



ANNUAL BULLETIN OF THE ASSOCIATION  
OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH  
MALIGNANT DISEASES "ISKRA"

NO.6/JULY 2021

# iskra

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## **ANNUAL BULLETIN NO.6/JULY 2021**

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General Assembly is the highest body of the Association and consists of all full members of the Association.

The Assembly meeting is held once a year.

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Dijana Beric, B.Sc. Economist

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Malignant Diseases "Iskra"

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IMPRESSUM



**Dear friends and donors,  
dear children and parents**



The year behind us was globally marked by the COVID-19 Virus pandemic. The way we work and function has changed greatly. As always, we had to focus on the children who need to receive their therapies on time, without any delay.

Due to the unfavourable epidemiological situation, we closed the Parents' House for all visits, postponed the rehabilitation camp until further notice, as well as many other project activities.

It was a difficult year for both the children and doctors at the Department of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology, UCC RS. Regardless of the circumstances, many children have successfully completed their treatment, but we must not forget our angels who failed to cope with the disease.

We hope that the time of the Pandemic will soon be over and that we will work and act in our full capacity again, in accordance with our goals and tasks.

This year we have prepared for you a brief overview of our activities from all past years of our work.

*Dijana Beric, B.Sc. Economist  
President of the Association*

Iskra's  
*First*  
Six  
*years*



December 2014

## HOW IT ALL STARTED...

“While my son was being treated for leukaemia in Belgrade, we were staying at the Association of Parents and Children with Malignant Diseases “Zvoncica”, which operates within the Institute for Health Protection of Mother and Child. It was only then that we realised how much their support meant to us and we decided to establish a similar association in RS” - says Dijana Beric, mother of a child with leukaemia and one of the founders of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases based in Banjaluka. “Our aim was to establish an association to provide support to parents in difficult periods. Once a diagnosis has been made, parents face a period of uncertainty, they do not know who to refer to, where to take their children and other information they can get from those parents who have already been through such situation.” Today, Ms. Beric recalls that she became aware of the necessity of the project that would become the priority for the association: quality work would require a PARENTS’ HOUSE, which would replace gloomy hospitals, and a psychologist who would help both parents and children. Parents decided to hold the first General Assembly of the Association on 15 February, International Childhood Cancer Day.

Given that treatment is a long and arduous process and requires enormous physical and mental strength and material resources, and that the sick children come from all over RS, one of the burning problems their parents face is the inability to stay with the child. Maintaining a family atmosphere has proved to improve a child’s overall health and thus a better chance for recovery. Children and their parents feel safe in the Parents’ House because of the proximity of the hospital, but they also feel relaxed as there is no therapy in the House, no white coats and no doctor’s visits. The Parents’ house is to include 7 apartments, a kitchen, a dining room, a playroom with a living room, a laundry room, classroom, separate room for psychologist, an office and a hallway. There will be a green area with a playground in the yard and several parking lots for the needs of the tenants.



Dijana Beric and Rada Vjestica with the nurse Snjeza at the Clinical Centre Department in Banjaluka

RADA VJESTICA, THE ASSOCIATION BOARD CHAIR, recalls the time when the project PARENTS’ HOUSE was developed: “The construction of the Parents’ house was aimed to facilitate the long and difficult treatment of children with malignant diseases and allow their parents to stay with their children during the treatment. Malignant diseases cannot be cured fast, while all you need in that period is very expensive. Mothers stay with their children all the time which presumes that they have to quit their jobs, which in turn results in having less money on disposal.

Parents and children living outside Banjaluka and coming to the city for treatment are left on their own, they have no support whatsoever so they pay rent for apartments in order to be close to their children.

Families incur higher costs as they have to finance two households instead of one.” Children also need a parental home, because they feel tired and exhausted after painful therapies, so a warm atmosphere and a nice ambience help them to liven up and recover faster.”

# PARENTS' house

**Implementation of the project “Building a Parents’ House” was achieved thanks to the great generosity of the President of the Republic of Srpska. The office of the RS President secured the funds for the construction of the first Parents’ House in RS, which is currently being built within the complex of the Clinical Centre Banja Luka.**

Under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Srpska, a fundraising event /donor evening/ was organised in Banja Luka on December 24, 2014. On that occasion, political and public officials from the Republic of Srpska gathered together at the Administration Centre of the Republic of Srpska Government at 20:00.

At the same time, popular singers Romana, Jelena Tomasevic, Vlado Georgiev, Zeljko Samardzic, “Miligram” band and others were having a charity concert at Trg Republike.

This fundraising event ensured money for the construction of the Parents’ house while the citizens could participate by calling the charitable number 1458. The Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra RS” Banja Luka is grateful to all those who have shown their humanity and extended their helping hand to the “small brave hearts”.





## PROJECTS

December 2014

# Fundraising Event for the PARENTS' HOUSE



"With Love to the Brave Hearts" is an activity organized for the fifth time last year by the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Srpska to raise funds to help those in need. In December 2015, on the occasion of raising funds for the construction of the Parents' House, this activity achieved unprecedented success in the Republic of Srpska. By 23:00 of the day, more than 118,000 people dialled the number 1458.

## ART WORKSHOP

16 February 2015

# FOR BRAVE LITTLE HEARTS Workshop for children of ISKRA RS



## INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY

On February 16, the Republic of Srpska Museum hosted a charity event to raise social awareness of the needs of children with cancer.

## IN THE RS MUSEUM

Spring 2015

## SPRING IN THE MUSEUM

### Inspiration for ISKRA RS children

March 23 to April 23, 2015, Educational-Pedagogical Department of the Republic of Srpska Museum organised 24 art-workshops, participated by 145 students of 29 primary schools.



## CONFERENCE

May 2015

## ISKRA RS AT A CONFERENCE IN SWEDEN



“Iskra” members at the VI International Conference of Associations of parents of children with malignant diseases in Sweden.



## CHARITY EXHIBITION

4 June 2015

# Exhibition in Banski dvor ART FOR CHARITY

Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra RS" Banja Luka and the Museum of the Republic of Srpska organised a charity exhibition called "Art for Charity". The exhibition opened in the Cultural Centre Banski dvor attracted great attention of the public.



The goal of the charity art exhibition was to collect money to be invested in the **RENOVATION OF THE KITCHEN** at the Haematology-Oncology Department of the Clinical Centre Banja Luka, through the sale of paintings.



July 2015

## Ozone Spa Gucevo REHABILITATION CAMP



OZONE SPA GUCEVO was an ideal resort for an active vacation in the company of members of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra RS". The Association organized a camp for children with and treated for malignant diseases and their families in the period from 18 July to 24 July 2015 on the mountain Gucevo in Serbia, together with the partner association "Zvoncica" from Serbia.

Gucevo Mountain is considered to be the place with the densest ozone, which is certainly important for these children. The affordable prices and hospitable attitude of the resort staff towards all camp participants should be mentioned too. All participants enjoyed regular daily activities from morning gymnastics to evening walks.

Going to the forest, making huts, climbing the top of the mountain (3.5 km), collecting branches and lighting a campfire are interesting, but most importantly, these are healthy activities that stimulate development of new healthy habits.

During the day, the children had art workshops organized by "artists" from Belgrade, sports games (bag jumping, tug of war, caterpillars, etc.).

An animator was at their disposal throughout the day, they played basketball and football, and in the heat of the day, the children gathered together and had fun playing board games.

Staying in the ozone spa usually shows excellent results after only 48 hours, so we were not surprised when some of the participants, upon their return from the camp, reported that the control blood counts showed a change for the better.

10 September 2015

## PARENTS' HOUSE IS BEING BUILT

### Cornerstone Laying Ceremony



On September 10, 2015, the President of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik and the representative of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra", Rada Vjestica laid the cornerstone for the construction of the Parents' House "Iskra" for children with malignant diseases. The cornerstone was laid within the University Clinical Centre of the Republic of Srpska at Paprikovac in Banja Luka, and 850,000 BAM was provided for the construction of the house in a fundraising event realized with the support of the President of the Republic of Srpska. The house shall comprise 500 meters, seven apartments for parents to stay in and all necessary appliances and other facilities that will provide professional medical and psychological assistance during the process of treatment of children. The house should be an integral part of the health system while the University Clinical Centre will undoubtedly get new contents and a new dimension.

In a statement to the press after laying the foundation stone, President Dodik emphasized that the community should continue supporting parents faced with such a difficult situation.

# 2016

WINTER  
PLEASURES

January 2016

## REHABILITATION CAMP



DONATIONS

February 2016

## DONATION FOR HAEMATOLOGY ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF THE PAEDIATRIC CLINIC

“The Company “Mladegs Pak”, in cooperation with the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra” Banja Luka, donated a four-function vital sign monitor to the Haematology Oncology Department of the Clinic for Paediatric Diseases of the Republic of Srpska University Clinical Centre. The value of the donation provided on the International Childhood Cancer Day was above 8,000 BAM.





**27 April, 2016**

Our Association members attended the opening ceremony of the Parents' House established by the Association "Heart for children with cancer in FBIH"

**14 May, 2016**

The Music Society "Muzikus" held a charity concert in Teslic for one of our heroes treated at the Haematology Department. They showed their greatness with music and love, but also proved that anyone who wants to help can do it. None of them know the boy personally, which contributes even more to the greatness of their effort. And the boy is at the beginning of a difficult path, hence our help, in any form, will make that path easier for him. May we have as many bright stars in our lives as the "Muzikus" society and may there be no child sick.



SPRING  
2016

April 2016

## EUROPEAN CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE

The seventh conference CCI (Childhood Cancer International) held in Belgrade, Serbia, from 22 to 24 April, 2016). It was hosted by the Serbian Network of children with malignant diseases.



Dijana Beric and Vladimir Pejic represented our Association at the Conference.

First of all, CCI Organisation was presented, then the cooperation between CCI Europe and SIOP, and then a brief explanation of the European Union project and involvement of CCI Europe in that project.

The Hosts, Irina Ban and Vladimir Radulovic, officially opened the Conference, while Luiza Baset presented the countries and organisations present (30 countries and 100 participants).

Concurrent sessions were offered this year so that participants could choose the session to attend. One group was led by Maren Bosel from Germany, who delivered a mentor seminar for survivors, focusing on how to organise various groups of survivors, types of activities they undertake and how they provide support to each other. It was a great opportunity to gather new ideas and share experiences with each other.

The second group was led by Anne Goeres from Luxemburg, who provided information related to collecting means and establish public relations.

The Conference addressed standards of protection and 7 goals of the Europe Beating Cancer Plan, which is widely recognized as a reference document for assessing progress in drug development, treatment and care in various paediatric centres when it comes to cancer treatment across the continent.

However, much remains to be done to ensure that all children in Europe receive the same standard of care, regardless of the country they live in.

Dr Lorna Zadavec from Slovenia spoke about the late effects of treatment and pointed out the importance of long-term monitoring of survivors.

The next conference will be held in Rome, Italy, in 2017.







Dance club “Bolero” held a charity dance evening on May 29 in the sports hall “Obilicevo” in support of the work of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra” RS.



*MAY 25, 2016 - A FEW MORE DAYS AND CONSTRUCTION WORKS ON THE PARENTS' HOUSE WILL BE COMPLETED, AND THEN THE FURNISHING ...*



## CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRST PARENTS' HOUSE IN SRPSKA COMPLETED



The construction of the first parents' house in RS for children with malignant diseases and their parents has been completed and the contractor should hand over the house to the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra" in Banja Luka by June 15.

Dijana Beric, secretary of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra" in Banja Luka, says that the house will be furnished once the handover has been done. "We have finished all the rest. We do not have funds to furnish the house, but the Cabinet of the RS President, Milorad Dodik promised to help. We are assured that the house will be furnished and get its use value as soon as it is equipped", she explained.

At a rough estimate, above 850,000 BAM was needed for all the works for the first parents' house in RS, which was the amount "Iskra" had at its disposal after the charity event organized by Milorad Dodik, the President of RS. Around 100,000 BAM more was needed to complete the construction, without equipping and furnishing the house.

"But, the construction of the house was not interrupted at all. From the day we laid the corner stone, the building of the house has not stopped. Numerous donations helped us to succeed in that, many recognized the significance of this story", she added.

She pointed out that the company "Niskogradnja" constructed access roads, "Sume Srpske" and "Rasadnici" provided the plants and humus and seedlings for the yard, and the company "Tenzo" arranged the children's playground, while other companies granted fire extinguishers and other types of safety equipment.

It is a ground floor building of 500 square meters with seven apartments, all hygienic and health conditions, living room, kitchen, dining room, playroom, classroom, room for psychological support, support of social workers, laundry room, green area with playground and several parking lots.

According to the data of the Haematology oncology Clinic for Children's Diseases of the UCC RS, 60 to 70 new patients get sick every year, and 30 to 35 new very severe cases are expected every year.

All the families of children with malignancy, though brave and strong, face high costs of treatment, in addition to medicaments and stuff provided by the RS health system. Hence, parents' houses are designed to ensure a family environment, psychological and economic support all of them.

*Our friends from "Zvoncica" attended a meeting held at UCC RS on June 10, 2016, to present their way of working and managing the Parents' house at the Institute for mother and child, Belgrade Serbia.*



## CABINET OF RS PRESIDENT TO PROVIDE EQUIPMENT FOR THE PARENTS' HOUSE



Artists from UDAS painting the walls of the living room of the Parents' house



**16 June 2016** - The first Parents' House in RS for children with malignant diseases and their parents is to open its doors next week, and all the money for the equipment will be provided by the Cabinet of the RS President, Milorad Dodik.

The secretary of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra" Banja Luka, Dijana Beric, said. She added that the parents of the sick children were very happy to hear the news that the Office of the RS President will bear the costs of furnishing the house. "The contractor will remain in the facility until the opening, and then the Parents' House will be handed over to the Association for management," she said. She also emphasised that the conditions of treatment for children with malignant diseases are good in Srpska, but that a register of patients should be established at the national level as soon as possible. Head of the Clinic for Children's Diseases at the University Clinical Centre of RS (UCC RS), Dr Stojislav Konjevic, said that 40 children from all over RS are being treated at the Department of Paediatric Haematology Oncology. "Malignant diseases that are most often diagnosed in these patients are acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and solid tumours," said Konjevic. He added that there are still no clear indicators on the cause of the increasing incidence of malignant diseases in children. The RS Institute of Public Health reported that 14 preschool children were treated for malignant diseases at the UCC RS in 2011, and 25 children last year.



*We remember Rada Vjestica, one of the founders and the first Chair of the Association Board. Full of energy, desire and will, she was also an initiators of the construction of the Parents' House. She simply knew that what had to be done – had to be done. Always determined to go further.*

21 June 2016

## THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA PRESIDENT TO OPEN THE PARENTS' HOUSE

After the opening, the President of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, told the press that he would sign a decision the day after to allocate BAM 100,000 needed to equip this house.

The President of Srpska added that the house should be equipped in about two months and used by parents of children with malignant diseases.



The President of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, said that the first parents' house built in the Republic of Srpska shows readiness of our community to spare time and money to help others, despite daily challenges. Dodik believes that this house will accommodate all the families in need.



Secretary of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra", Dijana Beric said that she was satisfied that the house was built, emphasising the great support provided by the President Dodik and the fundraising event "With Love to the Brave Hearts". She said that this house is a proof of love and the good in people. "This is a great thing for everyone who contributed to this project implementation and for the whole community. We can all be proud of this", said Beric.

The opening ceremony was also attended by the Mayor of Banja Luka, Slobodan Gavranovic, and the Director of the University Clinical Centre of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka, Mirko Stanetic.

July 2016

## SUMMER CAMP GUCEVO 2016

As part of its regular annual activities, the Association “Iskra RS”, in coordination with the Belgrade Association “Zvoncica”, organized a Summer Camp for children treated for malignant diseases on the Mount Gucevo in the period from 16 to 23 July.



PARENTS'  
HOUSE

September 2016

## PARENTS' HOUSE ACCEPTED FIRST TENANTS

TREATMENT EASIER WITH MOTHER AND NEW FRIENDS.



**9 September 2016** - It will be much easier for me to endure the treatment in the Parents' House, which is homely and has everything we need, because, in addition to being with my mother all the time, I will have my new friends around.

Thirteen-year-old Nikola Jovanovic from Modrica, who is struggling with leukaemia, said yesterday after entering the Parents' House in Banja Luka. On this occasion, Nikola presented the Minister of Health and Social Welfare of the RS, Dragan Bogdanic, with a “golden ribbon” as a sign of gratitude, on behalf of other sick children. Bogdanic emphasised that the Ministry is making best efforts to make it easier for the families of children with malignant diseases being treated at the RS University Clinical Centre. “Besides that, we will provide funds to cover salaries for the staff in the Parents' House,” said Bogdanic. Apart from Nikola and his mother, two other families moved into this house, and the director of the UCC, Mirko Stanetic, welcomed them on that occasion and so did the members of Iskra Association and the Minister, saying that the UCC will provide regular analysis of all swabs, as well as the regular work of the council.

## SEPTEMBER – THE MONTH OF RAISING AWARENESS OF MALIGNANT DISEASES

On the occasion of the World Post Day, in addition to the events in Bijeljina, the management of the Pošte Srpske visited the Parents' House in Banja Luka for children suffering from malignant diseases and donated benches and a mailbox to the Parents' House. This year, "Pošte Srpske" did not produce advertising material on the occasion of October 9, so the funds are directed to help children. In agreement with the representatives of the Parents' House, as well as the Association of Parents for Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra", our employees did what was needed, they installed benches in the yard of the building where the children live.



We thank the children and educators from the kindergarten "Princess Katarina Karađorđević" Laktaši for the donation to children accommodated in the Parents' House "Iskra"

## LIFE IN THE PARENTS' HOUSE



November 10, 2016 - Children are having a pleasant afternoon in the Parents' House, just like most of their peers in their own homes. Playing various games, putting together puzzles, having fun on the playground or gentle conversations during the period of struggle to return to normal health, make this environment just what it needs to keep the strength or faith, or a healthy, childlike smile.



CREATIVITY  
AND ACTIVITY

OUR SMALL  
CREATIVE WORKSHOP



We thank the wonderful Natasa Vuksan and we are looking forward to next Monday.







## “SNJEŠKOVO” TAKES KIDS TO SPACE

Charitable cultural and entertainment event “Snješkovo” opened at the RS Children’s Theatre in Banja Luka. The director of the Children’s Theatre of RS, Predrag Bjelošević, said that “Snješkovo” is a charity fundraising event and all visitors can donate to the Association “Iskra” to help children suffering from malignant diseases. “We do not charge for the entrance to” Snješkovo” but all parents with children are welcome, while it is our wish that those who come set aside at least part of the money for children suffering from malignant diseases,” Bjelošević emphasized.



### British Fellowship 2016

In November, a group of young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina visited the United Kingdom as part of the British Embassy’s British Fellowship 2016 project. Upon their return to the country, they wanted to help the Parents’ House in Banja Luka and Sarajevo.

At the end of December, they visited both houses and gave them 890 KM each. Thank you to them on behalf of the sick children and their parents and on behalf of our associations. As long as there are such conscious citizens, Parents’ Homes will not be lacking.

Their names are: Adi Bikić, Anja Petrović, Dalida Tanović, Dejana Grbić Velagić, Dennis Gratz, Fedra Idžaković, Jelena Vujić, Jovica Katić, Lejla Turčilo, Marko Martić, Milica Vučetić, Miloš Grujić, Mirela Makivić, Mirza Hukeljić, Neira Avdibegović, Nermina Saračević, Nihad Sijerčić, Sabina Đapo, Sabina Sarajlija, Selma Šehović, Sunčica Šanjević and other participants in previous programmes.

# 2017

JANUARY 2017

With peeping and a Christmas table, our family members celebrated Christmas in the Parents' House and made themselves happy that day.

## CHRISTMAS at the Parents' House



Another year and a great time with Natasa and her creative ideas, various colours and decorative items.

## CREATIVE WORKSHOP



## CITY THEATRE "JAZAVAC" DONATION SHOW

On January 26, the City Theatre "Jazavac" held a donation show "Kako su postale ružne riječi". All the income generated from the sale of tickets was donated for the functioning of the Parents' House in Banja Luka. The Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra" does not have a permanent source of funding and is forced to raise funds for the functioning of the Parents' House by organizing various actions.



## ISKRA: MANY EVENTS FOR THE SICK CHILDREN

The Association of parents “Iskra” organised many charity events on the occasion of the International Childhood Cancer Day marked on 15th February every year.

Dijana Berić, the Association Chair, has announced a charity performance titled “Kako su postale ružne reči” by Dušan Radović. All the income from the sale of tickets was intended for the Parents’ House in Banja Luka.

The play is on Thursday, 26 January in the City Theatre “Jazavac”, while the tickets that cost four convertible marks can be purchased or booked at the Theatre ticket office, as well as the Parents’ House in Jovana Raškovića Street, bb.

Actress Snježana Andrić expressed her satisfaction to cooperate with “Iskra” and invited all people of good will to watch the play and thus help the work of the Parents’ House.

The second event is planned for March 19 at 7 pm at the National Theatre of the Republic of Srpska, when a concert of ten cultural and artistic societies from the Republic of Srpska is scheduled. As in this first case, the total income generated from ticket sales is intended for the functioning of the Parents’ House for children suffering from malignant diseases.

Vita Malešević, Vice President of the Board of Directors of Iskra and the mother of the boy who was treated at the University Clinical Centre of the Republic of Srpska, said that this association has celebrated February 15, the International Day of Childhood Cancer, for the third year in a row. The Parents’ House in Banja Luka was built on the initiative of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra”, with the support of the President of the Republic of Srpska, citizens, private companies and public institutions. The main purpose of the house is to provide accommodation to parents and children who are being treated for malignant diseases at the Haematology Oncology Department, who are not from Banja Luka.

Since September, when it started working, 17 families from all parts of the Republic of Srpska have stayed in it.

Parents and children have at their disposal seven apartments, a kitchen to share, laundry room, playroom, living room, classroom and a room for quiet time.



**The Parents’ House is financed by donations from citizens, private companies, public institutions and occasionally through funds from the projects of the Association “Iskra” and does not have a permanent source of income.**



# ACTION ON THE OCCASION OF FEBRUARY 15

*Dear friends of the Association,  
Please read the post to the end.*

As you already know, this year we are marking the International Childhood Cancer Day - February 15. In addition to all the activities, on February 15 this year we want to promote this day even more, and we invite you to post a photo on Facebook, Instagram (or both) by February 13, holding a sheet of paper. On the paper, write a MESSAGE for children with cancer or their parents, something you would like to tell them and let them know that they are not alone. You can send the photos directly to the association's FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/udrrodiskrabi/>), or make them PUBLIC on your profile, and you can add hashtag #za\_hrabra\_mala\_srca. #zahrabramalasrca. #iskrars.

Invite your friends to do the same.

All the photos we receive will be displayed on the screen during the ceremony in the Banski dvor, which will be attended by representatives of public institutions, private companies, and children and parents of our association.

If you are not from Banja Luka and still want to help, support us by releasing balloons on February 15 and send photos or videos to the Association's website.

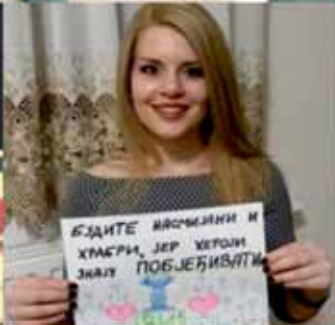
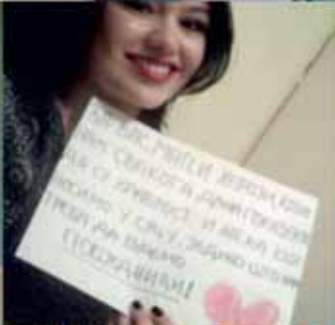
Why do we want this action to succeed?

Funds are most often collected for these children (necessary!), but support and positive energy sometimes mean more!

When it's hardest to give up ...

We hope many of you will accept this idea!

Let's show them that they are not alone, that we are proud of them - because they are the youngest and perhaps the greatest heroes of our society!



## PHONES IN HAND! SELFIES IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN WITH CANCER

(LOLA, Ž. G.)

Humanity is the best we can get from people. Because, it's important to be humane. Always and in any situation. The day of children suffering from malignant diseases will be marked in the Republic of Srpska on February 15, and we have a task for all of us. Here's what it's about.

On that day, the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra" from Banja Luka will organize a series of actions to raise awareness about malignant diseases. They also need our support. You all have phones and you love selfies?

- The plan is that as many people as possible take selfies holding a paper with a written message to children who are fighting cancer. Don't forget to draw a heart. The photos should be public and hashtag #for brave\_small\_hearts, #iskrars - Milica explained.

Not much!



February 2017

## A NOBLE HEART: STANIŠIĆ GRANTED HIS AWARD TO "ISKRA"

Danilo Stanišić, a member of the Banja Luka Judo Club, was named the most talented athlete in Banja Luka in 2016. But this young athlete has also proved to be a great humanist. The award was presented to him by Željko Panić, the best athlete in the city on the Vrbas in 2002. After that, Stanišić decided to donate the amount of 800 convertible marks to the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra".



For this humane gesture, this young man was additionally rewarded with a long applause from all those present in the Sports Hall "Borik", where the 15th Selection of the best athletes of Banja Luka was held.

- I haven't done anything unusual. When I found out that I would be proclaimed the best young athlete, I immediately knew who to award the cash prize to. I sincerely hope that it will help the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra" to some extent - said Danilo Stanišić, a super-talented judoka from Banja Luka.

Danilo Stanišić achieved great success in 2016 and hence he was selected as the most talented young athlete.

- I am proud of this recognition, because the competition was quite strong. I would like to thank the jury, and I will do my best to justify this flattering recognition. In this calendar year, a lot of strong competitions await me and I believe that I will continue to achieve good results - added the young judoka from Banja Luka.

*(srpskacafe.com)*

13<sup>th</sup> February 2017

## LITTLE FIGHTERS WIN BY THE WILL OF STEEL



Banjaluka - I have beaten leukaemia and I want to tell all my peers that life is ahead of us and that we must not give up no matter how hard the fight is, because the battle for health is the most important thing.

These are the words of Vladan Ravnjaković (17) from Milići, a young man with a look full of hope and a shy smile. Although he was brought to Banja Luka four years ago by a vicious disease - leukaemia, he found a new home in his "Parents' House".

- I am fine now, no more leukaemia. I am here for regular check-up and staying in the 'Parents' house' means a lot to me. We used to struggle when finding accommodation, but here we have everything we need - said this student of the second grade of the School of Economics.

- While fighting leukaemia, Vladan was always accompanied by his mother, Dragana Ravnjaković.

- The news that my son has leukaemia was a shock to all of us. In addition to illness, therapy and expensive medicines, the aggravating circumstance was looking for an apartment in Banja Luka where we would stay when Vladan was not receiving therapy - says this mother.

- At that time, neither she nor her husband were employed and it would be difficult to win this battle without support.

- Vladan finished his treatment in 2015, but the disease must be monitored for the next five years. Recent examinations have shown no leukaemia and there is nothing in this world that would make me happier than the fact that my son has recovered - said Ravnjaković and added that she can't find words to describe the relief the family felt when they could stay at the "Parents House".

The celebration of February 15, the World Cancer Day, officially started with the release of balloons in front of the Parents' House. "All children should be healthy," was the wish of one mother. This year, February 15 was also marked in East Sarajevo with the symbolic release of balloons into the air.



## WORKSHOPS

February 2017

## ART WORKSHOP IN THE MUSEUM OF RS WORKSHOP "FOR BRAVE, LITTLE HEARTS"

Workshop "For brave little hearts" on the occasion of the International Childhood Cancer Day, was held today at the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, and it was attended by students of three primary and two secondary schools.

Dijana Berić, President of the Association of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra" said that this day is marked throughout to support children with these diseases.

Natasa Nogo, a senior museum pedagogue, pointed out that this is for the third time the Museum is supporting marking of this day by organising art workshops.



- This year, students from primary schools "Ivo Andrić", "Jovan Cvijić" and "Branko Radičević" as well as students from two secondary schools, School of Medicine and Gymnasium, are participating in the workshop. Children socialized, had fun and exchanged experiences, but the most important thing is that they learn to accept the differences among them - Nogo emphasized.

Ten-year-old Hana from the Elementary School "Jovan Cvijić" said that she was glad to participate in the workshop and support her peers.

FOR BRAVE  
LITTLE HEARTS

February 2017

## INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY



**(RTRS, Srna)** - International Childhood Cancer Day was marked by the ceremonial event “For Brave Little Hearts” at the Cultural Centre Banski dvor and the symbolic release of balloons in Banja Luka. Assistant Minister of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Srpska, Ljiljana Ivancic, said that the number of malignant diseases in children is increasing as 25 to 50 new patients are admitted to the Republic of Srpska University Clinical Centre Banja Luka every year.

Head of Children’s Department of Haematology Oncology Ward of the Republic of Srpska University Clinical Centre, Jelica Predojevic Samardzic, said that 28 children are being treated for malignant diseases in that ward, while more than 100 are being monitored after treatment.

President of the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases “Iskra” Banja Luka, Dijana Berić, said that the Parents’ House, which has accepted 19 families since its founding, greatly affect lives of these children. - Six families are staying in the house. Minister of Health and Social Welfare of Srpska has launched an initiative among large companies to cover part of the costs incurred by the Parents’ House, and we also expect to receive a grant from the Government of Srpska to cover the costs until the association has gained the status of public interest - Beric told reporters.

Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska, Dane Malešević, said that the ministry provides full support to all children who have health problems, trying to facilitate their schooling and acquisition of knowledge while they are being treated.

Minister of Family, Youth and Sports of the Republic of Srpska, Jasmina Davidović, said that the goal of this ministry is to provide support to the families of children suffering from malignant diseases, given that when a child is sick, the whole family is sick.

40 balloons released in front of the RS Museum - symbols of hope in overcoming the disease. Promotion of equality among children and help in difficult childhood is an imperative of the whole community in the Republic of Srpska, said the representatives of the Republic of Srpska Museum.

On the occasion of the International Childhood Cancer Day, more than 40 balloons have been released today in front of this cultural institution as a symbol of hope in overcoming the disease and faith in the perseverance and strength of every child.

Representatives of the Department of Educational and Pedagogical Work of the Museum of Srpska organized an art workshop when treated children and their peers from Banja Luka’s primary and secondary schools drew museum exhibits.

Art teachers, senior museum pedagogue, Natasa Nogo and painter-conservator of the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, Đurđica Bjelošević, worked with children in creative activities.

## CHARITY CONCERT

February 2017

## CONCERT IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN

**(Srna, February 15, 2017)** - A charity concert was held in Bijeljina in support of children suffering from malignant diseases. The health institution Specialist Centre "House of Health" from Bijeljina organized the concert to mark February 15 - the International Childhood Cancer Day.

World classics musical pieces were performed on the classical accordion by the world virtuoso Dušan Sekulić and members of the "Srbadija" Choir performed too".

Executive director for health issues at the "House of Health", Aleksandra Ostojić, told

reporters that tonight's event is one in a series of activities implemented by the employees and added that it makes them happy to be able to support parents and their sick children in any way possible.

Representatives of the Association of Parents of Children with malignant diseases "Iskra" thanked the organisers, emphasising that any help is welcome, especially when organised the event, which was visited by a large number of kind people.

Parents expressed their gratitude and reiterated that this and any similar help is certainly welcome both to children to heal and parents to ensure the healing of their little ones.

The concert was held in the packed hall of the Cultural Centre "Semberija". Admission was free, and visitors had the opportunity to leave contribution in one of the boxes.

All funds raised are intended for the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra" Banja Luka.



## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

February 2017

## SCHOOL TEACHING FOR CHILDREN UNDER LONG-TERM TREATMENT

**SRNA/RTRS, February 2017** - Law on Primary Education of the Republic of Srpska stipulates that students under longer home or hospital treatment have the opportunity to attend classes organised by school, i.e. prepare for exams.

Shortly after the entry into force of the new law adopted at the last session of the RS Assembly, all accompanying bylaws will be drafted, the Republic of Srpska Ministry of Education and Culture of reported.

- Organization and implementation of teaching, i.e. preparation for sitting exams for students who are under longer treatment will be defined in more detail in the rulebook on student assessment, the implementation of which is expected to be adopted before the beginning of next school year. - The Ministry said.

In a meeting with the Ministry of Education, representatives of the Association of Parents of Children suffering from Malignant Diseases "Iskra" Banja Luka, discussed the possibility of providing better education services to school children who are staying at the Parents' House.

- It is our common goal to provide these students with educational services in support of their treatment process so that they keep the continuity of learning without having to make up for classes they missed upon their return to school - the ministry said.



## PREPARING FOR THE EVENT SPRING IN THE MUSEUM



May 2017

## EIGHTH CCI CONFERENCE IN ROME



We have left this conference full of impressions and new ideas as to how to improve the work of our organization, as well as the lives of all survivors in our setting. Like previous years, we can only praise the hosts, who, in addition to all the obligations that this conference brings, introduced us with the spirit of Rome and Italy.

September 2017

## FOURTH REGIONAL MLADICE CONVENTION



**(31 Aug-3 Sept 2017, Ivanova Korita, Montenegro)** - the Association representatives, Predrag Đurđević, Board member, Miloš Malešević and Vladimir Pejić, mladiCe "Iskra", attended the IV regional mladiCe convention in Montenegro. The Convention lasted from Aug 31 to Sept 3, 2017 and gathered more than 40 young people from Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Federation BiH, the Republic of Srpska and Slovenia, who were treated for childhood cancer. The Convention was organised by the Association of Children with Childhood Cancer "Finks".

Participants shared experiences on special needs of mladiCe organisation, their activism at the hospital wards and the support of communities, in particular their peers, which is needed for their healthy growing up and development.

Summing up the activities and results achieved in the previous period, it was concluded that all mladiCe organisations in the region have made obvious progress.

September 2017

## THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN THE PARENTS' HOUSE

(September 4, 2017)

At the initiative of our association and with great support of the Ministry of Education, the school year began in the Parents' House. Đurdica and Slavica, teachers of the two Banja Luka schools "Ivo Andrić" and "Sveti Sava" delivered the first lesson to our Bojana, the first student at the Parents' House, with a lot of joy and excitement. We hope this will make it easier for our children to return to normal life after healing.



# First Anniversary

## 36 CHILDREN STAYED AT THE PARENTS' HOUSE IN BANJA LUKA IN THE FIRST YEAR

**(RTRS, September 8, 2017)** - The first year of work of the "Parents' House" built in the charity action "With love to brave hearts" was marked in Banja Luka. In just one year, 36 children who were treated for malignant diseases at the University Clinical Centre of Srpska stayed in the house.

Seven apartments, living room, kitchen, dining room, playroom, classroom and yard with playground, all this makes the Parents' House a warm home for children suffering from malignant diseases. It has been operating for more than a year, it has housed more than thirty children, and currently there are six of them.

- This year, 36 children, meaning 36 families from all parts of the Republic of Srpska, have found accommodation here. We believe that we helped them a lot in those difficult times - said Dijana Berić, president of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra".

The Parents' house is available to all children suffering from malignant diseases and their parents free of charge.

Measuring not only the healing, but also the quality of life during and after the treatment, this is a safe place and one of the best projects - said Nenad Stevandić, Deputy Director of the University Clinical Centre of the Republic of Srpska.

Running of the house is financed by the Ministries of Health and the Family of Youth and Sports. The City of Banja Luka and numerous socially responsible companies are also regular donors. Regardless of certain problems in disbursing grants, both ministries have guaranteed today that the Parents' House will have no problems in its work.

- The Ministry of Health will disburse a full grant of 20.000 marks in the next few days, and I invite all people of good will, business entities, to contribute - said Dragan Bogdanic, Minister of Health of the Republic of Srpska.

The Parents' House is the only facility of the kind in the Republic of Srpska. It was built from donations collected at the charity dinner "With love to brave hearts" in 2015, when 850 thousand marks were collected for the construction.



## Dear guests from "Srce"

Our dear friends from the Sarajevo Parents' House "Heart for Children", Fikret Kubat, director of the Parents' House, and Lejla Kamerić, president of the "Srce za djecu"/"Heart for Children with Cancer FBiH" Association, visited us on the day of the charity event for the Solidarity Fund. On that occasion, they presented us with a gift and a Letter of Appreciation for the help and support we provided for the "Parent's House" project. Thank you for the useful gift for our Parent's House and for the good time.

## The students presented the children with packages that they made themselves

(**Nezavisne novine, M.G.**) - The Parents' House, where children suffering from malignant diseases and their parents live, was visited by the students of the Primary School "Ivo Andrić" who presented the children with packages they had made themselves.

Holiday time is a period of joyous visits and gift-giving, but few visits were as cheerful and exhilarating as when the Parents' House was filled with laughter and cheers of the children of the Primary School "Ivo Andrić", when pupils visited us together with their parents, Zeljka Opacic, the school principal and the teacher Dragana Dekic.

- In agreement with their teacher, the students decided to spend their happy hour, instead of in the classroom, in the Parent's House and to give their peers, who cannot go to school at the moment, packets that they made themselves - said Katica Kerkez, manager of the Parent's House.

She added that the students of this school have a tradition of making small packages at the end of the semester

## Our friends, pupils of the Primary School "Mladen Stojanovic" in Bronzani

Majdan, their parents and teachers collected a large amount of foodstuffs and chemical products for the residents of the Parents' House. Thank you for the great effort, nice wishes and truly generous donation that the hardworking hands of our moms will be the best use.

## Members of the ZP "Elektrokrajina" Union Organization

In addition to monetary donation for the Parent's House, they also brought our children packages. It was a really pleasant surprise for them, because the packages were in their rooms when they arrived at the Parent's House, some of them from the Ward after receiving treatment and some from home.

## Network of the Student Council of the Banja Luka region

organizes the campaign "One Sweet - One Child" every year. It is an important action because it awakens humanity in people to help someone. This year, representatives of the Network brought packets to the children in the Parents' House.

**Company "Alatnica Mihalec"** made us happy by donating sets of dice, which make every childhood happier. Our children will make imaginative creations and unknown worlds out of them.

**Special thanks to the boy who came with his dad to the Parents' House and shared his packages with us, as well as to the lady who brought the packages to the Parents' House.**



that they present to each other, but this time they decided to give them to children suffering from malignant diseases who stay in the Parents' House.

- The parents accompanying their children joined the action, so in addition to the packets for the children, we also received the necessary hygiene products that we need - emphasized Kerkez. She also explained that in such events encourage empathy in children, which is important when cured children return to school, so that other children show empathy to cured children.

# 2018

## MEDAL OF MERIT FOR THE PEOPLE



On the occasion of January 9, the Day of the Republic of Srpska, the President of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, awarded the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases "ISKRA" with the Medal of Merit for the People. The medal was awarded for merits in the field of humanitarian and spiritual work, which contributes to the general affirmation of the Republic of Srpska. The President of our Association, Dijana Berić, received the medal at the award ceremony on January 9, 2018.

This is a big honour for the Association, but also an obligation for the future.



15 FEBRUARY



## INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY

### CEREMONIAL EVENT AT BANSKI DVOR

Ceremonial event “For Brave Little Hearts” was held again this year on February 15 in the Hall of CC Banski dvor. The Event was attended by representatives of Ministries and other state and public institutions, parents, friends and members of the Association. On that occasion, we presented the Annual bulletin of the Association, where we listed all the major activities the Association carried out in the previous year. We received words of praise and encouragement for further work, which means a lot to us.





## ART WORKSHOP IN THE RS MUSEUM “FOR BRAVE LITTLE HEARTS”

Yesterday, students from four primary and two secondary schools created real masterpieces together with treated children from the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra” as part of the charity art workshop “For Brave Little Hearts”. This event was organized on the occasion of the International Childhood Cancer Day and was attended by students from primary schools “Ivo Andrić”, “Branko Radičević”, “Dositej Obradović” and “D. Maksimović”, and students from the Gymnasium and the High Medical School. Kaća Zec, an eighth-grade student of Ivo Andrić Primary School, said she took part in this charity event for the first time and she applied immediately without thinking. - I applied because I like to draw and because I want to make someone happy with my work - said Kaća.

This year, the Children’s Acting Studio “Roda” joined the charity event “For Brave Little Hearts”, by opening the event with the play “Naughty Duck”. Vladislav Pejić, a volunteer of the “Iskra” Association, said that he came to support creative children and that he was satisfied with the response of students.

Dijana Berić, President of the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra”, said that this type of support to the members of the Association means a lot.

Any support means a lot. It is not only in money, it is also in songs, words, written sentences, drawn work - said Berić.

This is not the first time that the RS Museum contributes to the fight “For Brave Little Hearts”, and students drew museum exhibits together with children from the “Iskra” Association who are being monitored, with the competent by curators from all departments and senior museum pedagogue.



2 YEARS OF THE PARENTS' HOUSE WORK

# ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARENTS' HOUSE

8. september 2018

A cake for the second anniversary of the work of the Parent's House and releasing lanterns into the night sky. As always, we have only one wish:  
**May all children be healthy.**





## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

# PROJECT FOR INTRODUCTION OF TEACHING FOR CHILDREN STAYING IN THE PARENTS' HOUSE

Written by: Vita Malešević, Association Board Chair

The goal of fighting cancer is not only to survive, but also to maintain the highest possible quality of life for all children undergoing the treatment process. One of the basic rights and needs of all children is education - a right that they have so far been denied by leaving their environment and school. After a difficult period of active treatment and a final, hardly awaited, return of immunity, the child returns to school - where he is offered two options - either to repeat the class, leave his old setting and friends, or to take all subjects at once. The amount of stress that both possibilities bring to a young being is devastating.

This project started with the desire to make it easier for children suffering from malignant diseases to return to a "normal life", and to reduce the trauma that cancer treatment brings. Thanks to our persistence and understanding of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska, two years ago a decision was made to introduce classes in the Parents' House and determined primary schools whose duty is to provide teachers (Elementary School "Ivo Andrić" and Primary School "St. Sava" from Banja Luka). The school was welcomed at the Parents' House with enthusiasm by both children and parents participating in this project. Children attend classes when they can and their acquired knowledge and grades are verified in the listed primary schools, and then they carry those grades to their home schools, and after the treatment they return to their friends and continue their education. In 2018, our goal was to expand the range of this project, and in addition to children whose education is based on classroom teaching - to include students in older grades of primary school, and provide them with adequate staff to conduct subject teaching. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska, it was agreed to start with this type of teaching from September 2019.

The ultimate goal of this project is to educate children suffering from malignant diseases without long breaks and unnecessary stress, and to provide them with basic knowledge and experience that their peers gain. Every work requires effort and time, and even this idea cannot, with all our desire and great support, be realized overnight. Helping a child is as valuable as helping the whole world.



**Children attend classes when they can and their acquired knowledge and grades are verified in the listed primary schools, and then they carry those grades to their home schools, and after the treatment they return to their friends and continue their education.**



SPRING  
2018

April 2018

## READY FOR THE FUTURE LISBON: NINTH EUROPEAN REGIONAL CCI CONFERENCE



The ninth European Regional Conference was held from 13 to 15 April 2018 in Lisbon (Portugal).

The conference was attended by 115 participants from 24 countries. The main topic of the conference “Ready for the Future” was clearly permeated through most of the presentations. An open discussion with European members focused on the future development of CCI Europe. The aim was to provide participants with knowledge on long-term topics from the categories “During treatment” and “After treatment”.

The conference began on Friday. Participants registered and took the opportunity to greet colleagues between 12 and 2 pm.



CELEBRATIONS  
AND  
HOLIDAYS

April 2018

## HOLIDAYS IN THE PARENT’S HOUSE: EASTER AND CHRISTMAS



A good deed is food for the soul

**On March 7, 2018**, the Parent’s house was visited by a priest of the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality of Lazarevo Banja Luka, who supplied our family members with necessities for everyday needs in the Parents’ House, as well as religious books and icons. The priest said that he came at the time of fasting to draw attention to the fact that fasting is not only a time of giving up food, but the time when good deeds should also be done, as a good deed is food for the soul.

**April 7, 2018** Our family members celebrated the happiest Christian holiday, Easter, at the Parents’ House. A priest of the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality of Lazarevo Banja Luka visited us and brought consecrated Easter eggs.

**January 7, 2019** Residents of the Parents’ House celebrated the happiest Christian holiday with Yule log, peeping and a rich meal. On the occasion of the Christmas holidays, the Parents’ house was visited by the priest of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the municipality of Lazarevo, Banja Luka, who brought food and hygiene items.

MY HAIR,  
YOUR HAIR

# ACTION OF PUBLIC HAIR CUTTING AND DONATION

Residents of Banja Luka and the surrounding area, but also residents of the entire Republic of Srpska, who continue sending us hair, have showed their great humane heart; we have collected hair from 146 donors. We thank them all from the bottom of our hearts.



**DOCTORS TREAT,  
NATURE HEALS****A view from my angle: Milijana Kujača, Istočno Sarajevo**

“Medicus curat, natura sanat”/“Doctors cure, nature heals” is a well-known Latin saying on the importance of natural environment for the overall health of a person. I think that being with others in a rehabilitation camp is important, in addition to dense beech forest, clean lawns and flower beds. All of us, children and parents from different parts of the Republic of Srpska, are united, we understand each other very well. The activities and contents of the camp are planned, all with the aim of strengthening the self-confidence, self-esteem, independence and creativity of both the children and their parents. Sports activities and relaxing walks have a beneficial effect on strengthening physical capacity, strength and skills. The children are very busy socializing, walking, having fun, so a week in mid-July passes very quickly and always ends in tears due to parting. The week passes quickly, but the impression it leaves on the camp participants is very strong and long-lasting.

**A view from my angle: Rada Trivić**

Nowadays, life is fast-paced and we don't have time for anything. When your child falls ill with a serious illness, everything stops in a second. Then comes shock and struggle to exhaustion. Until then, you haven't noticed people sharing the same problems and life stories? It is necessary to maintain contacts with families, to share experiences and to help if we can. Support the project “SUMMER CAMP FOR REHABILITATION OF CHILDREN WITH MALIGNANT DISEASES”

**A view from my angle: Adriana Musić, Association member**

The summer rehabilitation camp helps to solve the problems faced by children and families of children suffering from malignant diseases, as well as their easier and faster socialization and return to daily life and activities after treatment. That is why the camp is very necessary for our children, as well as for ourselves.

Also, this activity of the Association indicates the importance of a positive attitude and optimism in the treatment and recovery of treated children. This type of rehabilitation encourages and strengthens the feeling of happiness in great fighters and heroes of the great battle of life. In the company of other parents, we parents open our hearts, think positively and thus spread positive energy that helps our body and strengthens us. The support of the environment is very important for our children and us parents. Treatment of children does not end with medication and chemotherapy. In fact, that is when the new life of them and their parents begins - and that is a return to everyday life, which includes rehabilitation. Children heroes who win battles with serious diseases need our help even after the end of treatment.

# WHO ARE MLADICE?

Written by: Miloš Malešević, MladiCe RS

MladiCe gather people above sixteen who have been healed from childhood cancer. This term has been accepted in all the countries of the region. It was created by merging the two words, "Youth" and the letter "C", taken from the registry of diseases where it denotes cancer.

**MladiCe of the Republic of Srpska** is an active group of young people who survived malignancy. The group is a result of joint efforts and ideas of the whole community. Although we had been functioning informally for a long time, our first official meeting was held at the rehabilitation camp "Gučevo"; in 2018. There, we made a decision on the name of our group, as well as the logo. We started our work already in September of the same year and we have been functioning as a society ever since.



## SPRING IN THE MUSEUM

May 2018

# UNDER THE MUSEUM DOME

**Spring in the Museum (May 15, 2018)** the association "Iskra" again participated in the traditional event of the Museum of RS "Spring in the Museum". The event opened with an exhibition of works from workshops organized by the Department for Educational and Pedagogical Work of the RS Museum for Children of Primary Schools and Centres, and under the auspices of the RS Ministry of Education and Culture. Maša and Andrej from the Parents' House received a Letter of thanks for their creative contribution and participation in the event. Congratulations to our friends.

**Visit to the Museum of RS (May 22, 2018)** At the invitation of the Pedagogical Department of the Museum of RS, we visited the exhibition "Unlock the World of Illusion and Science", which is designed to shake visitors' trust in their own senses, learned experiences and perceptions of the world. We had a great time and learned a lot of new things.



## VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

August 2018

# FESTIVAL “DANI VRBASA”

**On August 23 and 24, 2018** - Diligent volunteers of “Iskra” Association distributed promotional material to the festival visitors and sold items made at creative workshops at the Parents’ House. The Association’s stand was also visited by the Mayor of Banja Luka Igor Radojicic.



## REHABILITATION IN FUZINE

August 2018

# REHABILITATION CAMP »KRIJESNICA«, GORSKI KOTAR

From 23/08 to 29/08/2018 we attended the rehabilitation camp of the Association Krijesnica from Zagreb, which was held in Fuzine. As a guide, I took three children to the camp, namely: Matej Railic, Masa Putnik and Luka Beric.



HEART FOR  
CHILDREN

August 2018

## REHABILITATION CAMP VLASIC 2018

(August 1-5, 2018) At the invitation of our friends from the Association “Heart for Children with Cancer”, representatives of our association attended the rehabilitation camp at Vlasic. It was a wonderful five days, when we made many new friends, acquired new knowledge and skills and had a great time.



SUPPORT  
TO THE  
ASSOCIATION

SOURCE: RTRS

## R. SRPSKA INSTITUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION “ISKRA”

The Republic of Srpska President, Zeljka Cvijanovic, the Prime Minister, Radovan Viskovic, and the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Alen Seranic, have talked today with the representatives of the Association of Parents of Children Suffering from Malignant Diseases “Iskra”.

They discussed support to children being treated at the Clinic for Children’s Diseases, Haematology-Oncology Department at the Republic of Srpska University Clinical Centre, their parents, programme activities, rehabilitation projects and the functioning of the Parents’ House, as reported by the Public Relations Department of the Government of the Republic Srpska. The commitment of the institutions of the Republic of Srpska to support the activities of “Iskra” Association was jointly confirmed, through current grants to charity organizations and associations, but also through project activities that include rehabilitation.





# 2019

FEBRUARY 15

The International Childhood Cancer Day was marked both at the Parents' House and at the Department of Paediatric Haematology of the UCC RS. Our children, who are currently being treated, were happy with the balloons and we were all happy to release them together with the greatest wish - May all children be healed!



## INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY



Preparations completed to mark February 15, the International Childhood Cancer Day. Our hard-working mothers made golden ribbons, which were distributed by the volunteers of the Association on Krajina Square from 10 am to 5 pm.



We thank our dear friends from "Zvončica" for their visit. Founded in 1992 at the Haematology Oncology Department of the Institute for Health Protection of Mother and Child of Serbia "Dr Vukan Cupic" in Belgrade. The Association helps sick children, their parents and the hospital.

[www.zvoncica.org.rs/kontakt.html](http://www.zvoncica.org.rs/kontakt.html)



## BALLOONS AND RIBBONS FOR “BRAVE LITTLE HEARTS”

“Leukaemia is not the end, there is life even after the disease,” said today Marija Babic, a girl who struggled with this vicious disease eight years ago. She came to Banja Luka’s Krajina Square to support children suffering from malignant diseases ahead of the activities carried out by the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra” on the occasion of February 15, International Childhood Cancer Day.

Babic pointed out that the conditions of treatment in Banja Luka are now much better compared to the period when she was treated and had to travel to Belgrade or Sarajevo for therapy.

“Our clinics are much more modern now than when I was ill eight years ago. Today, Banja Luka has everything that is needed for healing, also the Parents’ House, which greatly facilitates the therapy itself, so that children can be with their families in between therapies, which was not possible before. Then they had to stay in the hospital even when they were not receiving therapy”; Babic added that everything was difficult during the treatment period, but the kind staff made those moments easier.

“Every year, about 30 children are treated at the Haematology Oncology Department at the UCC RS, and currently 13 are being treated. Five children are currently staying at the Parents’ House, and that number is constantly changing. “Since September 2016, when this House was opened, there have been about 75 children in it,” said Dijana Beric, president of “Iskra”.

On the main square of Banja Luka, the Association “Iskra” will distribute promotional material and gold ribbons to the citizens until 5 pm today as a symbol of the fight against malignant diseases in children.

President of this Association, Dijana Beric, pointed out that the aim of these activities is to raise awareness about children’s cancer and the difficulties they face in their fight for life. “We can say that the community is sensitive to this topic, but the fact is that it needs to be further developed. It seems to me that the more we talk, the more we realize that we need to talk even more”; said Beric and added that in the four years of the Association’s work, significant steps have been made when it comes to treating children with cancer.

Beric emphasized that in the next period, systemic issues that are a problem both in our country and in the whole world should be resolved, and those are improving the treatment and care of children suffering from malignant diseases, as well as the availability of medicines.

“The availability of these drugs is quite low as in other systems, given the small number of patients, which is why pharmaceutical companies do not conduct research for drugs that would be intended only for children with malignant diseases. That is why the percentage of healing is around 80 percent nowadays, and not more,” Beric emphasized.

She also pointed out that the Solidarity Fund as a systemic solution is a great success of our entire society, because children who cannot get help in our health institutions can get a chance for treatment in some European countries.



## MAKING DRAWINGS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH MALIGNANT DISEASES



BANJA LUKA - The Museum of the Republic of Srpska and the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra” organized an art workshop “For Brave Little Hearts” on the occasion of February 15, the International Children Cancer Day.

Dijana Beric, President of the Association, pointed out that the purpose of this workshop is that healthy children, by expressing their feelings through drawing, send a message to children who are being treated for malignant diseases that they are not alone and support them.

“All children who are being treated today will hopefully go home tomorrow, join their environment, be among their peers, so such manifestations are of great importance,” said Beric.

Natasa Nogo, senior museum pedagogue, said that the Museum marks February 15 every year, and this event is attended by young actors from the Children’s Acting Studio “Roda”, students of four Banja Luka primary schools and high school students from Banja Luka Gymnasium and Medical School.

The children chose a museum exhibit in the science department for inspiration for their drawings.

“Children who have already been treated and are being monitored are accompanied by their parents. We introduced each other and shared their hard stories and the story of each parent touching me as well as all my colleagues”, said Beric.

Danijela Stojcic (16), a member of the “Iskra” Association, said that this support means a lot to children who are being treated. She said that five years ago she had health problems and every year when this day is marked, she comes and volunteers as the association needs.

“The support I received during the treatment meant a lot to me and I’ve succeeded, thank God, now I want to give back to my friends and support them,” said Stojcic.





## CEREMONIAL EVENT

*On the occasion on the International Children Cancer Day, 15 February, art workshop "For Brave Little Hearts" was organised in the RS Museum, starting at 11:00 a.m. Drawings produced by children were exhibited at the Parents' House. On that very day, balloons were released at 12:00 in front of the Parents' House, accommodating children treated for malignant diseases, while a Ceremonial performance "For Brave Little Hearts" was held in the hall of Banski dvor at 15:00.*





# Birthday

*On the occasion of 3 years of work of the Parents' House, a postage stamp issued by the company "Post of Srpska" was promoted. The postage stamp was promoted by Mr. Miladin Radović, director of the Post of Srpska, Natalija Trivić, Minister of Education and Culture in the RS Government and president of our Association Diana Berić.*

*We would like to thank the ladies from Derventa who made us gingerbread and cake for our celebration, then our parents who came from different cities, as well as one grandmother on a beautiful arrangement.*

## THE PARENTS' HOUSE THIRD ANNIVERSARY



## PANCARE CONFERENCE



The 23rd PanCare Conference was held in Opatija from April 24 to 26, 2019. The host of the conference was prof.dr.sc. Jelena Roganovic, Head of the Department of Haematology, Oncology and Clinical Genetics, Clinic of Paediatrics, University Hospital Centre Rijeka. After the welcome speech, Dr. Roganovic and the President of PanCare Dr. Helena van der Pal, Snjezana Prijic-Samarzija, Tomislav Rukavina and the host Davor Stimac addressed the audience and opened the conference. The first session, entitled “Concern for survival in the former Yugoslavia.” took place from 13:00 to 15:35, was attended by lecturers from our region, who delivered presentation entitled “How are we going to continue?” dealing with continued monitoring of patients after the treatment process, its advantages and disadvantages. One of advantages is the safety of patients and their families due to continued contact with doctors they trust, while the disadvantages are said to be the pressure in the sense that the disease remains in the focus of attention.



**PanCare is a multidisciplinary pan-European network of professionals, people treated in childhood for neoplasms and their families, aimed at reducing the frequency, severity and negative effects of late side effects of treating children and adolescents with malignancies.**

## CCI EUROPE REGIONAL CONFERENCE



The 10th European Conference of Parents' Associations was held in Prague from May 22 to May 25, 2019. It was different from the previous ones. Namely, for the first time it was organized together with SIOP. Doctors, parents and patients (survivors) together make a winning combination that has been advocated for a long time. To this end, dreams have come true this year. I am extremely glad that our doctor, Jelica Predojevic-Samardzic, attended the conference.

The first day (May 22, 2019) was for doctors, parents and survivors, with a welcome address by the representatives of SIOP, the main organizer, followed by a brief overview of current projects and presentation of clinical trials that have resulted in certain changes in practice. Also, the CCI presented itself at a round table discussion with one representative of parents, one doctor and one patient.

The second day (May 23, 2019) was the official opening of the Conference, meaning the first day of the work, intended only for CCI. A welcome speech by the President of CCI and the President of SIOP followed. Then, the situation in Eastern Europe was presented in terms of treatment and standards of treatment, in the sense of differences when compared to developed countries. Ways of improving access to new drugs and therapies were also discussed.



**The European Society for Paediatric Oncology (SIOP Europe or SIOPE) is the only pan-European organization that represents all professionals working in the field of children's malignancies. With more than 1930 members in 36 European countries, SIOPE's vision ensures the best possible care and results for all children and adolescents with cancer in Europe.**

EUROPEAN  
CONFERENCES  
PanCare

BASEL, 11/09 – 13/09/2019

## PANCARE CONFERENCE BASEL

Five members of our Association took part in the PanCare Conference held from 11 to 13 September 2019, namely Milan Beric and Tatjana Stojcic, representatives of parents, and also members of the Association Board of Directors and three members of “MladiCe of RS”, Vladimir Pejic, Marina Trivic and Danijela Stojcic.







# Kamp SUTJESKA

Written by Milan Beric

The 6th Summer Rehabilitation Camp was held from July 22 to July 28 in the beautiful setting of the National Park “Sutjeska”

While on the camp, we stayed in the hotel “Mladost”, where we encountered the wonderful hospitality of our kind hosts. Perfect nature was the medicine for the soul and body of all our students.

In addition to many creative workshops held by our psychologist Aleksandra and Natasa Masta, daily sports workshops - for which our hosts ensured a coach, there was also a workshop of the Association volunteer, Sladjana Beric. She presented harmful effects of everyday use of plastic, and gave practical advice on how to preserve nature and living organisms in it.

One of the workshops was a nutrition workshop led by Maja Pilav from Sarajevo. We already know how important it is for the health of the whole organism to eat properly, in order to keep our immune system as strong as possible. We are grateful to Maja and her colleague Azra for visiting us and bringing us a great mood.



# IN 2019

Although 2019 was the first year of our network's existence, we spent it developing and organising many projects. During this year, we have been active both on the international scene and in our region. As an active youth network, and part of "Iskra" Parents' Association, we participated in the first joint conference of CCI-Europe, the European organization of parents and children treated for malignancy, and SIOPE, the European Society of Paediatric Oncology, held in Prague, Czech Republic. We were also part of two sessions of the PanCare network, held in Opatija, Croatia, and in Basel, Switzerland. This year we had the honour to organize the Sixth Regional Youth Convention and host over fifty participants from countries in the region from 27 to 30 August.

Our main goal is to facilitate the process of treatment and healing for those who are being treated, hence we have organized numerous visits and gatherings in the Parents' House of the Association "Iskra". We hope that 2020 will be as successful as the previous year.



## DONATION

**We donated to the Department of Paediatric Haematology Oncology of University Clinical Centre RS the things they needed for daily functioning of the Department.**

**The donation was collected from the registration fee for the 6th Regional Convention of Young People Treated for Childhood Cancer, organized by the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases "Iskra", together with MladiCe of the Republic of Srpska.**

## SIXTH REGIONAL CONVENTION OF MLADICE, BANJA LUKA 2019



Given that we participated in two regional conventions of young people treated for cancer in previous years, this year we have accepted the honour and obligation to organize the convention in the Republic of Srpska. This endeavour was the largest project we have decided to accept so far, and we expected that a huge amount of work and effort would be needed to make it happen. We started to develop plans in September 2018. From the very beginning, we knew that we would need more money to organize this convention in a proper way. We had the opportunity to present our plan and idea to the President of the Republic of Srpska, Ms. Zeljka Cvijanovic, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Srpska, Mr. Radovan Viskovic, and the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Alen Seranic, who, after hearing all the details, decided to fully support our work and to be the auspices of this event. We are infinitely grateful to them for that.

The support provided by our officials brings the wind in our sails to continue our work even stronger and more persistently. Those years of planning passed unexpectedly fast, and the convention came closer and closer. The organization of this event made us realize how much our community is willing to help and support our work. The convention lasted four days and offered a lot of very useful lectures and workshops.



# Volunteers



One of the workshops on the camp “Sutjeska” was the one delivered by the Association volunteer, Sladjana Beric. She presented harmful effects of everyday use of plastic, and gave practical advice on how to preserve nature and living organisms in it.



**JUNE 2019**

Representative of “Iskra” at the Rehabilitation camp organised by the Association Krijesnica “Grad mladih” in Zagreb.



# *in action*



MladiCe and volunteers are at the Square!

Come and get an informational leaflet, balloon and golden bow about children's cancer as a sign of support for sick children!





# *Class teaching* **AT THE PARENTS' HOUSE**

Written by Jovana Rodic, B.A. in Class Teaching

A new job is a bit stressful for everyone because you always start over. New space, new associates, new students. The first working day at the Parents' House awakened many feelings and thoughts in me. How to approach parents and children knowing what they are struggling with.

Preoccupied with such thoughts, I come to the Parents' House and there, contrary to my expectations, smiles and cheerfulness greet me right at the door. A real school classroom, a table for a teacher, a blackboard on the wall and six benches, and two students in them. In front of them are notebooks, pens, books and school bags. Pale, hairless, with cannulas on her arms, but smiling and eager to meet me and escape the routine of daily blood counts and therapies.

Teaching in the Parents' House is different from teaching in any school. Classes are held according to the regular curriculum. Assessment test also follows the prescribed patterns. If the children are in isolation due to their health condition, we deliver classes online and we check what they have learned when they return to the Parents' House. On the other hand, these are children who receive chemotherapy and who feel the side effects that. Sometimes they are irritable because of that, they withdraw into themselves, they feel tired, moody, scared.

And then, all the specifics of teaching in the Parents' House come to the fore. Teaching must be individual and adjusted to the child's abilities. We overcome our "little crises" and continue learning in interesting workshops, or relaxed socializing. This is a long and difficult period for all of us, but it is also beautiful, because in the end, with a lot of patience and mutual cooperation, we achieve the goal. And that goal is for the child to return to regular classes without additional stress, to his class and peers and continue his education.

# Pedagogical workshop

Written by Ana Bratasevec



Inclusion of school-age children in programmes of cultural institutions enables them to step out of predictable atmosphere into a different setting that provides new opportunities for expressing interests and talents.

Participation of schools and centres in the programme activities of the Museum of the Republic of Srpska is increasing every year. The Department of Educational and Pedagogical Work gives equal importance to all participants, and develops cooperation with kindergartens, schools and centres.

Implementation of modern museology concept which presumes the expansion of the audience as the primary objective was the reason for founding the "Pedagogical Service" in 2006 and since then, the presence of children in the RS Museum has been a priority in the educational mission of this cultural institution. The "Open Museum" was and remains the ideological vertical of events organised by this service, which today, as the Department of Educational and Pedagogical Work, organizes traditional events, Children's Day, Children's Week, Archaeological Film Review, Spring in the Museum, professional student guidance, and numerous pedagogical activities throughout the year.

Events dedicated to children's rights around the world are traditionally held in October. The 14th Children's Week was held at the Museum's Permanent Exhibition in October. "Under the Dome" of the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, schoolchildren, protégés and the youngest participants of the program represent their institutions, kindergartens, centres and schools, while the program "Children's Week 2019" was designed with the idea that every day should be Children's Day and every week should be Children's Week.

The aim of the visit to the Parents' House was the "Narodni Bukvar/Folk Primer" Workshop, a professional catalogue by Vladimir Dukanovic, a museum advisor. In this workshop, we introduced children to 143 concepts from the lives of our ancestors. During the visit, a program of communication workshops by Ana Bratasevec was designed to be held during 2020, in cooperation with the psychologist from the Parents' House, Aleksandra Vojvodic, " - said Natasa Nogo, senior museum pedagogue.

# Playful page



## MANIFESTATIONS







2020



15 FEBRUARY

# INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY



On the eve of February 15, the International Childhood Cancer Day, we organized a workshop on making gold ribbons. Our hard-working mothers and children made decorative bows to be shared at Krajinja Square on Saturday, February 15, from 10 a.m.



*On the occasion of February 15, the students and teaching staff of the Han-Pijesak Elementary School sent strong messages of support to all their friends who are being treated for childhood cancer.*





**Distribution of golden ribbons, leaflets and balloons started at the Krajina Square. Come to the Square, put on a gold ribbon in support of children who are being treated for malignant diseases!**



# Workshop

## “FOR THE LITTLE BRAVE HEARTS”



As in the previous 5 years, the Museum joined this traditional charity event. Department of Educational and Pedagogical Work organized an art workshop for students from primary schools “Georgi Stojkov Rakovski”, “Branko Radičević” and “Zmaj Jova Jovanovic”, as well as students of the Medical High School and the Catholic Gymnasium.

Director of the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, Miladin Savić, opened the event to provide support to the children who are currently staying at the Department of Paediatric Haematology Oncology at the Banja Luka Clinical Centre.

Along with competent pedagogues and curators, together with treated children from the Association of Parents of Children with Malignant Diseases “Iskra”, the workshop participants expressed their faith in the successful cure of their peers suffering from malignant diseases, as well as the message that they are not alone and that have the help and support of the community.





At the session of the National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska, all MPs, led by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Srpska, Mr. Radovan Viskovic, provided support to children suffering from malignant diseases by wearing gold ribbons.



At the Parents' House, together with our kids who are currently struggling with a terrible dragon called malignant disease, we released balloons and wished the greatest wish:  
"May all children be healed"!



# Ceremonial event



On Monday, February 17, 2020, the Association "Iskra" held a ceremonial event in the City Hall of the Cultural Centre Banski dvor, on the occasion of the International Childhood Cancer Day.

On that occasion, the President of our Association, Ms. Dijana Beric, presented the entire work of the Association in the past 5 years, expressed gratitude to all guests, representatives of public institutions, friends, parents and members of the Association.

The RS UCC Department of Paediatric Haematology Oncology Head, Prof Dr Jelica Predojevic Samardzic, who has the main role in healing our children, addressed the audience.

Miloš Malešević, founder of the active group of young people treated for childhood cancer "MladiCe RS", also addressed the audience and presented the work and activities these young people carry out every day in order to make life easier for children and parents currently facing this severe disease.

We thank everyone for attending this event, showing that they are with us in our efforts to provide the best possible conditions for children who are being treated for malignant diseases and their parents.





On the occasion of International Childhood Cancer Day, workshops were organized in schools with the aim of increasing awareness in primary school children on childhood cancer. Teachers took part in the workshops and a strong message of support was conveyed to children faced with malignant diseases and members of their families.

Primary school "Jovan Ducic" Kasindo, in Istocna Ilidza, organized workshops with eighth and ninth grade students. We thank all the students for their participation and our dear Milijana Kujaca, the school teacher a mediator in communication!



Primary school "Aleksa Santic" in Osmaci was one of the schools that participated in the marking of this important date. We thank all the students for their participation and Ruzica Mitrovic, a teacher in this school and Andrej's mother, for their cooperation and realization of the workshops!

