

NEWSLETTER

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Online service platform

In a period of heightened protection against the COVID-19 virus and limited mobility, most service providers were forced to discontinue services or transform and offer alternatives. Never before have so many children been out of school at the same time, disrupting learning, and the impact of COVID-19 poses an even greater difficulty for children with disabilities as they face an even greater risk of being left behind. Many parents of children with disabilities have faced difficult challenges in educating their children.

The Association for Assistive Technology "Open the Windows", to ensure continuity in its work with children with disabilities, in partnership with UNICEF, created the Online Service Platform, which offers high-quality and individualized education for children with disabilities. Through the platform, the team delivers four types of services for children with disabilities: individualized support for computer and internet use, early development stimulation, speech therapy services and consulting support for parents / guardians.

This platform includes a team of eight special educators and speech therapists who develop individualized online teaching plans for each child in need. In order to provide quality support and the best possible virtual education, the team of professionals takes the time to identify the needs of each child individually and in accordance with their special needs. Virtual classes with special educators and speech therapists are offered in Macedonian and Albanian.

OUR TEAM OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS AND SPEECH THERAPISTS THAT WORK IN THE PLATFORM



Марија Цакиќ -
Специјален едукатор



Драгана Дојчиновска
- Клинички логопед



Нермин Шакири -
Клинички логопед



Блерта Аљџиби -
Специјален едукатор



Маја Трајчова -
Специјален едукатор



Данче Тодоровска -
Специјален едукатор



Ана Китановиќ -
Специјален едукатор



Ана Дончевска
Пенчев - Специјален
едукатор

The children attending classes receive support for the development of existing reading, writing and articulation skills, as well as cognitive development regardless of their current abilities. In addition, children are encouraged to become active students by working from home and are introduced to a new learning plan that takes place in a safe and supportive environment. The platform supports not only children with special needs, but also their families through various parent workshops led by the platform's educators. These live workshops have the option of live chat and consultation for parents.

We anticipate that due to the large number of children with special needs who seek virtual educational support from their homes, this platform will continue to offer support even after the pandemic crisis.

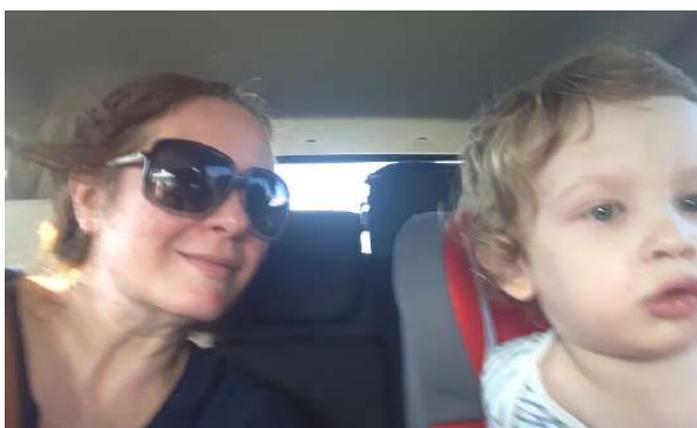
To visit the Online service platform click [here](#).

The benefits of the Online service platform told from the prism of one parent

My two-and-a-half-year-old son virtually met the special educator Ana a few months ago and since then Ana has become our special educator in whose hands I have entrusted the development of my son, who is allegedly suspected of having an ASD spectrum.

At a time like this of the coronavirus Ana was our support, a light of hope as we move forward. Ana is our special educator in whom we trust and this is followed by her many years of experience in the field of child development from 0 to 6 years.

Her advice and efforts were unequivocally professional and only confirmed her professionalism and dedication. I see the benefits in having a special educator who is carefully and dedicatedly committed to my child's development. As a parent of a child with developmental disabilities, I received professional guidance and



advice on where and how my child's development should be directed, based on the careful assessment that Ana Doncevska made during the monitoring of my son.

It is very important for the special educator to guide you on the right path because a human life is affected and at the same time the responsibility for it is just as great, but I think Ana does it with great love, moral and responsibility for each of her students.

We are happy and grateful that Ana, through the Online service, takes care of the education of our son.

Registration

If you would like to register your child for support, please fill out an application. You can also register by calling the attached telephone numbers, where you will receive assistance from our operators to complete the application. After completing the application, the operators will connect you with one of our educators to schedule the first class for your child. Click [here](#) to fill out an application.

The importance of the Alternative report on the implementation of the Convention on the Child's Rights

At the invitation of the Coalition of Youth Organizations "SEGA", part of the team of "Open the Windows" in April was hired to contribute to the preparation of the Alternative Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Macedonia in the period 2010 - 2019.

The alternative report is sent to the UN and is a summary of the situation with children's rights in Macedonia, both the current situation and the comparative situation of progress, stagnation or possible deterioration in the past nine years.

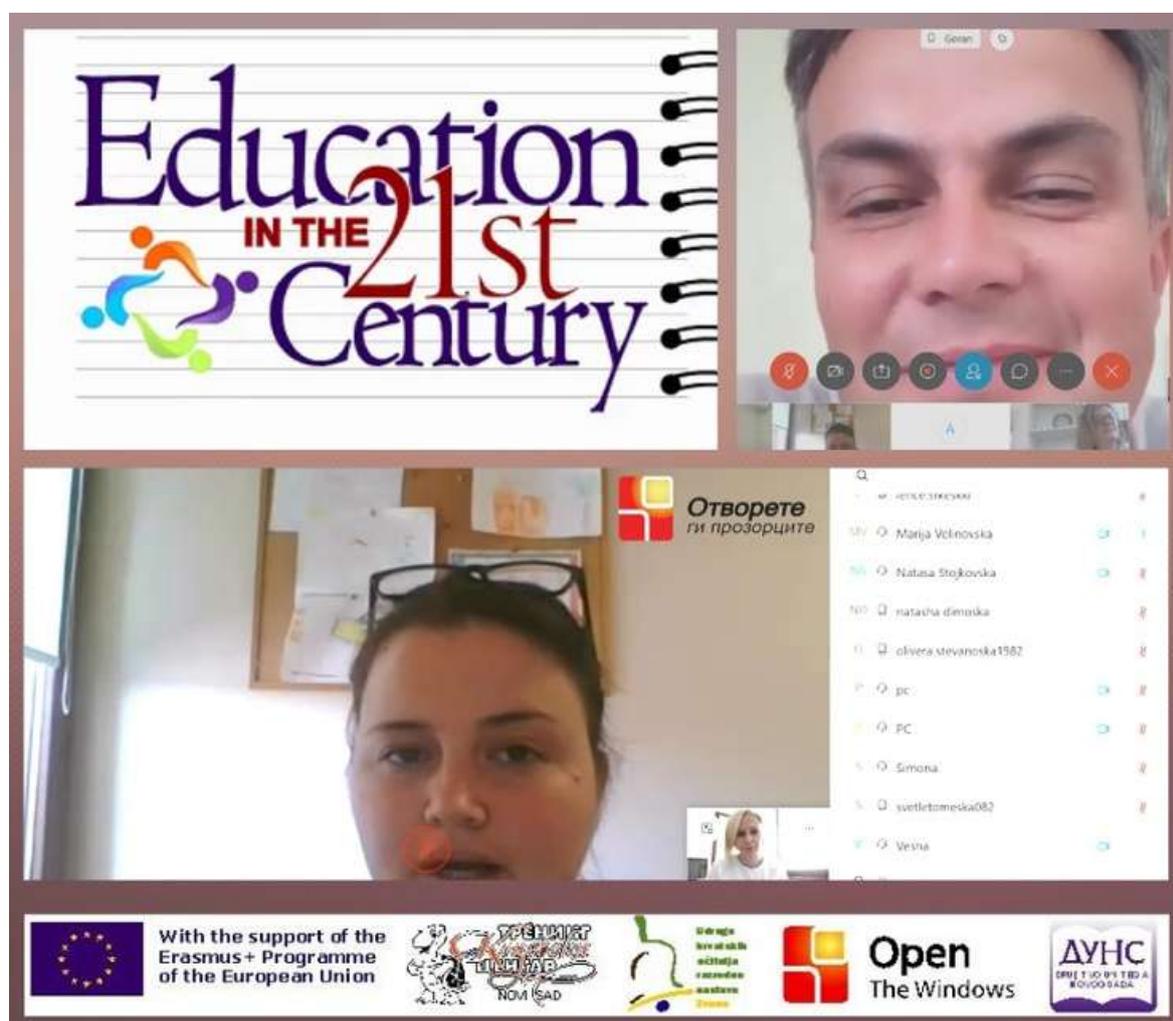
More specifically, the practical implementation of Article 28 of the Convention was reviewed and the topics covered: Access to education with a focus on children who are not in the educational process and access to education for children with disabilities, ie visual disabilities. The "Open the Windows" team contributed to the second theme, hoping that it would help improve access and quality of education for children with disabilities in our country.

A round-table on needs for lifelong learning in the context of 21st century education

The purpose of this roundtable was to discuss the current situation with the professional development of educators in the countries participating in the project and to emphasize the importance of their active participation in the planning of vocational training policy in their countries.

The roundtable, which was held online due to the pandemic, was attended by a representative of the Bureau for Development of Education, preschool teachers, high school teachers, pedagogues and special educators.

Participants had a fruitful discussion and with their many years of experience made a significant contribution to the further course of this project. We, as implementers of this round table, remain fully committed to improving the quality of education and the education system in our country, always in cooperation with all relevant institutions and individual stakeholders.



The coordinator of the project is the training center "Kocevski" from Novi Sad, while the Association "Zvono" from Zagreb, "Open the windows" from Skopje and the Teachers' Association from Novi Sad, are international partners within this project supported by the Erasmus + program.

Equipping five day centers with modern assistive technology

Assistive Technology Association Open the windows as part of the project "Piloting a model for the transformation of day care centers", supported by UNICEF, the British Embassy and the MLSP, in July this year conducted the activity "Equipping with modern assistance technology in five day care centers".



DAY CENTER FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY SKOPJE



DAY CENTER FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY - GOSTIVAR



DAY CENTER FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY - PRILEP



DAY CENTER FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY - KAVADARCI



DAY CENTER FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY - KRATOVO

The type of assistive technology that day care centers have received (touch screens, assistive keyboards, trackballs, joysticks, stand-alone clicks, smart touch panels, laminators for communication and production of communication cards and assistive devices for proper holding of a pencil) was executed based on the needs of each day care center.

Quality services for successful inclusion

The individualized services and the application of assistive technology enable children and persons with disabilities and their families to have equal access to all spheres of social life. The Quality Services for Successful Inclusion project, implemented from November 2019 to May 2020, aimed to provide accessible, affordable and quality services for children and persons with disabilities and their families. The expected effect of the services is support, independence and greater involvement of the users in the regular flows of social life.

During this period the following services were provided:

- Continuous and quality services through provided access to computer and internet using assistive technology.
- Continuous and quality services for early stimulating development.
- Continuous advisory and consulting support for various stakeholders, and
- Development of resources to support parents



Through the realization of the services, 53 users had the opportunity to receive quality services that had continuity even in conditions of emergency to receive the necessary support from a special educator and speech therapist. In addition to the beneficiaries, their families also received support. Additionally, four online workshops for parents were realized, in which 102 parents participated. Within the project, a manual for parents was developed, for early recognition of developmental deviations, with guidelines for timely request for support and stimulation of children's development.