

## **‘Timmy Mouse Educational Project’**

### **Chances 4 children – Education is the key to a better future.**

On the 6th of October 2014 we were invited to a press conference organized by Suceava Police Inspectorate to launch the first round of books of the Timmy Mouse Educational Project. After this we spent the week out in Suceava County training teachers at kindergartens to use these Timmy mouse manuals. We had meetings with local Mayors who showed the same enthusiasm for the whole project in their communities.

Since 2008 St RCHF has enjoyed a healthy collaboration with The Suceava Police Inspectorate completing many activities and projects to benefit children and the community. It was therefore a real bonus when they offered to help us in the distribution of these first sets of manuals to kindergartens and also invited Timmy mouse to be a first ever Romanian Crime Prevention manual for pre school children. We with great pleasure helped produce this book again all in the Romanian text.

On the Hospital front the Director of the pulmonary disease hospital in Iasi agrees to these educational materials being used by children interned in the pediatric section of this hospital as realizes the simple fact that any child interned in hospital loses valuable educational time.

#### **Mission:**

Our goal is to provide educational materials to pre-schools/kindergartens and children in Hospitals and state institutions in eastern Romania and Moldova, to allow the child to start learning important basics at the earliest age. This will stimulate the most deprived children in their learning and developmental processes and are a positive addition to their subsequent education once they enter mainstream schools at a later age.

#### **Vision:**

We want to provide positive and structural input to the learning and developmental processes of mainly those children, who are in the danger zone of falling behind in their learning process.

Every child must have the possibility and has a right to get to know his or her world, to examine it and be stimulated to take an active part in it. Education is the key to a brighter and more prosperous future.

#### **Background of project and its initiators:**

The bond and cooperation between Stichting Romanian Children’s Humanitarian Foundation (St. RCHF), Timmy Mouse Products and Educational Fund „Wings of Angels Romania” has grown over the years. It is the base of this project and is strongly connected to the social-economical and cultural background of the children this project is meant aimed at helping.

Mr. B. Douglas, the director of RCHF, has lived and worked in Romania for almost 20 years now, on a voluntary basis. He is very familiar with the local problems and strives for constant local, national and international cooperation.

The Educational Fund „Wings of Angels Romania” is managed by Simone van Altena-Charmant. She lived in Romania for several years, where she worked with the Roma population. Developing and executing a preschool program was her main task.

The creative part of the project is taken care of by Miriam Charmant. Before this creative work became her main activity, she worked as a psychological didactical assistant for 7 years.

The mission of Timmy Mouse Educational Project very well fits with the mission of RCHF, which, in short, is:

„To help raise standards of life for children, their families, and old aged citizens who often find themselves living at a level that places them at an unfair disadvantage in society today.“

In eastern Romania and Moldova, unfortunately hard unseen poverty still has a tight grip on many adults as well as children. Their situations are often rather hopeless, but with positive application of attractive, informative and easy to learn education at an early age the children can recover and have a real future within its educational years. In these places it is not strange to see the pre-schools/kindergartens especially in the large rural areas that have an enormous lack of materials including trained teaching staff. It is these children and these schools that we intend to help first of all. Our goal is to provide modern, easy to use and understand interactive materials that will help improve the development of children in the earliest phases of education.

The most easily-accessible material will help increase the vocabulary of the infant. As the vocabulary increases, the child will learn to better express itself and communicate with the people around it.

Playing and learning is both interactive and educational this way and improves the child's social skills.

Geography is taught the same way. By early exposure to facts and subjects, we hope to add to the infant's learning path.

The plan of the educational material makes it usable for different ages and developmental stages. The merry illustrations of Timmy Mouse are meant to stimulate and add to the attractiveness of easy pleasurable learning.

### **Lingual development:**

It is extraordinary, the speed at which an average child can master a language. A three-year-old infant uses about 600 words, a five-year-old has about 3,000. In the meantime, it learns to use the grammatical structures. But an important condition for this is that in its own environment the child is stimulated to communicate.

Maria Montessori speaks of the 'sensitive period' for among others the lingual development. Up to about 7 years of age, children are very interested in language due to the ability to analyse that language.

Within the limits of such a genetically programmed period of time, children are very open to learning certain tasks.

This vision on lingual development is shared by many researchers. They perceive language as an ability we are born with, which has to be stimulated by communication, for which the sensitive period is the optimal time to make language develop.

We want to connect to this with the 'Timmy Mouse educational project'. Before children start elementary school. Kindergarten-pre schools can take up part of the lingual development. Starting from a good basic lingual development, children will easily continue the learning path. It creates an opportunity for children to get to know their world and function within it as well as possible.

## **Why is the project necessary?**

This project is vital as answers to the needs and necessities of young children to get to know their living world and is thus stimulating a healthy curiosity, which will encourage learning activity. The project allows kindergarten-pre schools to start working on a simple basic learning program which stands each child in good stead for its future before the age of compulsory education is reached. Learning is motivated and stimulated in a playful way, to provide as good a link to the subsequent education as possible.

This concerns primarily the economically and socially weak and the unfortunately mainly desperate areas in eastern Romania and Moldova. In these areas, the learning arrears caused by a lack of preschool education are enormous. The 'Timmy Mouse Educational Project' wants to provide a positive input in handling those arrears in children's education.

Eventually, a successful school process will result in increasing chances on the labour market and this provides a better future perspective for this group of young children.

## **We are dependent on donations, but donations will be spend on school materials for 100%.**

The funds of this project will be spent completely on the development, production and distribution of the preschool materials/preschool packages.

No salaries are paid and all work is entirely on a voluntary basis.

A term for testing the material and the related feedback are stated for an optimal final result for both child and teacher.

The distribution of the materials will be done in-house by Stichting RCHF, for which we will use pre-existing contacts.

With joined efforts, we can work on a healthy educational support for young children in deprived areas, meaning: areas where poverty is a great threat to the essential initial phase of the learning process of the young child and where preschools have little options to get sufficient educational material.

## **At the moment, the preschool-kindergarten package consists of:**

### 1. 'Timmy Mouse Learning cards'

This set consists of a box of 251 cards and a manual. The cards are split up into 22 categories, mainly related to the world of the younger child (such as: farm animals, in and around the house, food, health, exercise, nature, opposites, numbers, shapes, colors, the alphabet). The manual shows how to use the cards. It also provides example questions, examples to extend the educational use of the material and room for the teacher to write notes, so the material can be taught to the children via the best possible/suitable method, fit to the level of development of the children.

This set is used by the teacher only and can be used individual, as well as in a small group. This set would be very appropriate for teaching children in Hospital.

All materials will be used in the national Romanian language.

The manual includes an English translation of all categories and cards. This way simple English words can be taught, using the same materials.

### 2. A book "Easy learning with Timmy Mouse". In this book you can see the same categories, as used in the set 'Learning cards'.

A book that stimulates to learn the objects, opposites, movements, numbers, shapes, colors and the alphabet. The numbers for example are placed in a theme poster. There are also pages to repeat the lessons.

The teacher can use the same manual as the cards.

All materials will be used in the national Romanian language.

### 3. Storybook 'Timmy's Dream Rocket'

This is an animated and text picture-storybook with no less than 32 exciting pages all of which add to the young child's learning.

In Romania all materials will be used in the national Romanian language.

### 4. A basic book about Geography: „Geography with Timmy Mouse”

Pre-school Geography helps and stimulates young children to recognize and understand their own environment and gradually expand their knowledge of it.

The subjects of Pre-school Geography will help children in this process of understanding the world around them, and facts are presented step by step, in an accessible way.

Starting from a familiar place – home – and accompanied by merry illustrations of Timmy Mouse, the children will “walk” together with their teacher along important subjects, which will shape the basic knowledge of our earth.

With every subject, the teacher can use some questions, which will help the children to get more acquainted with this new information.

In the teacher-manual are questions about the subjects. There is space for the teacher to write down his or her own notes, to make the material more suitable for children in a specific class/group. The manual includes some coloring pages, which can be copied and used in class.

### **We want to extend the range with:**

- 1) A basic book arithmetic; counting and numbers.
- 2) A book, in which children can practice language, the alphabet and easy words.
- 3) A second edition of the Look and Learn cards. We had very positive feedback on this creative and flexible learning tool and decided to extend the first part.

Because of the good quality, the materials can be used many subsequent years, which makes them an investment in and for the future.

The materials also aim at reaching teachers, as professional and responsible persons, who will be challenged and stimulated to search for, and bring in their own information, so they can broaden the knowledge of the subjects.

This will give opportunity to adopt the educational material and thus creating a personal way of teaching, which certainly can improve the ambiance for active learning of the children.

The project will be monitored in-house by St. RCHF. The teachers will provide feedback by means of personal contact and e-mail.

### **Additional information**

St. RCHF (Stichting Romanian Children's Humanitarian Foundation)

The foundation is ANBI (Docnr: 58253) accepted by the Dutch tax office (NL). since the 1st of January 2008.

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Mrs. M. Charmant, Chairwoman St. RCHF.  
Illustrator/text Timmy Mouse Books  
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The Stichting Romanian Children's Humanitarian Foundation is a Dutch registered NGO.

Stichting RCHF has a board of 3 unpaid members, 2 of which are founder members.

St. RCHF works in the North East of Romania primarily, as this is the most deprived area of Romania, and is led by Brian Douglas (British citizen), who has lived in Romania since 1994 and has 3 non-paid volunteers.

The principle activities and domains in which Stichting RCHF works are:

1. Public health education.
2. Outreach work to help disfavored families and children to raise their standards including within schools. Within this domain, we want to implement the 'Timmy Mouse Educational Project'.
3. Emergency disaster relief.
4. Education to children and adolescents on the dangers of narcotics and personal safety, including in the domain of illegal trafficking of people, which is a problem in Romania.

#### Mission and objectives of St. RCHF.

To help raise standards of life for children, their families, and old aged citizens who often find themselves living at a level that places them at an unfair disadvantage in society today.

We address these problems by teaching essential health education, providing personal counseling and viable solutions and working hands on with those we help, plus addressing hard poverty and also providing emergency support to those affected in times of national disasters.

St. RCHF is a member of the World Health Organization housed STOP TB Partnership, an affiliate member of EURAD, and it collaborates with Romanian public health authorities including the Iasi Public health promotion department, Pulmonary disease hospital of Iasi (Prof Dr Traian Mihaescu), Association of Tuberculosis sufferers in Romania (Dr Marius Dumitru – Bucharest), The Inspectorate of Police Suceava County (Inspector Ionut Epureanu) and Botosani County Dorohoi Police, The Mayors, officers and local Council in Dorohoi, Botosani County and also Ciocanesti Suceava County.

St.RCHF believes in complete transparency and places its accounts and monthly financial information on its website [www.rchf.eu](http://www.rchf.eu). Please see section finances. Newsletters can be found in the same website under 'news heading'.

**Some pictures of the distribution of the Timmy Mouse books in October 2014:**









