

Leyla, 13 years old

Leyla is 13 years old and originally came from Syria. She came to the hostel with her younger sister 1 ½ month ago. The children's commissioner from Metadrasi initiated a family reunion process with an uncle living in Germany after they were placed in the youth care home. However, during the take-in interviews, inconsistencies regarding the family relationships came to light and it is suspected that Leyla actually doesn't have a familial relationship with the "family" in Germany. Therefore, the children have been housed in an orphanage.

It is believed that the children might be cousins. The communication with the "sister" of Leyla with her aunt has been very good and emotional. When the aunt communicated with Leyla, she did so without any warmth and she used an aggressive tone. Her uncle portrayed a similar attitude.

From the moment of her admission, Leyla had difficulties complying with the rules and in managing her emotions. She behaved incredibly selfishly and was often aggressive while interacting with other children.

During her stay in the hostel, she created problematic situations on a daily basis (destroying other children's possessions, use of violence, damaging any object within reach). This negatively affected the daily life of other children and they started to avoid her company. Her isolation clearly affected her mood and further aggravated her negative behaviour. The shelter's team had to constantly adjust intervention plans to deal with yet another crisis situation created by her. The emotional needs of the staff and of Leyla herself were very high as a result and required special management.

At this early stage, we missed crucial information regarding her social and medical history, so an appropriate individualised intervention program for Leyla could not be put together.

Investigations on her family environment and social history were carried out, in order to gain a better understanding of her behaviour. The support of a psychiatrist to investigate the cause of her persistent negative behaviour was sought as well.

The psychiatrist considered her mental state to have suffered from irreversible damage, influenced by the previous institutionalisation she had experienced in Syria and the physical abuse suffered in her family environment.

During a preventive medical screening by private hostel doctor, in anticipation of her enrolment in school, the minor was diagnosed with the hereditary disease "Lisch nodules". This disease can cause neurological problems if it has manifested itself in the brain, and it could have a negative influence on her behaviour.

Currently, the disease is being investigated through various tests to determine how it has been affecting the minor Leyla. Based on the test results a tailored medical support framework will be set-up.