Návrat
Návrat is a non-profit organization which advocates and supports the return of children from institutional care into families. We believe that a stable family with loving parents is the only environment where children have the optimal conditions for healthy development.

Our vision is to use our expertise and practical skills to create a society where:

- all children will spend their childhood in families that are able to provide them with safety, care and love,
- all abandoned children will find a safe haven in families willing to take care of them,
- social and psychological help will be given to families with serious problems to prevent their children from being deprived of their basic needs.

We believe that a CHILD has the right to the full development of his or her personality and the fulfilment of his or her physical and psychological needs. We believe that a FAMILY is the optimal environment in which a child can become a complete and responsible person. A family provides love, acceptance and feelings of safety and security.

We believe that INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS are the key to quality of life. Relationships with parents are irreplaceable in a child’s healthy development. A child needs to grow up with parents, whether with biological or substitute.

Board of Návrat:

Mgr. Marek Roháček, Chairman of Board
Mgr. Renáta Matejová, Vice-Chairman of Board
Bc. Alžbeta Padyšáková
Mgr. Pavel Kailing
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Revision Committee:

RNDr. Peter Paľaga, Chairman
Ján Hornáček
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More than 30 staff (social workers, special education teachers, psychologists) in 7 regional Návrat centres deliver complex professional services in two areas: substitute family care and services for at-risk families. Tens of professionals from various fields provide services to Návrat as needed. Hundreds of people support the mission of Návrat through their dedication and engagement in the issues. The work of the volunteer is priceless. We would not be able to continue fully in our mission without their help.
Our usual strategically planned budget is 452,255 EUR per year. The distribution of incomes is given in a diagram below:

- Public sources: 41.00%
- Foundations: 26.00%
- Individuals and legal persons: 11.00%
- 2% of taxes: 16.00%
- Other revenues: 6.00%

Our average expenses per year are 440,659 EUR. The purpose of expenses is given in a diagram below:

- Expenses on services: 21.00%
- Salaries paid for services: 63.00%
- Other expenses: 9.00%
- Communication campaigns: 6.00%
- 2% campaign: 1.00%
COMMUNICATION WITH PUBLIC

1. institutions and professionals responsible for children’s rights

SYSTEM CHANGES AND ADVOCACY OF SERVICES

2. family whose problems threaten the well-being of the children

SERVICES FOR AT-RISK FAMILIES

3. pregnant woman at risk

Návrat

4. abandoned child

SUBSTITUTE FAMILY CARE

5. family that took in an abandoned child

6. public

COMMUNICATION WITH PUBLIC
SYSTEM CHANGES
AND ADVOCACY OF SERVICES

The creators of rules and laws that directly impact families with children and define the frame and conditions for the help and support that families can receive. For effective decision-making, they need information and expertise from people in the field. Professional organizations whose activities are directly linked to ours. Individual professionals (social workers, psychologists, doctors, teachers, etc.) and the general public, who participate in helping families and children. People open to the exchange of information, experience and mutual enrichment.

What we do:

We are an expert consulting part of many groups that create laws and rules regarding children’s rights and needs. We try to steer towards solutions which are compatible with our values. We pass on our know-how and experience at workshops and educational meetings.

We lobby for particular families and try to persuade institutions to help them systematically through already existing programs which they are entitled to. We also make our skills, knowledge and experience available to institutions to help with effective case management.

Our representatives are active members of professional organizations, the Committee for Children and Youth with the Government Council of the Slovak Republic, the Workgroup for Deinstitutionalization (an advisory board for the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family) and the Eurochild Network (a network of organizations and individuals working in and across Europe to improve the quality of life of children and young people).

We create and translate publications and materials that make the help more effective. We also supervise volunteers and laymen.
FAMILY WHOSE PROBLEMS THREATEN THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

A family in a dire financial situation and with relationship problems. Mutual conflicts, family members’ immaturity, deficits of social skills and various dependencies tarnish the quality of the child-rearing environment. Children starve and do not prosper in such a family. The family needs socio-psychological help which is often lacking or inadequate. In the worst cases, the children are removed from the family.

What we do:

We offer systematic socio-psychological help to the family directly in its home. We visit the families regularly, build relationships and motivation to cooperate in solving problems. We help the family analyze their situation, point out unrealized correlations, and advise and support them emotionally. We support them in their communication with the authorities and help them acquire necessary communication and social skills and build self-confidence.

We organize support groups for parents, as well as stays for children and whole families. All of these services are provided with the goal of improving the situation holistically and providing a more suitable environment for the children.

Facts and figures:

- we provide approximately 100 families in crisis per year with intensive and long-term services. Our services help improve the safety of the children and the parenting skills of the parents, we are successful in preventing the removal of the children from their families and some children are able to return to their families.
- our services have an average impact on 250 children per year
We are moving, better said, we help to move :-) And although the moving is usually very stressful and bothersome, we are happy! Actually, it means that three children are coming back home to their mother from institutional care. A couple of days ago, the court accepted that their mother, our client, has taken all the necessary steps – she has overcome her severe life crisis and become able to take care of them again. You should have seen that joy! And we are happy with them, because we are sure that this is the right way.

From our diary:
Today all three of them came to see us, Pete, Mummy and Daddy, with big smiles on their faces, after a holiday. Thinking about it, it’s been almost a year since we got to know her. It was initiated by the custody authorities. She was pregnant, living in a shelter where she wouldn’t be able to stay with the child. She had nobody to turn to, not even the father of the expected child. It looked as if she was all alone to take care of the child. And so we tried to help her. We found a crisis centre where she was received during pregnancy and we supported her during delivery. She was very disappointed that the father didn’t show any interest in the child. We tried to make her understand what he was probably experiencing instead of judging him. We agreed that she wouldn’t push him, but she would be open to help him create a relationship with the child after his birth. And so it happened. She invited him to the maternity hospital, and the father, though unsure, came and fell in love with his son at first glance. Recently they’ve been living together, a standard family: mother on maternity leave and father as the family’s provider. Daddy is enjoying fatherhood more and more – holding his child in his hands, bathing him, even changing nappies. We are happy because Pete is secure, in the loving arms of his parents, although just a year ago there was a chance that he would be placed in a children’s home...
PREGNANT WOMAN AT RISK

She experiences a difficult life period – the pregnancy has caught her unaware. She feels unsafe and disoriented. Her partner is usually not present. She is broke and her housing situation unstable. Her experience, her family and her parents did not provide her with the skills to handle this situation. She has no support. There is the chance that she will give up her child, or that her child will be taken from her due to inadequate care.

What we do:

We offer a pregnant woman continuous support based primarily on mutual respect and confidence. We meet, encourage and calm her regularly. Together we try to find opportunities to improve her situation and we accompany her to authorities. We increase her capacity to handle the situation. We help to develop her self-confidence and her confidence in her own abilities as a parent. We look for appropriate housing, supportive people, and financial and material resources. We facilitate the formation of the healthy attachment of mother and child. If it is possible, we motivate and prepare the father of the child for his parenting role and taking responsibility. We do all of the above so that the mother herself is able to take care of her child – for her own good and for the immense benefit of the child.

Facts and figures:

- we accompany 15-20 women (per year) through their pregnancies to prevent the removal of their children and placement into institutional care
- some of these women gave birth to their children; some of the children can stay with their mothers. Regrettably, some of the women aren’t able to take care of their children on their own due to their social or personal situation. We actively look for the opportunities, that they could stay with members of their extended family.
ABANDONED CHILDREN

The children were born and their parents were unable or unwilling to take care of them. They were placed into institutional care. In addition, they are not “desirable enough” to be adopted or placed into foster care: they are an ethnic minority (Roma children), disabled, have chronic diseases, have multiple siblings, etc. There is the danger that they will spend their entire childhood in an institution without a family to give them hope for a brighter future.

What we do:

We create and update a database of disadvantaged abandoned children who are not successfully being placed in families by the state. We actively seek families for these children, families who are able and willing to care for these children, in spite of their disadvantaged status. We increase the chances of a happy match for the child and the family by being aware of the history and medical needs of the child and by knowing the capacity and needs of the family.

In specific cases, we try to cooperate with the child’s birth family so that they can support the child to their full capacity – at least by providing regular and meaningful contact.

Facts and figures:

- we find a new family for **10-15 disadvantaged children** (with medical conditions, ethnic minorities and sibling groups)
- we look in the documentation of more than **1,900 children who need a new family**
- we update regularly an information about **500 children** (per year) so that finding a family for them becomes easier
- we cooperate with **abandoned children’s birth families** so that they can support them to the maximum extent possible, even if they are not able to take them home
This is probably the saddest of all our work: updating the information about children who need us to find a family for them. They are on the increase... Two-month-old Katie’s Mummy was on drugs, four-month-old Ivko inherited beautiful big eyes, but unfortunately has a heart disease. Two-year-old Barbora still can’t walk and speak and five-year-old Johnny has already undergone five eye operations and has three more siblings: two-year-old Iveta, one-year-old Karol and a-couple-of-weeks-old Michael.

I think about the chances these children have that somebody will notice them... Somebody for whom their health problems wouldn’t be obstacles. Somebody able to become their new parent.
Renata is a seven-month-old girl whose mother signed a general agreement for adoption. By the time she got to her adoptive parents 6 months had passed, she’d stayed at 5 different places and altogether 7 different people had taken care of her. The baby entered the family very stiffened, frightened and with an unnatural skin colour. After two months in the family with two loving, steady people, months filled with touch therapy, being carried in a sling, swinging and ultimately being carried in the arms of her adoptive parents, the baby is relaxing, smiling and her skin colour is returning to natural. “You taught us so many small, practical, and enormously important things about attachment... And it’s super that you came to our home and helped us right in our own household,” the adoptive parents say.
A FAMILY THAT TOOK IN AN ABANDONED CHILD

A childless family that wanted a child, a family that apart from their own children, wanted to provide a safe haven and love to an abandoned child and decided to take one in and become a substitute family. There is a long road in front of them, in many respects similar and in many aspects different from raising one’s own child. In order for these families to succeed, it is important to thoroughly prepare the family for the challenges of this journey and to continuously support the family with encouragement, advice and help solving the problems of the child.

What we do:

As an organization authorised by the Slovak Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, we provide the social, legal and psychological training required by the law to become a substitute parent. After the child is taken in by the family, we offer a wide range of professional help and specialized programs, therapy and continuing education focused on improving attachment, treatment of psychological deprivation and the impact of trauma on the child.

Our approach to our work is professional and personal, as well as respectful and based on partnership.

Facts and figures:

- we prepare more than 100 applicants for adoption and foster care and about 10 applicants for professional parenthood (per year)
- we offer our services continuously to almost 1,000 substitute families
- hundreds of counselling conversations are provided by our professionals by the Not-only-about-adoption Infoline and through an interactive web counselling service
- we organise educational workshops and educational weekends for substitute families regularly
- we offer various types of therapies for traumatised children
THE PUBLIC

The public that lives its own life. It perceives abandoned and at-risk children as a marginal topic and deals with it on and off, mainly through media charity projects, where emotional blackmailing prevails. Individuals with different levels of awareness of their responsibility – from indifference to intentional and active involvement. The implementation of many pro-family solutions that we consider to be important depend on the opinion, emotions and responsibility of common people.

What we do:

We make a great effort to deal with this topic sensitively and professionally. In close cooperation with artists and other creative people, we communicate with the public. We look for innovative and interesting ways to communicate our ideas to the public. We use radio, television, film, theatre, the press. We organize interactive happenings and campaigns and participate in festivals. Using innovative and creative forms, we attract attention to our issues and activities and try to elicit discussion and interest, which results in bringing people closer to the values that we consider to be important in our society.

Our goal is for people to open up to the idea of taking a child, be empathic to the real needs of children and to increase the acceptance of substitute families in their environment.

Facts and figures:

- we organised the first international conference on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in cooperation with the Harmony Foundation, the Association of Substitute Families and other partners. More than 130 professionals from several fields, substitute and professional parents took part.
- we organise and took part in several “public” presentations on the topic of substitute parenthood and the support of parenting
- we have an average of 4,000 visits to our website www.navrat.sk monthly
- we communicate our ideas daily to the public via our www.facebook.com/Navrat.sk social networking website, where we reach more than 1,000 people
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We have one principal concern in Návrat – it is a RELATIONSHIP. The relationship between a child and a loving parent. It takes a long time to build such relationship. And it is meaningful when it is permanent.

Regular donations enable us to plan our services for families on a long-term and permanent basis. Regular donations grant that we don’t have to reduce our services because of insufficient financial sources.

Help us to fulfill our mission permanently. Join that ones, who already decided to support our services for families and children by regular donation.