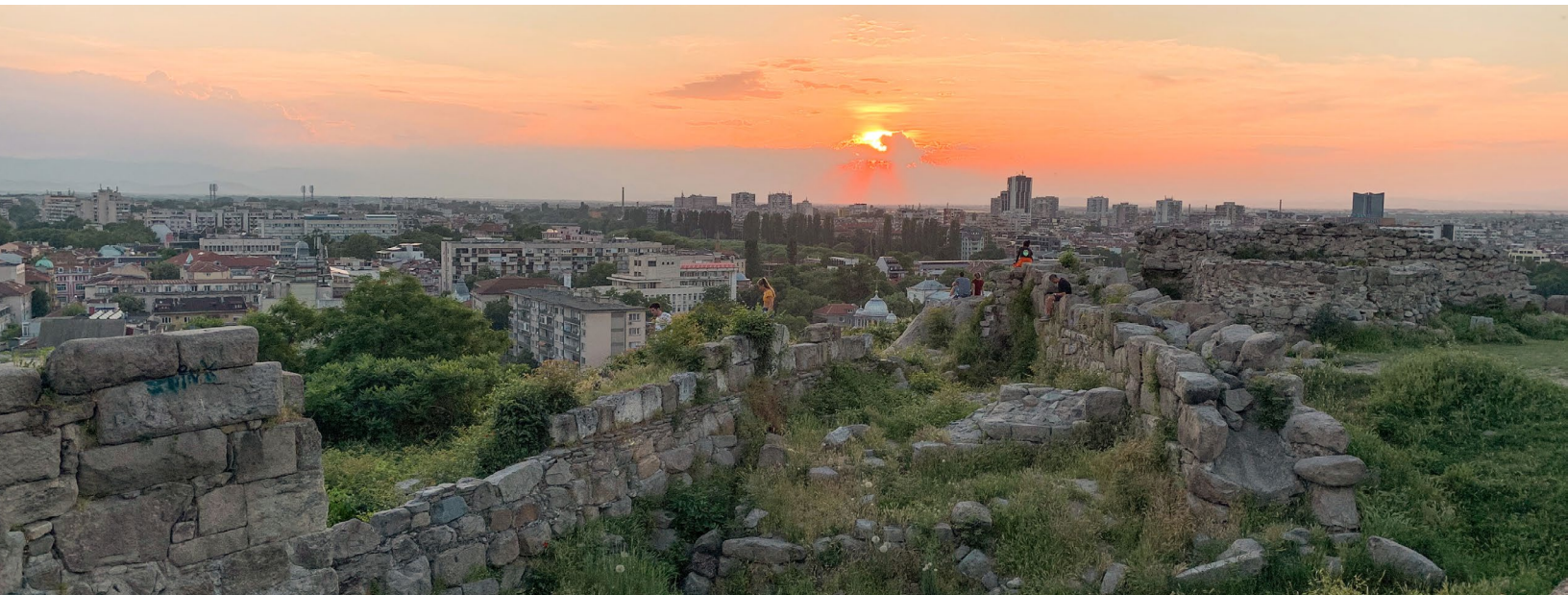
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# Overview of Orphanage

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## Background

Family Type Care Center (FTCC) Detska Kushta--the Children's Home--is a residential care center designed specifically to provide a family-like atmosphere for children who cannot enter the foster care system or receive care from family or relatives. The home can accommodate 15 residents. Currently, 11 children--seven girls and four boys, ages 3 to 13--are cared for at Detska Kushta.

The director at Detska Kushta, Yordanka Popova, leads a group of several social workers, a nurse, and caregivers. The team at Detska Kushta strives to maintain an environment where the children in their care have opportunities to develop both as individuals and as members of a community. The director and staff at Detska Kushta work to help the children gain cognitive and social skills, especially aware of their need to overcome traumatic and stressful situations. The FTCC also works with any available family members, including parents and relatives, to minimize the child's stay at Detska Kushta. Family reunification is the highest goal if it is considered in the child's best interests.

Good connections and partnerships:

Over the years, Detska Kushta has benefited from the partnership of several organizations, including Agapedia Bulgaria Foundation, Educational Support, Social Teahouse (Varna), Divisi (Plovdiv), Plusheno Meche, and the Movement of Bulgarian Mothers. These organizations provide funds for activities and holidays for the children. Children with special needs also receive opportunities to develop their talents through additional funding and opportunities. Thanks to these partnerships, the services, and facilities for children and young people have been improved. This, in turn, allows Detska Kushta to continue to function and strive to offer children a happy and normal life.

# Mission

The mission of Detska Kushta is to improve the standard of living and care of children within a family-like environment.

To achieve this, the team at Detska Kushta strives to provide the following:

- Quality physical and mental health care
- Educational and extracurricular activities
- Opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with significant people in the child's life
- Guidance and opportunities regarding choices, especially as children move towards independence

As they move forward toward these goals, Yordanka and her team are involved in the daily life of children. If necessary, specialists from other services, including a nurse, are invited to participate. Yordanka also works closely with other institutions and organizations to provide opportunities for the children.

## What Makes Orphanage Unique?

The uniqueness of Detska Kushta lies in the children, Yordanka, and the team, and the atmosphere they create together. Their pet dog, Lucky, helps too! Despite high turnover, the current staff is motivated and wants to provide excellent care for children.

## Long-Term Vision

In the next ten years, Yordanka wants to repair the building. Long term, this includes repairing the roof and attic, which would be a wonderful place where children can spend their free time on cold winter days. Yordanka would also like to transform the outdoor area into a safe playground. To achieve this vision, Detska Kushta needs help from organizations such as the One Heart Foundation and ACHF, as well as from donors, including companies and individuals.

### WHAT PIECES OF THE VISION DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS?

In the next 2-3 years, Yordanka wants to replace three interior doors, sinks, showers, toilet bowls, and tiles in the kitchen; buy 2 heating and cooling units; and repaint the walls.



# The Thrive Assessment

## What is the Thrive Assessment?

The United Nations (UN), an international organization, has worked tirelessly to find ways to promote a better quality of life so that basic needs are met. In 1959, the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, and nutrition.

Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation ([miraclefoundation.org](http://miraclefoundation.org)), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights to the children in their care. This Thrive Scale not only gives child care facility leaders a picture of how they're doing, but specific and practical steps to improve.

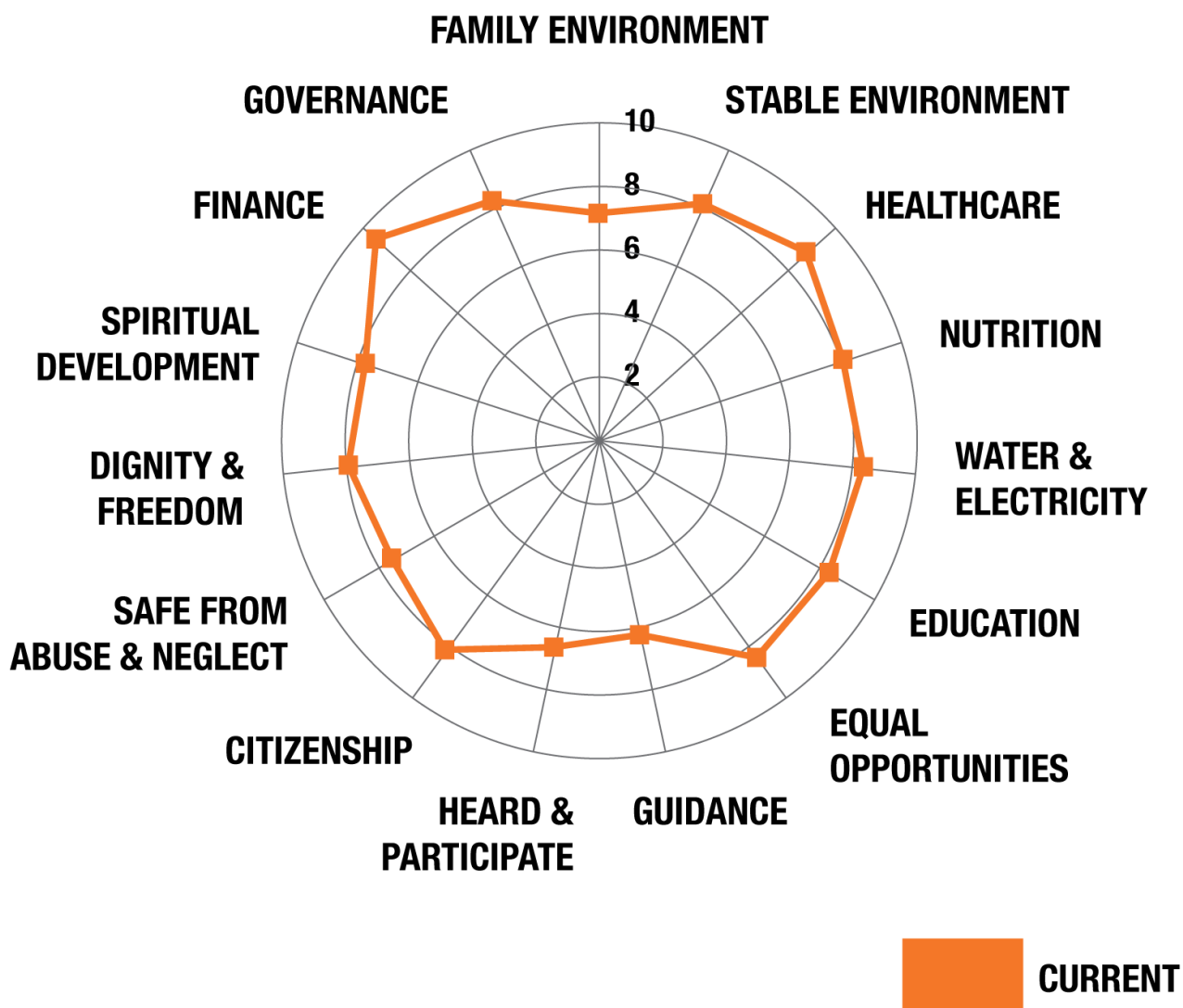


With permission, A Child's Hope Foundation has revised The Thrive Scale to make it adaptable for orphanages. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standard, resulting in a total of 15 ACHF standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future.

The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months to chart the progress of each standard. It, along with the Orphanage Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.



# Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage







## Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

At the moment, Detska Kushta is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The caregivers work eight-hour shifts, ensuring that the children are cared for around the clock. Yordanka tries to create a work environment where social workers are motivated to stay on the job. But this is a difficult task because of the low pay for this type of work and workers' lack of awareness of the responsibilities they are taking on. Yordanka has managed to gather a team of young people, but she is skeptical about whether they will be able to keep up with the physical and emotional demands of this kind of work. She realizes that with such low wages, she cannot attract quality people willing to stay for a long period. Another factor she sees as a problem is that social workers become friends with children, leading to a blurring of boundaries.

Although there is room for 15 children at Detska Kushta, there are only 13 children living there right now. Yordanka has been asked to try to keep one space open in case of emergencies. Currently, there are no complete orphans, as all of the children have living relatives. When appropriate, the children can have contact with their parents or relatives after the first two or three months. Currently, three children visit their biological families on weekends. One child is taken twice for two hours each month. On August 29, 2022, two children—a sister, 4, and a brother, 10—were adopted in Italy. There are currently no children registered for adoption.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The children do feel like a family. Although—like all children—they often quarrel, they are quick to defend each other from outsiders. Yordanka and her team maintain order and discipline while giving love and attention to the children treated with love and respect. All children are addressed by name, and derogatory nicknames are forbidden. Both social workers and caretakers interact and play with the children and engage them in various activities, including games and art. The social workers keep records of each child, and staff members meet at least once a month for a team meeting.

Yordanka and her team have put a lot of effort into establishing age-appropriate rules and consequences as they help the children mature into responsible adults. For example, rather than corporal punishment, discipline includes the temporary loss of an item or extra chores.

The FTCC does not have catering but instead fosters a family-like environment by all cooking together. In addition to at-home activities such as cooking, the children go to the movies or the theater once a month. For out-of-town trips, a parent must fill out informed consent forms. Despite efforts made by Yordanka and the team to arrange field trips—to the sea or the

mountains, for example—they face difficulties. To get permission for such activities, Yordanka has reached out to Child Protective Services and is waiting to hear back from them. There is an approved list of camps the children can visit, but the funding for such activities comes from donors, so there is often little money available. Currently, in Bulgaria, children living in FTCCs are victims of prejudice; they are often considered inferior and undeserving of typical childhood experiences. For example, although they sometimes go to the seaside near Bourgas, they are only allowed to use the unrenovated student housing

Detska Kushta would gladly accept volunteers to accompany the children and their caregivers on excursions or field trips.

- ☐ The home needs a budget for more frequent cinema and theater visits.
- ☐ The children deserve better conditions for both summer and winter vacations.



## Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **THRIVING** level. Children have access to basic medical and dental care, and caregivers help them learn good health and hygiene habits daily. The home is clean, but it is outdated and in need of repair. Children have easy access to water and soap. All children are vaccinated, and girls are provided with sanitary supplies and counseling. Detska Kushta works with a pediatrician and an emergency hospital. There is one child with diabetes who receives regular medical care and one with mild mental retardation at the FTCC.

Each child is given a thorough medical check-up at check-in, including necessary blood tests and vaccinations. The children are regularly checked for lice, and the staff uses preventive measures against lice infestations.

Children don't get regular orthodontic checkups because they are expensive. They have had only one significant case, and the child received appropriate care.

Although difficult, the Detska Kushta has set aside money for emergencies. With the municipality's permission, money from the budget can be transferred from one line item to another.

No steps have been identified at this time.





## Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The center does not have a nutritionist, but weekly and monthly menus are prepared by a nurse who ensures that the children receive a balanced diet, including fruits and vegetables. Standards of hygienic food preparation are followed. Donated food is accepted but must be accompanied by a certificate with an expiration date. The FTCC participates in food preparation training every 2-3 months with a certified trainer.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to Clean Water and Electricity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Detska Kushta is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The building has four bedrooms, three of which have four beds and one which has three. The accommodation of the children considers gender, age, and individual needs.

A person in charge of maintenance works at the FTCC part-time. The leadership has developed an evacuation plan, with a drill carried out twice a year for educational purposes. A system of internal control and video surveillance has also been introduced to ensure the security and safety of children. At Detska Kushta, the power goes out very rarely. Heating is provided by multiple wall units, but if the power goes out, there is no backup plan for heating. The home has access to clean drinking water from the tap. Although they are usable, the showers and sinks are old, and the plumbing system often needs repair.

The entire facility needs repainting. To improve safety and security and to save money, the FTCC would like to install photocells/motion detectors at each corner of the building.

- ☐ Installation of photocells/motion detectors (\$200)
- ☐ Replace 1 shower, 1 sink, floor tiles (\$500)
- ☐ The FTCC needs two heating/cooling wall units (\$1800)



## Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. Two children attend kindergarten, and a third child, 5 years old, is sick and, therefore, not yet enrolled. The remaining children attend school. Appropriate testing is done to identify children with special needs. Some children have difficulties in school and are enrolled in educational support activities. If an educational problem arises, a psychologist is on call. If there is a child with special needs, then it is necessary to issue a referral so that the child can receive appropriate services. Currently, there is one child of Roma origin who is learning Bulgarian. He can count to 50 and knows the letters, but he has problems speaking and reading in Bulgarian. Children who attend school have access to a computer if they are involved in online learning, but they have to take turns as there are only two computers. They don't have tablets.

Seven of the children visit The Agapedia Foundation once a week. This foundation conducts group activities for the children. For example, it encourages them to save money for their summer and winter camps by helping them make cards and sell them. The children also attend the workshops facilitated by the Foundation Center for Street Children, where they mainly take the pottery course. Children make tiles, little houses, and cards. The children have access to art supplies. They also attend demonstrations at the fire station.

The children have time to pursue their own educational interests, even though there is no funding to study an additional subject outside school. The children often read books, and sometimes the older ones read to the younger ones. The caregivers also read them stories.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **THRIVING** level. The children have appropriate opportunities based on their ages. For example, they decide what clothes to wear and have the right to decide what to do in their free time if they receive permission.

Sometimes the children hold meetings to discuss various issues, such as menu items. Children have the right to ask questions about any health procedures they undergo. Among the children, some individuals stand out as leaders. Sometimes games are organized in which children play the role of a social worker.

No steps have been identified at this time.





## Right to Guidance

**SURVIVING**

**SUSTAINING**

**THRIVING**

Detska Kushta is currently at a **SURVIVING** level. The children have the right to guidance. There is access to a psychotherapist every week, and some children have weekly meetings with a psychologist, which is determined by the Department of Child Protection. When a child is placed at Detska Kushta, it is determined whether he or she needs to visit a psychologist. This guidance and counseling are available for 6 months to one year if the child needs it. Some children visit a psychologist for support with difficult topics. No matter what happens, the children are always encouraged to talk to Yordanka.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

**SURVIVING**

**SUSTAINING**

**THRIVING**

Currently, Detska Kushta is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The children can decide what to wear and what to do in their free time and are involved in planning the menu. The children are taught about the importance of following rules. If they break a rule, they may lose a favorite item, for example, their PlayStation. This positive discipline has had a very good effect on the children. If they were asked why they lost the privilege to play with the PlayStation, they recognized that it was because they were disobedient.

☐ The FTCC would like to develop individualized goals and future plans for each child.



## Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

**SURVIVING**

**SUSTAINING**

**THRIVING**

Currently, Detska Kushta is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The children are taught to accept responsibility for their actions. For example, if a child breaks something on purpose, they must pay for it out of pocket money. The children are also expected to fulfill their personal responsibilities. They are responsible for general household chores, setting and clearing the tables, and making beds. The caretakers and social workers are examples of good etiquette and appropriate social interaction with the children. In the case of inappropriate behavior, the first response is a discussion with the child, many times, if necessary. When punishment appears appropriate, it is administered in an appropriate, positive way.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Detska Kushta is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The team members at the FTCC treat the children with respect and avoid physical punishment because it is prohibited by law and because they do not believe in this method of discipline. Yearly, staff members attend a seminar on positive discipline techniques and alternatives to corporal punishment. The staff members are not allowed to be alone with a child in their room for more than 5 minutes.

The children have access to social workers in case there is any type of abuse happening in the home. The children also have access to a “complaints” box to ensure their voices are heard. When resolving issues, social workers act as referees or counselors, and the children naturally turn to the people with whom they have built a relationship of trust. Often, however, the children who do the most complaining are the same ones who are the aggressors in the conflict. Because of this, the team finds it useful to discuss problems with all involved children.

The FTCC has access to a psychologist every week. When a child is placed in the FTCC, he or she is assessed to determine whether or not appointments with a psychologist are indicated. Some children are required to meet with a psychologist by Child Protective Services. Often these meetings are required from 6 months to a year.

There are no safety issues at Detska Kushta. During the night, there is outdoor lighting, the outer door to the courtyard is locked, and the home's watchdog, Lucky, always warns the nighttime personnel if there are unwanted visitors.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. The children have the right to privacy within the limits of what is safe. The children have nicknames for each other that would be considered derogatory if one of the staff used them, but they use them in between themselves without feeling offended. Yordanka and her team teach good manners and respect for others. For example, the children make a very good impression on people because they always speak respectfully, using the correct grammatical formal terms when addressing adults.

Twice a year, Yordanka takes the children on a one-week holiday - in the summer to the sea and in the winter to the mountains. If the full amount is not covered by donors, the rest is taken from their budget. One of the organizations sponsoring them is the Movement of Bulgarian Mothers.

No steps have been identified at this time.





## Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. The children do not usually take part in a spiritual community. However, they have the right to attend church if they want to. The home celebrates important religious holidays such as Easter, Christmas, birthdays, and the liturgical name days of the children, Yordanka, and the team. The only spiritual or religious material available and accessible is the Bible.

To move to the thriving level, the home could provide more spiritual and religious materials and encourage children to attend church and liturgy if they like. One possibility could be for children to learn about the Orthodox Church's role in Bulgarian history.

- ☐ The FTCC would like to provide spiritual and religious materials appropriate to the culture of the children.
- ☐ According to the wishes of the children, arrangements could be made for them to participate in religious services as appropriate.



## Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at a **THRIVING** level. The FTCC has a full-time accountant. All expenses are accounted for, and there is no misuse of funds. Every year, an internal control and inventory are carried out, as well as an audit. Everything that is bought is accounted for; otherwise, it must be paid for with personal money.

No steps have been identified at this time.



## Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

**SUSTAINING**

THRIVING

Detska Kushta is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. The home meets licensing, audit, and management requirements. Members of the team have regular monthly staff meetings and all incident reports and training records are maintained. The staff attends training with a supervisor on appropriate boundaries, work expectations, and work habits and methods. The supervisor for these meetings is an external psychologist and psychotherapist, and team interaction is discussed with him. In addition to monthly team meetings, individual interviews are conducted every four months. The FTCC does not have a board of directors, as this role is performed by the mayor.

No steps have been identified at this time.

## Strategic Initiatives

### A PIANO AND A STAND FOR THE CHILDREN TO PRACTICE

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The children attend piano and xylophone lessons at Divizi House of Musical Magic in Plovdiv and need to practice at home. Purchase a Yamaha P-45 Digital Piano Synthesizer and a Yamaha L2 Keyboard Stand X-Form Black (\$530) and a Thomann THTX 3.0 Xylophone (\$300).
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	<\$5,000

### UPGRADE THE BATHROOMS

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Old showers, sinks, and bathroom tile need to be replaced. (\$500)
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	<\$5,000

### RENOVATION OF THE YARD - ALIGNMENT AND PAVING

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Children need to play in the yard, but most of it is covered with dirt. When it rains it is muddy, so a child-friendly surface is needed. (\$2000)
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	<\$5,000



# Current Orphanage Improvement Partners



## One Heart Bulgaria

One Heart Bulgaria was founded in 2003 in order to improve the lives of children living in Bulgarian orphanages. Since that time, they have impacted thousands of children through their programs and initiatives. Visit [www.oneheart-bg.org](http://www.oneheart-bg.org) for more information!

For a list of projects and opportunities to coordinate on orphanage initiatives go to [www.AChildsHopeFoundation.org](http://www.AChildsHopeFoundation.org).



