

first

tooth

word

step

sandcastle



Up to 2000 young children in the Czech Republic are spending milestones such as these surrounded not by their families, but in institutional care.

Our initiative **Dobrý start** (Good Start) wants to **change** this.

While children in institutional care have food to eat, beds to sleep in, and toys to play with, they are lacking what is most important: a family.

Our initiative **Dobrý start** (Good Start) wants to change this.

This is why we have launched the campaign **Z rodiny doletí dál** (Children fly further with families).

The Czech Republic is one of the last European countries where children are still being placed in institutional care. These children's lives could improve if the government simply enacted a long-promised law. This law would put in place prevention and support services for biological families and would help to strengthen foster care. The introduction of this law, however, is constantly being postponed.

The aim of **Dobrý start** is to support the introduction of this key law by putting a spotlight on the sad situation of thousands of children. We are drawing attention to the fact that children, especially very young ones, do not belong in institutions. In June 2017 (this month) this law will again come before the Czech government.

What can **YOU** do to help make a change

- Send the children a paper plane
- On <http://dobrystart.cz/> sign a virtual paper plane (petition)
- Take a picture of yourself with a paper plane

Many Czech celebrities and hundreds of members of public have joined our campaign already. You can download your picture using the form on <http://dobrystart.cz/> or on our Facebook page. Spread the word.

The most important thing is that the public is aware that **there are children who need our help**. Like our Facebook page, follow us on Twitter or Instagram and help us to share this information.

Thank **YOU**.



Why do very young children **not** belong in **institutions**?



What we learn early in our lives, even in **the first few months**, has the ability to influence every that comes after. Staying in an institution can badly **damage a child both psychologically and socially**. Science has shown that our brain can retain memories from our early childhood and a plethora of research confirms that institutions are not good for the **neurological development of the brain**. Even a short stay in an institute can cause a child irreparable damage.

Not only this, but institutional care is **much more expensive** than supporting children in either their biological families or in foster families. Institutional care has **major negative consequences on society as a whole**. Children who have experienced institutional care are much more likely to encounter poverty, unemployment, mental health problems, substance abuse, and homelessness. One in two children who have been housed in institutions will go on to commit crime.

Babies may look like all they need is to eat and sleep, but **the feeling of safety that can only be got from loving and caring hands** and is crucial to their development.



dobrý start
z rodiny doletí dál

And why **paper planes**?

If you launch a paper plane well, it will **fly far**. If you launch it badly, it will soon fall. For children, who are **similarly fragile** to paper planes, a good start in life is **extremely important**.



dobrý start

z rodiny doletí dál



Behind this initiative is the public service company **Dobrá rodina** (Good Family), which helps to support and develop foster care; the creators of the documentary *V nejlepším zájmu dítěte* (In the Best Interest of a Child), **Linda Jablonská and Irena Hejdová**; and the chairman of the Government Department for the Rights of Children, **Klára Laurenčíková**.

