

shelter of care update

news update : looking back . . .

On 15th May we will officially close the doors of our Project Amos offices for the last time.

Although this will in some ways be a sad day for us, on the whole we are feeling optimistic about the decision. In the current economic climate, the expense of running the office is a sizeable drain on our finances, and we are confident that the work we have done here over the last 16 months has established a sound foundation on which we can continue to build even if we don't have a dedicated center for the time being.

Since we opened the office, and launched Project Amos in January 2008, we have experienced many changes within Shelter of Care.

Opportunities within the placement centers have gradually reduced as changes

to the way abandoned children are cared for have meant that the services we provide there are in less and less demand.

Far from being disappointed about this, we are delighted that the situation is changing so much that our orphanage work is no longer required!

This change has meant that we have been able to concentrate much more on providing individual support to young adults transitioning to independent living, which is actually work that is more in line with our original mission statement (see page 2).

This time spent with individuals has allowed us to build up solid relationships and has given us the opportunity to offer practical support as well as advice and counsel.

Since opening the center, we have provided English language classes and internet safety training, hosted regular drop-in sessions, run two summer programs and of course celebrated Christmas with a wonderful party!

We have established relationships with new clients as well as consolidating ties with our 'old girls' and re-

connecting with some long-lost friends.

Young people have come to us for help with their studies, for support into employment, for help and advice about setting up their own homes, for counsel as they face problems and changes, and sometimes just for a shoulder to cry on.

In the last year, several of our clients have graduated from school, started at college, found work, or moved to a different home. Two have discovered family members they didn't know before. One is now regularly attending church.

We are thankful to all those whose generosity has made this work possible, and most of all to God for his excellent provision! Read on to see how we plan to go forward from here.



Some of our clients at last year's Christmas party!

. . . and moving on!

Although the office base may be closing, we still have big plans for Project Amos.

Project Amos was launched in January 2007 to focus specifically on the one-to-one and counseling work of Shelter of Care, with the intention of opening a dedicated self-sustaining counseling centre (The Amos

Centre) in the future, as set out in Shelter of Care's mission statement.

This is still our long-term vision. As we close our current base, we are planning for the continuation and development of the project's work:

- A Christian organization in the city has kindly offered us

the temporary use of their office space in return for a small contribution towards running costs. Here, we can hold meetings and sessions with our clients. This office is in a very convenient location for a lot of our young people.

- Recently we have been liaising with local church leaders to explore the possibility of expanding our

specialized counseling with their support, including a possible visit later this year by a team of trained counselors from the UK to run training and provide counseling for church members. The support of local churches will be vital if we are to successfully set up and run a Christian counseling centre.

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... and moving on!

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• For some time now, we have been exploring the idea of starting a small business selling discounted clothes imported from the UK. The business would employ our clients where possible, providing work experience opportunities for some, and the chance of stable and fair permanent employment for others, and the premises would include space reserved for meetings and counseling sessions. We are currently drawing up a business plan for this project.

• We still have our piece of land at Bârnova, which now has planning permission for an extensive building project as well as all its permits and piped utilities. The value of this land has increased

considerably since its purchase in 2006.

Our Mission Statement (see below) states our intention to provide not only practical support to those who have grown up in Romania's childcare system, but also spiritual and emotional support and nurture. As we plan for the future, we are continuing to seek out the best means of pursuing these twin aims.

Our experience tells us that even as the physical and financial situation is improving for many of the

children in placement centers and foster homes, they still suffer from the spiritual and emotional effects. In fact, a recent study in the US showed that abandonment can have long-term physical as well as emotional effects.

There are still tens of thousands of Romanian children who are classed as 'abandoned'. We are committed to continuing to seek ways to undo the damage of the past and ensure a safe and stable future for the young people we work with.

Mission Statement

- To provide shelter and practical support for young people transitioning from orphanages or foster care to life on their own
- To provide spiritual care and nurture for these young people
- To offer counseling and legal aid through a dedicated counseling centre

praises and prayers:

- We are thankful for the kindness of the Christian organization who have agreed to let us use their office space, and we pray that this arrangement will be a blessing to them as well as us.
- Please pray for the church leaders in the city to be receptive as we continue to speak to them about Christian counseling and prayer ministry.
- Although we are keeping most of the equipment and furniture from the office, we have to sell some items. Please pray that they sell quickly and that we get a fair price.
- Change can be unsettling. Please pray for our young people during this time of change for us. Pray especially that they will still feel comfortable coming to visit us at our new venue.

extra : articles and news

Did you know that we have a section on our website devoted to official reports and translated news articles from Romania?

If you have ever wondered what the Romanian people have to say about the situation of children in their own country, then here is just a taste of what's available on our website:

Parents in Italy—Children

in the Orphanage: an article from Gândul newspaper about two brothers who spent years in various placement centers while their parents worked abroad.

Infant of Eight Months... drinks beer: a wide-ranging inspection of Romanian foster care services results in a damning report.

350,000 'Orphan' Children: this is how many children in

Romania have parents working abroad. For some, this means a childhood spent in foster care or a placement center.

Adopted Children May Develop Immune Diseases: A Romanian newspaper reports on a US study about the long-term health effects of abandonment.

All of these articles have been translated directly from

Romanian news reports.

The articles section of our website also features our review of an eye-opening report comparing childcare services in Iași with those in the Moldovan capital, Chișinău.

Simply follow the links from the featured articles on our home page at:

www.shelterofcare.com

'For I know the plans I have for you', says the Lord.

'Plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you a hope and a future.'
Jeremiah 29:11

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