

Frontline Bulgaria



FRONTLINE

Promoting inclusion
... because 'Community Works'!

April 2013

Newsletter 24

Featuring...

'New Frontiers in Occupational Therapy'

*Frontline in partnership with
Ruse University OT course and Friendship Church/NGO*

The main purpose for Mary and Gill's recent visit (1st-7th April) was to catch up with Sophie and Claire, Frontline OTs whose placements are funded by the EU Leonardo programme.

Sophie and Claire are the first of four qualified Occupational Therapists from the UK who will complete 6-month placements between March and December 2013. They are working alongside UK and Bulgarian OT students and graduates - gaining experience and building their professional skills in a different cultural environment, whilst helping to develop and model a community-based therapy service for children and young adults with disabilities. We are very grateful to '**Friends of Bulgaria**' for their generous support that is enabling us to resource this work.

Based at Baba Tonka house where Friendship runs regular groups for young people with learning disabilities, Sophie and Claire are drawing on Frontline's wide network of contacts in Ruse, built up over the last five years. They are already very busy visiting youngsters at home, at school and in other locations such as day centres and small group homes.

As Occupational Therapists they aim to find solutions to everyday problems by exploring with each individual their physical, psychological, social and sensory needs, and devising an action plan to help them reach their potential and enjoy life to the full. This may include a therapeutic programme to help them engage effectively in developmental play, age-appropriate activities and skills for daily living at home, school and in the community. It may also involve adapting their physical, sensory or social environment, or providing special equipment to increase mobility, independence and inclusion.



Frontline is committed to supporting the development of Occupational Therapy in Bulgaria and helping to demonstrate the effectiveness of community-based provision, recognising the equal value of all stakeholders - including the children and young adults with disabilities, their families, carers and other professionals.

Strong partnerships are proving to be a vital key to the success of the project. In its' role as project lead, Frontline appreciates the excellent guidance and supervision provided by our OT colleagues at **Ruse University** and the invaluable practical and pastoral support provided by **Friendship Church**

During the week we also:-

- Arranged wheelchair assessments with '**Motivation Romania**' – including provision of another new wheelchair for a young child
- Arranged a 'drop-in' day for families at Baba Tonka house, including creative art, music and therapy sessions with Elaine Struthers (specialist OT from the USA) – a lovely opportunity to meet up with some 'old' friends and several 'new' families
- Enjoyed Elaine's very useful training – 'Sensory Integration Activities for Mums and Families at Home'
- Enjoyed Sunday worship at Friendship Church and meetings and meals with many friends and colleagues, without whom Frontline can achieve very little... not forgetting Claire's birthday celebration featuring some spectacular flaming dishes in a traditional Bulgarian restaurant!



'GOING OVER THE TOP' for FRONTLINE BULGARIA!

To read about this **SPONSORED ABSEIL** in early May please go to

<http://www.justgiving.com/GillSoper>

If you'd like to help Frontline 'make a difference' please donate if you can.

Many thanks to those who have already pledged or donated ☺



And finally...To all our supporters who help us in so many practical, material, financial and prayerful ways – Thank you for joining us in the journey!



To follow Frontline's activities in Brentwood and Bulgaria, please go to:-

<https://www.facebook.com/#!/frontlinepartnership> (Frontline)

<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/frontlinebulgarianews> (Frontline Bulgaria News group)

www.frontlinepartnership.org