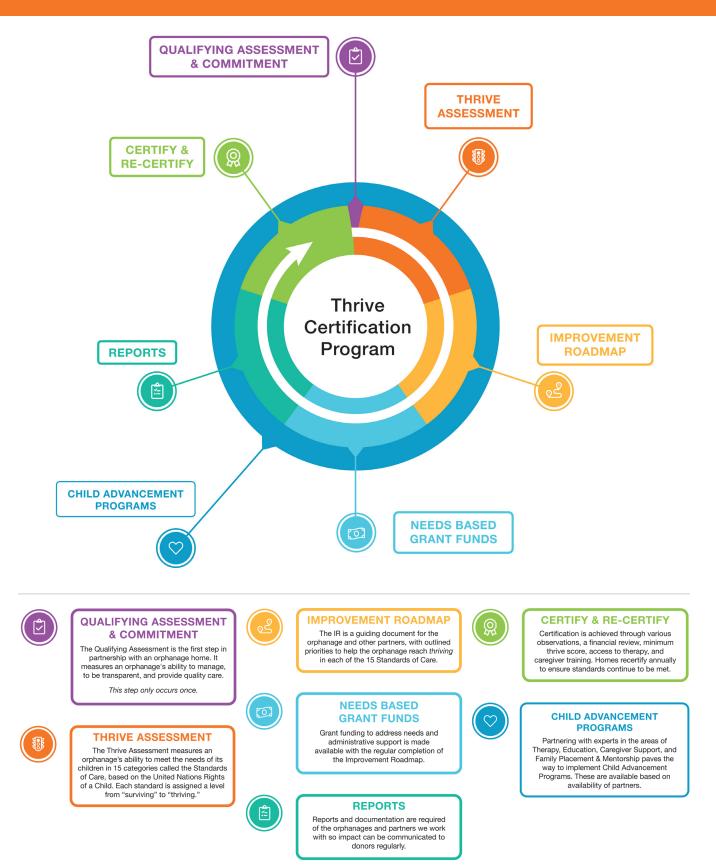
# **Mother Teresa**

## **Bulgaria**

# INDERVIEW NO CONTRACTOR OF CON





## **Thrive Plan Agreement**

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to "Lifting 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. Once an initial Thrive Assessment is completed, an Improvement Roadmap (IR) is built with the orphanage leadership after reviewing the results. In order to provide children with better outcomes, orphanage 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. Following the recommendations of the IR, the home progresses on the road to certification.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the Orphanage Leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most orphanages, 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 orphanage leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Orphanages that achieve certification will be recertified annually as they use the Thrive Assessment and build a new IR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then shares that information with donors, highlighting the orphanage's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with orphanage leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.



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# **Overview of Orphanage**

# Background

The Family Type Care Center (FTCC) Mother Teresa is a residential-style home for children from the Plovdiv region who are currently unable to enter the foster care system or live with their family of origin. Mother Teresa provides children ages 12 to 19 a family-like environment where they have opportunities to develop as individuals and as community members. The director and staff at Mother Teresa work to help the children gain both cognitive and social skills, being especially aware of their needs to overcome traumatic and stressful situations. The FTCC also works with any available family reunification is the highest goal for Mother Teresa if it is considered to be in the best interests of the child. Ivanka Popova, the director of Mother Teresa, leads a team of six, including social workers, a staff nurse, and a financial secretary. The FTCC follows a budget set by the municipality and has also set aside a small budget for emergencies.

**Good connections and partnerships:** Over the years, Mother Teresa 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 Mother Teresa to continue to function and strive to offer children a happy and normal life.

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## Mission

Mother Teresa's mission is to continue to maintain and improve the standard of living and care at the home with special emphasis on developing a unique "family-type" atmosphere. To achieve this, Ivanka and her team strive to raise happy children by providing them with excellent housing, proper nutrition, and appropriate healthcare and education. The main goal of the FTCC is to provide a quality of life that ensures full physical, emotional, and cognitive development and social inclusion of each child in their natural environment by providing personalized care in attentive and supportive conditions. Ivanka and her team go beyond the basics, however. They treat children with respect and teach them to behave respectfully in return. They strive to provide support to help each child reach their full potential.

## What Makes This Orphanage Unique?

The management and team are a wonderful part of the "family" at Mother Teresa. Ivanka strives to motivate the staff, despite the high turnover rate that is unfortunately common in this line of work. Because of the emphasis on family-like conditions, a great deal of attention is placed on finding and retaining staff that is willing to provide care for the children. Because of these efforts, Mother Teresa is an example of an FTCC that creates a sense of family in children.

## **Long-Term Vision**

Over the next ten years, Ivanka wants to continue to create an atmosphere where children feel safe, protected, and cared for. Ivanka also wants to replace or repair the aging facility that is in need of constant repair. To achieve this, Mother Teresa needs help from organizations such as 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?

Over the next 2-3 years, Ivanka hopes that the children who leave Mother Teresa will be able to integrate into an adult society based on what they learned from her. To begin work on the grounds and buildings, the FTCC needs to repaint the fence, replace the dishwasher, and purchase a water dispenser and two shoe lockers. To provide more opportunities for the children, the FTCC would like to purchase musical instruments.



## 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 all people's 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), 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 for 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.

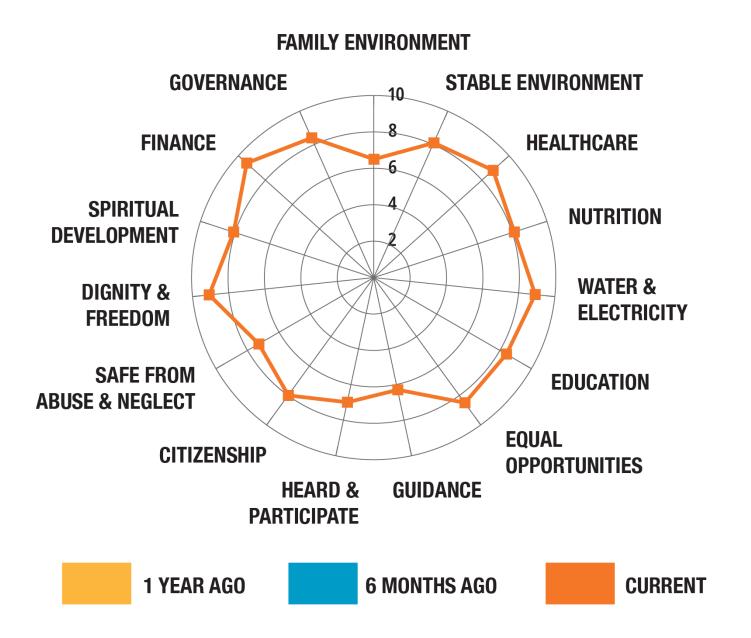


# **The Thrive Assessment**

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 standards, resulting in a total of 15 Rights of the Child used by ACHF. 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

Mother Teresa is currently at a SUSTAINING level. A team of caregivers works eight-hour shifts, ensuring children receive full-time care. Ivanka is trying to create a work environment where social workers are motivated to stay. This is a difficult task because of the lack of motivation on the part of the workers due to low pay and workers' lack of awareness of the responsibility they are taking on. Although many children have biological families, only a few have regular contact with them. Ivanka tries to encourage visitation whenever possible, but at the end of the day, it's a complicated situation that depends on the family and social services.

No steps have been identified at this time.



Mother Teresa is at a **SUSTAINING** level. Ivanka and the team of caregivers try to interact with the children in a caring way, similar to the situation that would be typical in a healthy family. Emphasis is placed on participation in activities such as after-school socializing, discussion, and other opportunities to interact and share in an age-appropriate, healthy way. Ivanka and her team strive to interact positively with the children daily. For example, from time to time, Ivanka or the social workers take the children shopping. Discipline is sometimes a problem because some children run away from the FTCC. As a result, the police and the child protection department are notified. The staff attends training on positive discipline techniques and alternatives to corporal punishment once a year. Although psychological therapy is available, most children do not want to participate, and Ivanka cannot force them to.

No steps have been identified at this time.

#### **SUSTAINING**

### THRIVING

#### **SUSTAINING**

#### THRIVING

## **Right to Healthcare SUSTAINING** THRIVING SURVIVING

Mother Teresa is at a THRIVING level. Children have access to basic medical and dental care, and caregivers help them learn good health and hygiene habits. The building is clean. Good health records are kept at Mother Teresa; if a child arrives without all the necessary documents, documents are located (or initiated) and maintained at the home. Although children have eye exams, this does not happen every year. Children do not undergo orthodontic examinations because they are expensive and considered non-essential. Although the children are encouraged to brush their teeth twice daily, the caregivers struggle to enforce this habit. Upon check-in, medical documents certifying the child's current state of health are presented, and each child is given a thorough check-up.

No steps have been identified at this time.



Currently, Mother Teresa is at a **SUSTAINING** level. The menu is chosen together with the participation of the children. Caretakers prepare the food, and if the children are willing, they can help cook or participate in food preparation. Care is taken to ensure that the food is prepared following safety and hygiene standards. The kitchen and dining room are aired out frequently and are generally clean. Although the food is not prepared by a certified nutritionist, all of the FTCC employees who participate in cooking undergo food preparation safety training and receive a yearly certificate. Four meals are provided daily, with portion control according to the recipe being followed. The children receive sufficient protein from meat and fish and are given fruit twice daily. Although all the children don't always like the food that is prepared, this is a matter of taste, not quality or quantity.

No steps have been identified at this time.

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SURVIVING

Currently, Mother Teresa is at a **THRIVING** level. The water is safe to drink, although it is highly chlorinated.Because of this, Ivanka would like to provide a water dispenser. The FTCC has yearly inspections of the electrical system and the safety and serviceability of the lighting fixtures. The power goes out very rarely. Mother Teresa hires a part-time building maintenance worker who ensures no burnt-out light bulbs or broken lockers. The sink, showers, and faucets are often broken, mostly by the boys, but everything is repaired. At night, the courtyard is sufficiently lit with external lighting and is located near a stadium that provides light. The buildings are heated and cooled by electric heaters and air conditioners, but if the power goes out, there is no backup plan for heating. Mother Teresa would like to develop an emergency plan in case the power or water goes out.

- □ Water dispenser (\$200)
- □ Plan for heating/cooling in case of power outages.



SURVIVING

Currently, Mother Teresa is at a **THRIVING** level. Every child is enrolled and is expected to go to school. Because of the trauma that some children experience, there is occasional truancy. For example, currently, there is a 15-year-old child who runs away to be with her grandmother, because she feels safe there. Each of the children has a laptop provided by the city, which was used for learning during the restrictions due to COVID-19. The laptops are kept by the headmistress and given to the children for educational purposes only. All children, except those with an IEP, can count and write. If a child has a learning disability, this is identified at school through a speech therapist and a psychologist. There are opportunities for tutoring every day after school, and social workers at the FTCC are available to help the children with homework. The children all regularly read age-appropriate books together. There is a library of books available for all ages, which are provided by donors. There is also funding for some of the children to attend extra lessons. In the Divizi House of Musical Magic (Plovdiv), a 17-year-old girl is learning piano through a program provided by Divizi. Children with learning disabilities attend Educational Support for the subjects they struggle with at school. Several girls make decorations for champagne bottles, which earns them pocket money. Teenagers also get involved in making things for Christmas and Easter markets. Other children, if necessary, attend sessions with a psychologist. There are psychologists available at Mother Teresa, and at this stage, there is no need for an additional psychologist. Each child has a tutor and a mentor with whom they discuss grades at school. Grades are also discussed with the director. The social workers and

## **Right to Clean Water and Electricity**

#### **SUSTAINING**

#### THRIVING

#### SUSTAINING

#### THRIVING

the director also have access to the children's grades. The mentors discuss each child's school performance with the class teacher each week. The children are taught to use computers, including Word and Excel, with the support of the Social Tea House foundation in Varna. This year, four teenagers participated there in an internship for 10 days. One girl participated in the Erasmus program in Smolyan with the help of the Social Teahouse. The children have access to art materials, and four enjoy drawing. Talented children are given a chance to take music lessons and perform - so far, the children have participated in two concerts in Plovdiv and two in Stara Zagora. Mother Teresa cooperates with the Agapedia Foundation, the Social Teahouse - Varna, Divisions (Plovdiv), SOS Children's Villages, and the One Heart Foundation to provide educational opportunities.

Buy a Yamaha P-45 Digital Piano Synthesizer and a Yamaha L2 Keyboard Stand X-Form П Black (\$530)

## **—** Right to Equal Opportunities



Currently, Mother Teresa is at a **THRIVING** level. All residents in the FTCC have the right to get an education. Children under the age of 14 are accompanied on their way to school. The young people also participate in planned extracurricular activities, such as cooking, soccer, music lessons, drawing, and English. SOS Children's Villages, an Austrian foundation, provides English language courses. For young people who have reached the age of 16, SOS Children's Villages provides hairdressing and driving courses, so the children can be prepared for real life after leaving home. SOS Children's Villages also pays 6 months' rent for every young person aging out of the orphanage. Also, every year there is a soccer world cup for homeless youth, which students from the FTCC have had the opportunity to participate in, thanks to funding from a special grant. Last year it was held in Cardiff, and this year it was in Peruštitsa, which is guite close to Plovdiv. Almost every week, two of the youngsters play soccer.

No steps have been identified at this time.

#### A Child's Hope Foundation



#### SURVIVING

Mother Teresa is currently at a SUSTAINING level. Children have the right to guidance and access to a psychotherapist every week at the FTCC. Some children have weekly meetings with a psychologist, ordered by the Department of Child Protection. When each child is admitted to Mother Teresa, it is determined whether the child needs therapeutic care. This psychological care is available for 6 months up to one year if the child needs it. Half of the children visit a psychologist and have support for difficult topics and circumstances in their lives. As previously mentioned, the children often resist meeting with a psychologist. No matter what happens, many of the children--even the ones who have aged out of the center-come back for advice and guidance from Ivanka, who has built a strong rapport and relationship with them.

can develop a strong rapport with the children.



**SURVIVING** 

Mother Teresa is currently at a SUSTAINING level. Children in the FTCC can decide how to dress, what to do in their free time, and choose and plan their menu. Mother Teresa also gives children the opportunity to have leadership roles. Two years ago, they had "Director for a Day" and a "Social Worker for a Day" initiatives where a teenager was allowed to play the role of a director or a social worker for a day. However, when conducting these initiatives, the director and the social workers had to try to prevent the children from confusing the roles. The young person with the best grades in school has been allowed to lead in both initiatives. Another example is a young man who left home and currently works at Liebherr manufacturing company and at a car wash. He will get married in December to a girl living in the FTCC. The young man wants to apply to be a social worker at Mother Teresa, but because he has close friendships, the management of Mother Teresa will wait another 1-2 years. The leadership also facilitates children's commissions at Mother Teresa. Meetings are held three times a week, and careful minutes of the meetings are kept. The children are enthusiastic about the process and keep the records themselves. The young people offer suggestions for the menu. For example, they love certain dishes that are prepared on special occasions. The weekly menu is posted on the wall outside the kitchen so kids can see it. Because the area around the FTCC isn't always safe, there are strict rules during their free time about what children can do. Young people

#### **SUSTAINING**

#### THRIVING

Additional psychological/therapeutic counseling is needed, particularly by someone who

## **Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions**

#### SUSTAINING

#### THRIVING

policy to provide information to kids on procedures and would like guidance in this area. The home also does not currently have individualized plans for the children's development, although they have a folder on each child for medical information and birth certificates. The director would love to see an example of individualized plans and be trained to create them.

Help Mother Teresa identify appropriate Individualized Development Plans for the young people.

## $\Delta \Delta$ Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Mother Teresa is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. Children are taught to take responsibility for their actions. For example, a child must pay for intentional damage to property with his or her own pocket money. Young people are also expected to participate in responsibilities around the center and to maintain their personal schedules. For example, children must "turn in" their phones at 9:00 pm, and 10 pm is the curfew on weekdays and 11 pm on weekends. Breakfast is served before 6:45 am on school days. Ivanka and her team model etiquette and good behavior. When a child breaks the house rules, the team uses the situation as an opportunity to talk with the child, perhaps repeatedly, in addition to natural consequences that follow inappropriate behavior. The young people also participate in community service activities and social initiatives, such as city cleanup initiatives or visiting shelters for stray dogs. Some children were able to help the people in the flooded villages about a month ago.

No steps have been identified at this time.



Mother Teresa is currently on a **SUSTAINING** level. The staff treats the children respectfully and avoids physical punishment not only because it is prohibited by law, but also because they do not believe in this method of discipline. Once a year, 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. There are no security problems at Mother Teresa. Girls and boys live on separate floors. However, social workers do not attend training on how to prevent abuse. There is an official rule for checking visitors at Mother Teresa, but in reality, there are gaps in compliance with this rule. Anyone working at Mother Teresa must provide documentation that shows there have been no legal proceedings against them. At night there are enhanced security measures in the area. The building also has bars on the ground floor windows.

All members of the team should attend abuse recognition and prevention training.

SURVIVING



Currently, Mother Teresa is at a **THRIVING** level. The children are treated well. They have the right to a private life within the limits of what is permitted; for example, if they want to leave the house, they must always ask for permission. The building has capacity for 15 children, with four bedrooms, three of which have four beds and one with three. The children's rooms are assigned based on gender, age, and other needs. 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. Ivanka and her team teach good manners and respect for others. For example, 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, Ivanka takes the children on a one-week holiday - in the summer to the sea and winter to the mountains. If the total 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. To maintain the current level, the headmistress of the home hopes to provide additional opportunities for the children to participate in activities outside the home, including important local events.



Mother Teresa is currently at the SUSTAINING level. The children are usually not part of a spiritual community. However, they have the right to attend church if they want to. For example, the young man who recently aged out of the system and is currently working two jobs attended church every week. The home celebrates important religious holidays such as Easter, Christmas, birthdays, and the liturgical name days of the children, Ivanka, and her 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.

- materials appropriate to the children's culture.
- in religious services as appropriate.

#### **SUSTAINING**

#### THRIVING

#### SUSTAINING

#### THRIVING

The FTCC would like to provide appropriate spiritual and religious materials appropriate to the children's culture. The FTCC would like to provide appropriate spiritual and religious

According to the wishes of the children, arrangements could be made for them to participate



Currently, Mother Teresa is 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 procedure is carried out by order of the mayor, as well as an audit. Everything that is bought with FTCC funds is accounted for.

No steps have been identified at this time.



Mother Teresa is currently at the SUSTAINING level. The home meets all licensing, audit, and management requirements and holds regular monthly staff meetings. All incident reports and training records are kept. The staff attends training with a supervisor on boundaries, training, and work methodologies. The supervisor is an external psychologist and psychotherapist. Team interaction is discussed with him. Team meetings are held every month, and individual meetings are held every 4 months. The FTCC does not have a board of directors, as this role is performed by the mayor.

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## **Strategic Initiatives**

## **BUY A YAMAHA P-45 DIGITAL PIANO SYNTHESIZER AND A** YAMAHA L2 KEYBOARD STAND X-FORM BLACK AND A **THOMANN THTX 3.0 XYLOPHONE**

PROJECT SUMMARY	The childrer of Musical N
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$830 USD

## **PURCHASE OF TWO SHOE LOCKERS**

PRO	JECT SUMMARY	The children I
INIT	TAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$200 USD

## **REPLACEMENT OR UPGRADE TO ONE OF THE TOILETS**

PROJECT SUMMARY	The current
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$200 USD

en attend piano and xylophone lessons at Divizi House Magic in Plovdiv and need to practice at home.

need a space where they can change their outdoor shoes.

toilet is malfunctioning and needs to be replaced.

