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materských
centier**

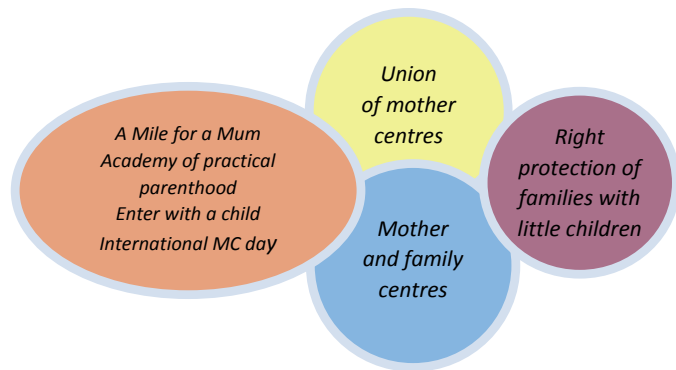
UNION OF MOTHER CENTRES

Slovakia – a country full of friends

**International mother centres day
10-10-2014**

**The Mother centres network has to be kind
and tolerant to each other internally
otherwise nobody from the outside would believe
that it can change the world.**





Union of mother centres

Union of mother centres (next only UMC) is non-governmental non-profit organization, which is operating in Slovakia since 2003. It unites 70 mother and family centres, which are established in cities and villages due to parental needs as citizens associations. The target group are families with children of various ages. It is a member of the international network MINE (Mother Centres International Network for Empowerment). It is financed through international grants, national projects and cooperation, sponsorships, assignation of 2 % from income tax or public collection „Thanks for you Mum”.

UMC mission and goal

The UMC mission is to achieve respect and acknowledgement of motherhood in society, jointly form supportive conditions for motherhood in the highest interest of the child, mother and family.

UMC Team

Statutories, regional coordinators (next RC):

- PhDr. Soňa Holíková – statutory responsible for UMC network, social consultancy, media, managing editor of Mother centres magazine, Facebook UMC, a member of the Government chamber for non-governmental non-profit organizations, RC for Bratislava region
- Ing. Daniela Konečná – statutory responsible for economy, project management, coordinator of project A step to independence
- PhDr. Zuzana Macurová – coordinator of campaigns A Mile for a Mum, International Mother Centres Day and RC for Trnava region

- Ing. Tatiana Bareán Žolnová – coordinator of campaign Academy of practical parenthood, graphics and IT, RC for Prešov region
- Ing. Jana Tuhá – Grundtvig national coordinator and RC for Žilina region
- Mgr. Jana Sýkorová – coordinator of campaign Enter with a child and RC for Trenčín region
- Monika Medvedová – RC for Banská Bystrica region
- Ing. Katarína Žarnovičanová – RC for Nitra region
- Ing. Silvia Orgoňová – RC for Košice region

History of UMC



1998

- **Establishment of the first MC** in Slovakia (MC Bambino in Poprad)

2000

- Mass establishment of centres with considerable support from the women from MC Bambino

2001

- First conference in MC Bambino „**Help us to help**“ with the presence of the Minister of labour,

social affairs and family, representatives from state administration, local governments, non-governmental organizations and existing MC

2002

- Establishment of the first MC anthem, recording of a videoclip from the MC environment with a refrain „We want to be together, what is wrong about it? So let us enter with a child!“
- Organization of „**Concert for all above 50 cm**“ in Bratislava with the presence of all MC in Slovakia

2003

- **Establishment of Union of Mother Centres** in Tajov with the presence of all 22 MC
- First general assembly of UMC. Gaining **first significant grant** from Bernard van Leer Foundation

2004

- Organization of event **Guinness world record** counting of number of people pushing prams and strollers on a 1 mile long track
- Establishment of a campaign „**How do we want to raise our children**“
- Publication of first issue of **magazine „Mother centres**“

2005

- Growth of number of members to 47 and another 22 on waiting list. Organization of an event „**Move with a pram – you move the world**” on the night before Mother’s Day in Bratislava in the presence of 296 people pushing a pram or stroller.
- Opening of **campaign „Enter with a child**”, which means to monitor Family friendly establishments
- **Gaining of second grant** from Bernard van Leer foundation „**Learning from each other brings benefit to a whole**” which lasted for 5 years

2006

- Renaming of the event to celebrate Mother’s day to **A mile for a Mum** due to growing interest from MC abroad
- **First International conference** in a collaboration with international network MINE in Bratislava with a topic „**How do we want to raise our children**” in the presence of more than **170 participants from 24 countries of the world (USA, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Uganda, Kenna, Rwanda, Brazil and other)**

2007

- Training of a team of **lectors in LSP methods** (Leadership support process) instructed by German MC network
- UMC is for the first time organizing public collection „**Thanks for you Mum**”

2008

- UMC becomes a member of international network FEFAP (European Federation of Unpaid Parents and Carers at Home)

2009

- **The second International conference** called „**Mother centres as Academies of practical parenthood**” (next APR) at Štrbské pleso in High Tatras in the presence of MC from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Poland, Austria, Russia, Italy and Uganda

2010

- **Developing of A mile for a Mum.** Number of registered people 17 210 in 40 cities in Slovakia
- **Families for families against flooding** – help for families in need after floodings in Slovakia

2012

- Gaining a substantial **institutional support from Stefan Batory foundation** (Civic Coalition Program, Stefan Batory Foundation) lasting for 2 years
- A mile for a Mum is joined by **Ireland, Serbia, Czech Republic**
- Publishing of **The first catalogue „Family and children friendly establishments”** under the campaign Enter with a child
- Realization of **3rd International Mother Centres Day** in historical theatre in Bratislava
- Gaining a significant grant through Programme of Swiss-Slovak cooperation to support the project **A step to independence** for 16 months term
- We have become a partner in **Grundtvig partnership**, which is a part of European grant within Lifelong Learning Programme for 2 years

2014

- A record number **27 543 registered participants at A Mile for Mum campaign**
- Gaining the leadership to organize **5th International Mother Centres Day** and an opportunity to introduce Slovak mother and family centres to the world

Longtime campaigns of UMC

Public collection „Thanks for you Mum”

It is a collection done throughout the whole Slovakia and is approved by the Ministry of internal affairs. It is a yearlong collection, but mostly demanded during celebrations of Mother's day. By buying a magnet priced for 1€ in the shape of a smiling sun or by sending a text message stating DMS (space) MAMA to 877, the public can support the campaigns of Union of Mother Centres as well as its activities and volunteering work of individual mother and family centres in Slovakia, which are dedicated to families, especially mothers at maternity and parental leave.



A Mile for a Mum

In one day to upgrade motherhood to the highest value in society.

Every year a day before Mother's day traditionally an event „A Mile for a Mum” takes place



throughout the whole Slovakia. It is an entertainment and cultural event for the whole family, organized by Union of Mother Centres along with mother and family centres in Slovakia. A part of this spectacular celebration is a walk of symbolic 1 mile. Every year it's walked in one day at the same time in many places in Slovakia and abroad by thousands of people by foot, on inline skates, on a bicycle, in a wheelchair or in a pram to thank Mum for her unique and irreplaceable role.

A Mile for a Mum is at the same time thanks for volunteering work of women-mothers in mother and family centres.

Union of Mother centres as an owner of the trade mark for the event „A Mile for a Mum” is allowing its members and sympathizers to organize this event. The event is obtaining again an international dimension because the celebrations of motherhood is joined every year by several centres from abroad.

Enter with a child

The name of the enlightenment campaign „Enter with a child” shouldn't be only a plea and a wish, but a natural right of all of us who are parents of little children, feel accepted in our society and our presence is welcomed.....



Not everywhere it is a matter of course the understanding of children and their special needs. Union of mother centres within the campaign “Enter with a child” is recognizing establishments which take into consideration specific needs of families with little children and allowing parents at maternity leave to spend this period in all respects and without limitations. UMC rewards them with a certificate „Family and children friendly establishment”. You can join the campaign as well – suggest an establishment which in your opinion deserves such an award.

Union of Mother Centres issues a catalogue „Family and children friendly establishments”, which you

can browse through on our web page <http://www.materskecentra.sk/uplfile/katalog-vstupte.pdf>

Academy of practical parenthood

It is not easy to be a good parent. We are not born with this ability, we have to learn it. A parent intuition could be developed. Practical skills in communication with a child and an opportunity to understand upbringing in a deeper context helps parents to develop in mother and family centres a campaign „Academy of practical parenthood”. Its unique activity is a course „How to understand your children and myself” which is accredited by the Ministry of education.

However in mother and family centres you can find many other activities aimed at parental education developing parental competences (health and child care, upbringing, preparation for delivery and breastfeeding, breastfeeding support groups, ergonomic carrying and others). The uniqueness of these activities in mother and family centres is hidden



in their informality, in opportunity to naturally share with other parents and a unique environment created just for families with children.

Mother centres magazine

Since 2004 this magazine serves to inform the public about activities of the Union of Mother Centres as well as individual mother and family centres. The main topics always include A Mile for a Mum, Enter with a child, Academy of practical parenthood, Volunteering, International Mother Centres Day and other successful projects and cooperation. Experts contribute with articles into educational, social, economic and legal advice columns. It is distributed for free to all members and sympathizers, districts and university libraries.



Mother and family centres



They are established in cities and villages due to parental needs as citizens associations which engage women, mainly mothers on maternity leave. They work predominantly as volunteers without claiming a reward or pay. As the UMC, mother and family centres are also not connected to any state or municipal budgets. The sources of income are various musical, dance, sport or language courses which are done for children and also mothers. The other ways to gain income are projects which centres can join. In case of acceptance, the finance is used for material support of centres, not for rewarding coordinators who are running and operating the centres. Mother centres offer families with children of various ages a safe environment where they can meaningfully enjoy the period of devoted motherhood. In centres, mothers can develop, educate, work on one-self and find kind support in new life situations. Each centre is specific and offers diverse activities. The most common activities except safe playroom in MC include:

- **Creative workshops**
- **Activities** like first steps to music, baby massage, reading and project fairy tales
- **Celebrations for wide public** for example carnival, celebrations of International Children 's Day, kite show, St. Nicolaus, Christmas party, A Mile for a Mum, IMCD and other
- **Workshops, advisory centre and lectures** for example psycho-prophylactic preparation for delivery of a baby, support breastfeeding group, infant carrying, supporting families in difficult life situation, marriage counselling, healthy lifestyle, alternative education and other.

There are centres which apart from these activities are dedicated to specific types of help, for instance:

- **Minor mothers and their children.** They learn together and improve in childcare and learn to accept their new life conditions
- **Parents and children with physical disability.** Centres offer them a space for collective meetings which mean a great help for such families.
- Regular **meetings of deaf mothers and their children.** Centres prepare various **programme**



for children (a theatre, games and competitions), **courses** (first aid, dance), **lectures** (problems with upbringing) or **sit-downs**. As an integration activity they try to take part in so called „world of sounds”. Overcoming communication barriers mutually is a great benefit for both sides.

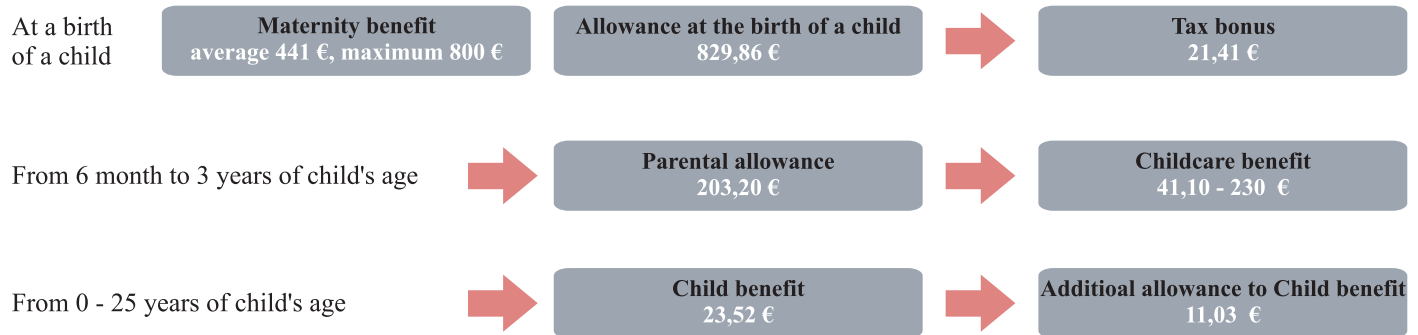
- **Dance courses** for example „A folklore in a heart” or „Minifolklore” are dancing courses to support and sustain Slovak folk tradition with small children.

Support of families and children in Slovak republic



Families with children are supported by Slovak government with one-off and repeated state social benefits. This allowance should assist parents to cover costs which appear when a baby or multiple babies are born at the same time and help them to organize for childcare, their upbringing and nutrition. UMC is trying to influence legal proposals, which could have a negative impact on families with little children with lower incomes, including middle class. An individual

Financial allowances for families with children



social consultancy is available too.

Financial allowances for parent to 1. 10. 2014:

1. Allowance at the birth of a child
2. Child benefit
3. Additional allowance to Child benefit
4. Parental allowance
5. Childcare benefit
6. Tax bonus – lower salary tax rate
7. Maternity benefits – capital benefit which is entitled to mother who has paid her social insurance.

Financial allowances no. 1 - 5 are paid to one of the parents without meeting any other requirements.

1. Allowance at the birth of a child

An amount of allowance at the birth of a child is:

- **829,86 €**, if a child is from first to third birth/delivery and has lived minimum for 28 days,
- **151,37 €**, if the child is from fourth and every following birth or if it is a child from first to third birth/delivery and hasn't live for 28 days

2. Child benefit

Child benefit is a state social allowance, by which the government is contributing to authorized person to cover upbringing and nutrition for dependent child. The amount of child benefit is from 1st January 2014 is **23,52 €**.

The benefit is paid once a month, from birth up to 25 years of the child's age or when the child finishes high school or university.

3. Additional allowance to Child benefit

The government pays extra to an authorized person to cover the upbringing and nutrition of the dependent child which doesn't apply for tax bonus (is not an employee). The amount of this allowance **11,03 €** per month.

4. Parental allowance

Parental allowance is a state social benefit, by which the government is contributing to an authorized person to cover proper childcare for a child up to 3 years of age or 6 years of age if a child has for a long term unfavourable health condition.

The allowance can be paid to a parent maximum to 3 years of child's age, or up to 6 years of age who has for a long term unfavourable health condition.

The amount: 203,20 € per month (from 1.1.2014).

A parent of twins gets **254 €** per month, a parent of triplets **304,80 €** per month.

If the authorized person is providing a proper care for **two and more at the same time born children**, the parental allowance in amount of 203,20 € is raised by 25 % for each child born simultaneously.

5. *Childcare benefit*

By granting childcare benefit the government is contributing to a parent or natural person, who is the guardian of a child to cover the childcare costs, if the person returns back to work before 3 years of the child's age.

Childcare benefit is granted **up to 3 years of the child's age or up to 6 years of age** if a child has long term unfavourable health condition.

The childcare amount per month is:

- At the same sum shown on receipts of authorized person, max. up to **230 €**,

- **41,10 €**, if childcare is provided by another natural person (for example a grandparent) and parental benefit is not paid to it or a parent who is conducting gainful employment and is not able to organize for childcare otherwise.

6. *Tax bonus*

The tax is lowered for the taxpayer by a sum of the tax bonus (not tax base), which is directly raising the salary to tax payer - employee.

From 1st July 2013, the tax bonus in total is **21,41 €** per month.

7. *Maternity benefit*

It is an individual insurance allowance, which is calculated from the salary of each woman. According to Social insurance statistics in 2013, there was **an average maternity benefit of of 441 € per month**.

The length of reimbursing of maternity benefit is:

- 34 weeks after starting maternity leave (approximately 6 weeks before planned delivery)
- 37 weeks for mothers – single parent
- 43 weeks if twins or multiples were born

A woman is entitled to maternity benefit if she paid insurance premium to Social insurance at least for 270 days before giving birth, the missing days cannot be paid after delivery and entitlement for maternity benefit does not occur.

Protective period for maternity benefit


The insured person whose sickness insurance has expired during pregnancy is entitled to maternity benefit in case the protective period was alive from 6th week before the expected delivery date stated by a doctor or real delivery date (protective period lasts for 8 months from the sickness insurance expiry).

This is a benefit for women who are made redundant when they inform their employer about pregnancy.

After 3 years of age a government/village/city/higher territorial unit is providing:

- 3 - 6 years – nursery (preschool education)
- 6 - 15 years – primary school
- 15 - 19 years – secondary school, gymnasium
- 19 - 24 years – university

Schooling is officially considered as fee free, but many „secondary” fees (like food, interest activities, collections for school building repairs, schooling aids and others) are relatively high considering an average salary in Slovakia is 835 € per month, and have to be paid by parents. Statistically though 58 % of people in Slovakia earn less than average salary, which means from 500 - 700 € brutto.

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PROGRAM ŠVAJČIARSKO-SLOVENSKEJ SPOLUPRÁCE SWISS-SLOVAK COOPERATION PROGRAMME



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