



## INTRODUCTORY WORD

*Hey,*

*Here we are again, with a new issue of our Bulletin, whose idea is to inform you about what we, Familia people do, what issues and problems we are trying to solve. Our intention is also to cheer you up and amuse you. Because, what is life without entertainment? We would be glad if, in the future, you would also take part in our work, offer us your suggestions as of the appearance of our Bulletin, what issues it should treat and what its contents should look like. Please send us also your contributions - texts, drawings, photographs...*

*Just be creative and you won't miss the point. And above all, feel free to tell what you wish or what worries you, because we may have similar dreams and share similar worries. Anyway, we will understand you because we belong to the same or relatively the same generation.*

*For those who don't know or who have forgotten, we, Familia people, are a group of adolescents whose start in the life was not so easy. We are gathered at the Adolescents' Club. In spite of all circumstances, we decided to become masters of our destiny with a help by good people, to make this difficult life more beautiful and enjoy it. We have been raised in foster families. There, we found our place under the sun, support, love, understanding. We don't differ from those who had a "better start". We also go to school, we like socializing, music, theater, parties and adore travelling. Contacts us to organize together some good time!!!*

*FAMILIA PEOPLE*

The objective of the Panel discussion "What after having turned 18?" was to sensitize the general public, professionals and decision-makers in order to join forces and together consider and identify actual problems associated with the process of young people's emancipating after having left the shelter of foster family and social welfare network, and

found themselves before not at all simple task which involves a number of problems and difficulties. We tried to perceive how the complex process of emancipating could be rendered more simple and safe, by a strategy and action plan that we can develop together, how to present and propose them to relevant services of the competent Ministries and to all others that we deem may help us.

At the panel discussion there were a total of 50 participants, including 40 adolescents deprived of parental care, 9 professionals coming both from governmental and non-governmental sectors, and a promoter.

The gathering was organized and moderated by adolescents of FAMILIA (Drazen Zacero, Ana Jovanovic, Djordje Miladinovic, Suada Aliti, Jelena Gojcevic, Jovana Jarebica, Slobodanka Popic, Misa Gajic, Momcilan Jovanovic, Zeljko Savkovic and Rada Cuk), and participants were adolescents of the Home for children deprived of parental care "Drinka Pavlovic", Belgrade (Natasa Savic, Jasna Kukic, Monika Gazibaric, Veronika Panisic, Ivana Trivic, Danica Lekic, Elizabeta Damjanovic, Vukasin Dokic, Dragan Petrovic, Imre Gabelji, Dragan Mitrovic, Aleksandar Petrovic, Stefan Petrovic, Aleksandar Dormanovic) and adolescents from: Milosevac (Admir Lojo, Tamara Nikolic), Subotica (Kristina Firic, Ljubica Zavarko), Loznica (Suzana Milovanovic, Neda Karadzic), Stara Pazova (Tomislav Mijanovic, Danica Jankovic) Nis (Milan Svabic), Paracin (Katarina Vujaklija, Danijel Pavlovic), Zitiste and Nova Crnja (Sasa Nikolic, Lazar Mijailovic) and Zajecar (Fadila Djug, Nenad Zigic).

As for professionals, present were representatives of the City Centre for Social Welfare, Belgrade: Ms. Ljiljana Mijanovic, Director, Ms. Vesna Argakijev and Ms. Tamara Borisavljevic; promoter: Ms. Branka Pujic, actress; representative of the international non-governmental organization Care International: Ms. Marija Milic; associates of FAMILIA: Ms. Branka Radojevic, Ms. Maida Stefanovic, Ms. Gorana Vlasic, Ms. Anita Jakovljevic and Ms. Kristina Lalic.

### **Description of activities**

v At the beginning, the audience was greeted by the gathering moderator Drazen Zacero (17 years old, in foster care) on behalf of the host and informed the participants about the objectives of the gathering. Individual introduction enabled everyone to tell something about him/herself.

v Presentation of Slobodanka Popic, lawyer, treating the topic of legal regulation of foster care, with the emphasis on the rights of adolescents after leaving the social welfare network, inspired impressive interest among the participants. It has shown that adolescents are insufficiently informed about their rights upon reaching 18 years of age. A number of adolescents have not been informed about the possibility to get scholarship for their studies.

v After a break, Suada Aliti, Ana Jovanovic and Djordje Miladinovic spoke about emotional aspect of emancipation from their own experience's point of view.

vJovana Jarebica spoke about specific problems of emancipation with the emphasis on conditions of living and schooling in Belgrade. This provoked the adolescents to speak about difficulties they are facing in their respective environments.

The adolescents mentioned the following problems:

- poor interest among professionals of the Centres for Social Welfare in their problems
- lack of assistance in exercise of their right to identity card
- lack of assistance in finding job
- lack of assistance in further schooling
- for adolescents coming from rural environments, lack of financial assistance for travelling expenses related to their schooling in the city

- lack of assistance regarding accommodation upon leaving social welfare network
- lack of financial support to foster families, particularly to relative families and those taking care of the children with special needs

Specific problems of the adolescents in the Homes for children deprived of parental care:

- necessity to leave the Home upon reaching 18 years of age
- girls' early marrying in order to avoid sex trafficking
- choice of socially marginalized partners, which returns them to the social welfare system as social welfare cases
- challenge for young men to get involved in crime due to impossibility to find legal sources of income
- lack of trust in pedagogues
- lack of psychological work with adolescents

v Work continued in groups where adolescents had the opportunity to present their ideas related to finding possible solution that would make the process of emancipation at least slightly more certain, and place numerous problems, more or less, within the limits of our power. Representatives of the Centres for Social Welfare and the organization CARE, joined the discussion groups in the role of observers.

v Presentation of the work per groups was aimed to design an action plan that would serve as a basis for developing a mechanism of assistance to adolescents who are leaving the social welfare network, at a local level. Thanks to this presentation before the panel group, we reached the following conclusions:

1. Level of information should be increased through: Centres for Social Welfare, Employment Agency, and that relating to issues of scholarship for education and schooling and possibilities of employment (including also the adolescents who are not citizens of this country – refugees). We deem it necessary for the professionals of the Centre for Social Welfare to visit the Homes and foster families and offer us information regarding employment, housing, etc.
2. Local communities should be included in our problems – identification of donors, cooperation with state institutions, along with cooperation with the Centres for Social Welfare, performing local actions, cooperation with the media, organizing a fair with private companies in order to raise funds aimed to find a job easier.
3. Problems should be identified and a map of problems prepared. State institutions should be informed about these actions, and their importance emphasized and defined.
4. According to the Director of the City Centre for Social Welfare, to start with, it is important to define the timing of decentralization of the centres: short-term, long-term - What? When?
5. Continuous work regarding vocational guidance of the children deprived of parental care that should be organized by the Centres for Social Welfare in cooperation with Employment Agency.
6. Establishing "Agency for emancipation" to include legal service, psychological counselling centre, etc. and to have the objective to make it easier for adolescents to socialize themselves and get integrated into local community as soon as possible. Activities of the Agency would include also an agreement with the State about favourable conditions for housing loans, and the possibility to get temporary accommodation; its participation in the preparation of documents for adolescents; assistance during the period of leaving one's foster family or the Home, as far as the issues of providing accommodation, food, pocket money, finding a job, etc. are concerned.

Services and activities of the Agency would include:

- professional: social worker, psychologist, Home pedagogue, Befriender-life mentor (reputable person from the local community)

- school paper or some publication, bulletin
- the media (radio, television, etc.) - PR, information

7. Maintain contacts with other non-governmental organizations and work on mutual understanding

8. Promote conditions prevailing in the Home, so that a selection of adolescents in care who could be successful university students can be made, and enable them to remain in the Home until completion of their studies; design a service in charge of finding a flat and donors willing to cover expenses of 1 to 6 monthly rents of the ward after having left the Home and while awaiting to get employed. It is also necessary for each ward to have his life mentor to monitor his behaviour, counsel him when making important decisions and connect him with the local community.

v In the closing word, Ms. Ljiljana Mijanovic took the obligation to be in charge of everything possible to help us, and we are highly grateful to her. She also proposed to organize a similar gathering in the premises of the City Centre for Social Welfare, and we are looking forward to it.

v Ms.Branka Pujic, as a very active participant in the gathering, has shown to be an excellent facilitator and promoter of our interests.

v Large number of adolescents were interested in continuing a cooperation with adolescents of FAMILIA, in order to start similar initiatives in their respective local communities.

v Impressions were summarized in the end, by means of evaluation lists (both for adolescents and professionals).

### **What we achieved?**

Organization of panel discussion "What after having turned 18?", was highly useful, not only for us, adolescents, but also to professionals. That was an opportunity to meet each other and to connect with our age mates from other municipalities in Serbia where fostering is being practiced. On the other hand, everybody could understand here that he is not left alone with his problems, and that was seen as an advantage because a group is always more powerful than an individual alone. In that sense, after this Panel we feel stronger as a group. In view of the fact that the Panel was attended by professionals too, one could conclude that we are a part of large apparatus, which, unfortunately, does not always function as required, but we now know our place in it. Another achievement of this discussion is also the fact that, after it, we look into the future with much more optimism. Finally, since we come from different environments, at the Panel we exchanged our experiences, learned others' opinion and expressed ours, and that inspired us to think about independent representing our own interests and searching for solutions.

Our guests of the Centre for Social Welfare had a unique opportunity to get immediate, "first-hand", insight into problems of the children in foster care, enabling them to work on deficiencies existing in the social welfare system. Inter alia, they could assure themselves that NGO sector is not their rival, but a strategic partner, whose potentials should be maximally utilized for the general well-being of both wards and professionals. We do hope that after this discussion, they got additional motivation to invest more effort and energy in their work, because they could see that there are people who appreciate it, and children who need them.

### **What we didn't achieve?**

Many of the participants did not have courage enough to pronounce all difficulties and problems they are facing, be they wards of the Homes or placed in foster families. What our age mates couldn't dare say in public, they spoke to each other or wrote in the evaluation list. Based on these statements, we got the impression that we did not obtain the real picture of

difficulties the adolescents deprived of parental care are facing when trying to get emancipated, but only touched "tip of the iceberg".

### **Results of the evaluation**

Over 30 adolescents completed evaluation list. 20 adolescents confirmed their permanent concern and considerations regarding their emancipation, while 12 of them declared that they thought about it occasionally. No one denied his thinking about that or declared to expect solution of the problem from someone else. Participants-adolescents are most preoccupied by the problems of employment (18), housing (11) and schooling (6). They also worry about having to leave the Home, obtain identity card and other documents, health protection, but also about the same rights, equality with, and respect from others.

A half of interviewed consider that there are possibilities to implement information and knowledge attained at this gathering in their own local communities: by organizing a Club similar to one operating in FAMILIA, approaching professionals of the Centre for Social Welfare, organizing discussion with those competent for their problems, informing other adolescents about the gathering or organizing a similar gathering in their own town. The other half of adolescents were not sure whether some of the Panel lessons could be implemented in their own communities.

20 adolescents believe that something positive could be done to change their position, 7 answered "maybe", while three of them were categorical in denying such a possibility. Adolescents see the following to be the key promoters of changes: themselves (18), Ministry of Social Affairs (9), Centre for Social Welfare (8), Home (1), while 4 participants think that all these actors should participate in that process; no adolescent named foster carers as promoters who should work on improving support and conditions for emancipation of the adolescents deprived of parental care.

Adolescents would like to deepen the discussion treating the topic of vocational guidance and further schooling, finding a job, flat, better information about their own rights, but most of them would like to discuss life and their own feelings.

In the end, adolescents wanted to add that we are all different and that this fact should be understood, but also that all children are equal, and have similar needs. The present professionals were unanimous in their assessment that the discussion was very interesting and useful to them. They think that they got informed and acquired new ideas, understood the difficulties and needs of adolescents, heard their voice and attitude, perceived the scope of problems in the field, and a necessity to have a different approach.

Panel caused great concern in professionals regarding the actual status.

We would like to thank all participants for having answered our invitation and thus offered us support in our efforts to ensure a more certain future to ourselves.

Special thanks are due to CCC, for having offered us their premises to organize the gathering. We would also like to express our gratitude to our promoter, Ms. Branka Pujic with her family, whose neutral position served as a mirror or judgment of reality to all participants of various ages, level of experience and roles, and thus helped us to better understand each other.

Memorandum prepared by: Drazen Zacero, Ana Jovanovic, Suada Aliti, Jovana Jarebica and  
Jelena Gojcevic  
Belgrade, September 2003

## IMPRESSIONS FROM THE PANEL DISCUSSION

“Home does not comprise walls, home is parents’ love, attention and care.”

“Mother is not the woman who gives you birth, but the one who leads you through the life.”

Hello, my dear Familia people!

I was glad that you invited us to participate in the Panel discussion. Unlike my friend who didn’t like the discussion, I found it interesting and useful for all, not only for the children in care.

1. In my environment, there are conditions to implement some things discussed at the Panel, and I have already partly set to work. To start with, I asked my foster carer who keeps the key to the premises where children deprived of real parents “seemingly” gather and got the answer that I should ask that social workers.

The premises are situated in Karadjordjeva street in Aleksandrovo, it is not furnished, it has two computers and children rarely gather there. I am sure that I will manage to get these premises and I assure you that they will be furnished and I will do my best to gather the children of Aleksandrovo. Workshop (of Familia) will, I am 100% sure, work actively together and cooperate with Familia, Belgrade.

2. The story about strategic plan (action plan): I have a partly designed plan, but to start with, I would like you to give me some advice because I have a number of problems and concerns. I will not neglect your suggestions.

3. My motivation will persist, because all it is about are young lives and the future.

“Obstacles should not discourage us, but motivate to overcome them.”

“After downs, there come ups”.

4. A part of the plan will soon be realized.

5. I live in the Cvijanovic family, which has been dealing with fostering for about thirty-five years. Four children have been raised there, and there are four of us actually in foster care in this family. My name is Sasa, and I am a student of second grade of Chemical-technological and civil-engineering school. I hope that all my plans will be achieved and become successful. I am pretty good at school.

I am glad that the Panel was an occasion for me to meet Drazen and a beautiful girl named Andrea with her friends or associates.

I expect much greater response from everyone.

With love, sincerely yours,

SASA NIKOLIC

### Love for Ljubodrag

On one big and cold hill,  
Where falcons lay little falcons,  
Where not even a baby bird is left alone,  
And listens to the song of love warbled by  
her caring mother.

Cardboard box was my cradle,  
Stone and wild rocked me,  
White diaper enveloped the tiny heart.  
Angels, listen to my plan.

Abandoned, in the dark so tiny and lone,

Smaller than a poppy grain.  
Let someone offer me a warm nest,  
I want to live, and my desire is big and  
strong.

My mom is smaller than myself,  
Her soul is like a sand grain, minuscule.  
She is nameless.  
Let some heart give me love!  
I will be dear and nice to it, I will love it a  
lot, forever!  
They call me Ljubodrag.

P.S. My mom Dragica Cvijanovic, who dedicated it to one baby that has been left on the Vrsac hill, and is now taken care of in Zvecanska street no. 7, wrote this poem.

## **THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE AND INNOVATIONS IN CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE**

The need for the social welfare system to modernize itself and become more functional, with recognition of existing qualities and experiences, is particularly emphasized in the children welfare field. One of the fields affected by general social crisis and destruction of the existing social welfare system is the field of creation of preconditions for the children in care to continue successfully their life, by developing the necessary level of independence of these young people and ensuring the system of support, by using resources of natural family, and also of alternative ones, primarily in the local community.

General circumstances of their development presented increasingly complex developmental requirements to these children, in terms of initiative, responsibility, independence, while parallelly, social support network underwent destruction.

Particular sensitivity for these problems was seen in the network of foster care but, instead of necessary increase in the scope of types and forms of services, its practical destruction actually took place. Attempts to revitalize it gave different results in different environments, and the poorest in the most immediate city core. It seems that this situation is not only a result of longstanding social neglecting of foster family, but also of a general lack of adequate supportive systems for families with children, to offer them more security and confidence that they are not left to themselves.

For those working in the social welfare system, social crisis meant facing intensity and frequency, as well as types of problems that had been unknown to them before, without having been prepared for it in any way whatsoever or enjoying professional support. While, on one hand, there was an increasing professional awareness of importance of foster care for adequate protection of children, and the need to extend the network and functions of this type of care through recognition of specialized and occasional fostering, the reality was a decrease in the number of already existing families. In fluctuating external circumstances and unclearly defined roles and procedures, professional work becomes sometimes just a formal task performing, with domination of administrative over professional, which may be a protective reaction of professionals who are trying to define their place and role between omnipotence which is attributed to them and helplessness they feel. These services may perform their function of main support both for the child in care and foster family much more successfully, if they have support themselves, on one hand by institutions of the system, and on the other hand, by different resources of local community – formal and informal groups which may be motivated for different forms of support to children.

A young person whose foster placement is about to terminate is facing different types and levels of problems – both basic, existential (flat, job), and those, not so visible but however not less important, relating to taking a full responsibility and facing the life requirements that their age mates are mainly still protected from. Planning release from the social welfare system does not comprise special programmes aimed to prepare the adolescents for this step. The foster family itself generally does not understand the limits of its obligations and responsibilities towards young person whose placement in that family formally ceases. In case there is no support network, to ensure successful release of young person, in the society where this process of emancipation is generally prolonged and for adolescents who live with their parents, it seems that some kind of analogous behaviour is imposed to foster family,

which is not planned, supported, nor socially gratified, and unclearness as of duration and outcome, threatens to compromise the existing closeness and all values achieved in relation between foster carer – ward. Therefore, an intensive presence of fear from the future does not surprise, nor does it the confusion in the plans, and even maladaptive responses to this situation of these young people.

The mentioned issues, which make only a part of what emerges as a problem in the processes of children's and adolescents' protection, must be solved by systematic reconstruction of foster care network, which will provide also the systems of support with lobbying in the broader public in order to ensure the resources for their solving.

Tamara Borisavljevic, psychologist  
Vesna Argakijev, pedagogue  
The City Centre for Social Welfare, Belgrade

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF FOSTERING**

Legal term "fostering" designates an organized foster care. The essence is social care of the children being raised in difficulties. Foster care is socially organized form of protection of the children in an alternative family. The children deprived of parents or parental care and the children whose development is disturbed by circumstances prevailing in their own family, are placed in an alternative family in order to secure conditions for their development, education and qualification for independent life and work.

Legal act, which governs all these issues, is entitled "Law on marriage and family relations" and has been effective since 1980. Material condition of parents cannot be an exclusive condition for foster care. Rights and obligations of parent and guardian in relation to the child do not cease during the period of foster care. According to the Law, foster care may maximally last till the ward's age of 26 years. However, the practice shows that it is usually prolonged, analogously to the relations in the biological family.

Family that receives a child for foster care has to meet legally prescribed requirements for a guardian. That family exercises its right to allowance. The body in charge of foster care is guardianship body of the municipality where child has his residence, i.e. domicile.

Family that receives a child signs a written contract with the guardianship body, after decision about referring to foster care has been issued.

Guardianship body makes supervision over realization of the purpose of foster placement. It sounds monotonous, but the language of law is like that.

Slobodanka Popic

## **PLANS, CONCERNS, SOLUTIONS...**

I have frequently asked myself about what will be with me once I turn 18. I visited a social worker and asked him if he could help me, to give me counsel regarding employment or, to begin with, provide me with a minimum pocket money that would enable me to start something on my own. "No", he said, "we don't have money, and as far as employment is concerned, you are aware yourself that in our country it is difficult to find a job; anyway, if something occurs, we will call you!"

I was really disappointed and I could not believe that they are so little interested - yes, I graduated and what now? Who could I rely on? With whom could I discuss things? Is there anyone who could talk to us who are becoming of age, to support us and encourage to think about things? However, nothing.

My foster mother has insisted on my getting employed, and that was another reason to be even more hurt! I am alone and without support again. I cannot believe, I am very much frightened, but I believe in myself, I must be strong enough and to slowly try to find my own way. However, I am adult now and that fact motivated me to take a bit more severe attitude. It was hard for me, I could not tell from what end and what I should start. And then, I heard inadvertently in a shop about one lady looking for a girl to baby-sit for a little child. "Yeah!" – I shouted, "well, I can do it and, by the way, I am terribly fond of little children", I said - "I accept the job". Now, I still baby-sit for that child that I have become attached to very strongly.

At present, I wonder if this salary could cover my basic needs when I get emancipated, and I ask myself how to start an independent life? How to find another job that would enable me to cover expenses of accommodation and food, at least these basic things!?

Jovanovic Ana

### **Challenges of the adult age**

I am a grown-up. I have passed through all possible phases of the childhood, like all my age mates. The only bad thing about my life is the fact that I was abandoned by my biological parents in the Children's Home in Zvecanska street. I think that in my heart that will remain a lifelong wound and bed memory that I keep in myself as a scar.

Now, sixteen years have passed far from my parents in, let's say, a comfortable environment, where I was surrounded by a lot of love and care offered by my foster family, and a bit of jealousy of some persons around me. I am trying to leave everything behind. However, in my mind I have an enormous question mark: "What will be with me tomorrow?"

Thank to my foster carers, who had strength and willingness enough to persist in their efforts to raise me, I am now a student of second grade of Architectonic technical school.

On the eve of my adult age, I am frightened and insecure, and even a little panicked about what I am to face. I have a problem shared by all young people of today - EMANCIPATION, which is a large obstacle that I have to overcome.

I see my emancipation as a huge problem and I take it very seriously. What I have to do previously is to ensure a job for me that would suit me. On the other hand, I would like to find a flat as one of the possible housing solutions. Also, an adolescent who has just become of age, as probably myself tomorrow, would need someone to offer him important support, to be there for him tomorrow in some unknown situation when he needs help. Such a support could possibly be offered by foster carers or the state.

It is only then that I could confidently leave my foster family and start my independent life. However, the probability for me or some other adolescent in the Home to manage to do all of that, is insignificant. Today, as we all know, it is hard to find a job. The same goes for a flat with a modest rent. I would not even like to mention the State – I really don't know if it is impossible for it to help us, or it simply does not notice our problems. That is why I don't even expect anything from the State, I only sincerely expect my foster family to offer me some support or assistance.

That is why we, Familia people, gathered and united our efforts and forces in order to fight for a better tomorrow. We do hope that as for our problems something will be done, because that would bring a more secure future to the children in foster families and in the Children's Homes.

Zeljko Savkovic

### **What after having graduated from primary school?**

I imagine: Myself as a friend to everybody around. Everyone will have the opportunity to confide his or her secrets to me. I will try to be friend also to those who don't love me much. How I see myself in the future: As many may suppose, I will go to "The Twelfth Belgrade High-School". According to many stories, professors are rigorous there, but I think this is for the best. I understand it is good for the children because much more can be learned that way! I fear: Not to be accepted as a pal and friend, and to be rejected! My fears and my presentiments will be more pronounced in the future!!!

Aleksandra Gulan

### **HOW I SEE MYSELF IN THE FUTURE**

I am sitting on the bed and thinking to myself: "What would I like to be once I become a grown-up?" My room provides me with a feeling of comfort and warmth because it is painted colour of apricot.

I am thinking about what I will become. I think that I will graduate from the Philological High-school, and afterwards the Faculty of Law. I have not yet decided for sure.

Sometimes I wonder that will be if I don't choose the thing I like, if I make a mistake...

Sometimes, I fear that I will not integrate into the society, but then I remember that there is still a lot of time to think about everything...

Andrea Dimic

### **OUR GENERATION - '85**

Many people think that we are carried by wrong trends and that we cannot tell peace from war. But, if you take a closer look into our souls, you will learn that there is something still not identified sleeping there, and just about to awake right now and to bring the life fire.

The torch burning inside is not just a bit of fire and a piece of wood, it is a fruit of love and imagination. Maybe we wish a lot, but that is certainly less than the world deserves to be offered.

Our generation is looking for foam of sea waves and smell of shells, perfumed grass and song of leaves. We are looking for pearls that emerge after the rain, we are looking for our rainbow and laughter. Together in a labyrinth, we are flying towards the corridor of light. Our pockets are full with time and there is no wind that could catch us.

Sometimes easier, sometimes harder, we pass through the threads of first love, sometimes we fly, and sometimes we fall. Sometimes we are flying for hours above the clouds, standing by the window and dreaming about being on the other side of the ocean. We have always the same dream in colour, because everything that we wish when we close our eyes remains there forever. Carried by this crazy fast-eyed life, we all face thousands of rocks and a million of shipwrecks. However, in the end, when we reach calm waters and look behind, we can see bright traces illuminated by moonlight on the enormous track of eternity.

Suada Aliti-Suzana

## **PROBLEMS OF OUR GENERATION**

Sometimes I wonder if I know the people around me enough, and particularly my friends that sometimes seem so happy to me, and sometimes disappointed and rejected. Some of my age mates have a problem with communication and expressing their feelings, and therefore they become reserved.

By such a behaviour, they unconsciously create problems to themselves, and it is difficult to solve them later. Generally, they think that nobody loves them, that nobody understands them and they let themselves to the drugs. These persons are very cold and antipathetic, it is very hard to reach their heart and learn something about their experiences, falls, disappointments. I think that these persons do not have anyone to support him or her and stop their further self-destruction.

My generation has experienced many traumas that had negative impact on their families, because they mainly struggled to provide food for their family and did not pay attention to behaviour of their children. The drug addicts need someone to offer them a lot of love and patience.

Throughout our life we all have our ups and downs, every new generation faces some new problems. We, the adolescents, should struggle in order to avoid such problems because adolescence is the most beautiful period in one's life.

Suada Aliti-Suzana

## **WHAT AFTER HAVING GRADUATED FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL!?**

I imagine: When I finish the fourth grade of secondary school, I imagine that I will be totally disoriented and that there will be no help for me. I imagine myself standing all alone in some island without anybody around and without a place to live, not a job to do. The same would also happen in the reality, I mean when I graduate from secondary school, I will not find a job, and consequently, I will have no possibility to secure to myself a flat and I will be a miserable poor person. I will remain a responsibility of my mother and I will not get independent.

I am planning: In order to avoid all these unfavourable situations, I am planning to start my apprenticeship in some company with effect from the third grade, because that will ensure me a job. When you go to a technical school, as a student of the third grade you are offered the opportunity of apprenticeship out of the school, and thus a kind of ensure to yourself a job. At the same time, I will have a salary, which means the money to rent a flat. I wish and plan, once I am settled, to enroll in the faculty. Of course, I don't want to depend on anybody, and that is why I have to work on my own future on my own.

Jovana Jarebica

## **EMANCIPATION AND MYSELF**

My name is Djordje Miladinovic and I come from a foster family, which lives in Mali Mokri Lug. I have a lot of problems, such as: schooling, job, independence... The most difficult of all is a financial problem, schooling is expensive, and I have no possibilities to earn or to provide some money. If I try to find a job, that will be a problem because I haven't finished my schooling, and I haven't done my military service. I am afraid of getting emancipated, I would like to separate from my parents and to start to live with my girlfriend Milica. But, my parents are old and sick, I am not sure that I would manage to keep household, and I don't know how to help them. Because of many obligations, I have neglected football and have

increasingly limited time for myself. I would like to have a flat, job, but it is all very hard and I will need much strength and willingness, and pretty much luck, to achieve these things. In the circumstances I found myself in, I need to struggle on my own and not to expect the things to solve automatically!

Djordje Miladinovic

My generation has experienced many traumas that had negative impact on their families, because they mainly struggled to provide food for their family and did not pay attention to behaviour of their children. The drug addicts need someone to offer them a lot of love and patience.

Throughout our life we all have our ups and downs, every new generation faces some new problems. We, the adolescents, should struggle in order to avoid such problems because adolescence is the most beautiful period in one's life.

Suada Aliti-Suzana

**Once loved**

Once I used to love your eyes,  
 Once I used to love your hair,  
 Once I used to love only you,  
 Like a flower loves dew.  
 Now, my dear, I don't love anything yours  
 anymore,  
 And I don't want anything yours anymore,  
 For I am no longer made to beg for love,  
 Nor can I always share you with others.

I just wanted you to leave,  
 Your return is of no use anymore,  
 It would only help me  
 To destroy you and me  
 Go away and don't come back,  
 Go away, and remain hers forever,  
 Wing will carry my words  
 "Love to be loved"

Suada Aliti-Suzana

**Maybe**

Maybe I will boast  
 That I now love someone else,  
 But only the heart will know  
 That I haven't gotten over you.

Maybe I will be able to laugh  
 And to pretend I am a happy girl  
 But only the heart will know  
 And keep the memory.

Maybe I will even cry  
 But no one will know about that  
 Only my poor heart  
 Will sigh over that secret.

Suzana Aliti

**Time brings him, time took him away**

My eyes wept,  
 One calm, clear night,  
 Because he will appear  
 never again...  
 One star in the sky is  
 dying  
 Quietly, quietly...  
 And no one but him  
 Visited my dreams.

Tired summer followed  
 the tear  
 In my heart sorrow  
 rooted,  
 Memories affect again the  
 soul,  
 Memories of when I was  
 with him.

I will not cry,

For no tears are left.  
 Sorrow took away all my  
 tears,  
 Leaving the time to heal  
 the wounds,  
 For time brings him,  
 Time took him away.

Suada Aliti-Suzana

## **TURKEY - EPHEBUS**

Last summer, I had the opportunity to visit a part of one ancient civilization, which was created some 1000 years B.C. It is an impression that takes your breath away. Aqueducts, sewerage, squares, library, amphitheaters, temples... Now, the town of Ephesus is only ruins that speak a lot about its past. That was a huge town that many stories and legends originate from.

I learned that in Turkey, a pig is sacred animal, because, according to the legend, it led the first emperor to the place that was favourable to build a big town. The entire event was painted on the walls protecting it. In the square there was a hospital where they admitted only patients they were sure will get well. A man whose disease was seemingly incurable asked help from them. Despaired for not having been admitted in the hospital, he took venom. By some miracle, it cured him, and since that time the symbol of medicine is a serpent. Across the street, there was a pharmacy.

The most impressive are the grandeur and beauty of the library, which with its columns and reliefs, speaks about importance of books. They had a strange king of life, just across the library there was a brothel. Commercials were popular then too, so in one of the streets, on the pavement there is a drawing showing left foot, broken heart, woman's head, and money, which tells you that if you go on walking in that direction, you will reach the women whose love is to be paid.

Amphitheaters are huge and constructed in such a manner that a man sitting on the top can hear everything the same as the one sitting next to the stage itself. That was their main gathering place.

I could write a lot more, because myths and legends arise at every step, and I can say that Ephesus is certainly a miracle that I have experienced never before.

Jovana Jarebica

## **HAVE YOU NOTICED...**

... the air smells... like the snow... interesting, it is November!

... there was the Book Fair? I know, I visited it.

... the morning bus transportation and their choice of music, joyfully, brother!

... that there are presidential elections, and you are only seventeen.

... that your aunt keeps reminding you: "Set up your back!"

And have you noticed that in her presence, you frequently start setting up by yourself, in order to avoid that boring talk of hers?

... that the professors are humans too?

At the test, they obligatory neglect the fact that everybody is using cribs.

You have managed to put everything from the cribs on the paper, and they SEEM not to have noticed.

And don't forget, they have eyes on their back, too.

... that the winter is approaching, that increase in your body mass is unavoidable.

SAUERKRAUT FILLED WITH MEAT...

... your sweetheart is watching you, oh my God...

Jovana Jarebica

## TV COMMERCIALS

I am sitting and watching TV Pink, "Friends" series is about to start...It starts... 3 seconds of "Friends", then a commercial break – 15 minutes, I watch all commercials and forget everything about the series and the meaning of these commercials.

List of commercials:

w Doncafe - Mira Stupica wants to marry an ugly, feminized, bald batman.

w Sanitary pads - "Babe" walks around her apartment and touches, smells, kisses, hugs her tanga sanitary pad.

w Anti-dandruff shampoos - "Babe" reasons: "I haven't seen him for a century!" -"But you have dandruff, you idiot!", her friend tells her... The other is desperate, develops immediately an acute depression. But, her friend recommends her Head & Shoulders, and everything finishes by a happy end. Particularly because that guy at the party performs sanitary inspection of hair, looks for lice, nits, etc. And his hand gets entangled in her hair...

w Cleaning agents - "I have got two minutes to clean all and everything!!!" But there is "CIF" with its magic formula from which emerges a bald gay and washes everything in exactly 1 minute and 59 seconds.

w Detergent – Dirty, foul-smelling socks cannot be washed clean, but a man appears from the washing machine, hits the socks into it, pours "TIDE", and the socks get white as the ebony.

w Toothpaste – We have bad breath, our teeth are brown, and half of them are missing. But, luckily, some tooth-extractor gives us "BONIDENT" and the teeth grow, new and white and there are no bloody gums. A girl, blue-eyed, says: "Imagine, a boy approaches you, cute, but his teeth are - YUCK! What is important is the soul, but also nice teeth!", concludes her in the end.

w COMMERCIALS, GO TO HELL!!! (ANYWAY, YOU ARE NO GOOD FOR ANYTHING ELSE)

Drazen Zacero

### Our everyday tears

As soon as it is born, a baby starts crying signaling very clearly that it has started breathing. Sometimes, children use their tears to achieve something or to attract attention. Adult persons cry when they are happy, but most frequently when they are sad. However, even when he does not cry, an adult person excretes about half a liter of tears every day!

Jovanovic Ana

## TO BE INDEPENDENT

Like many of my age mates, I frequently think about what it is like to be emancipated, independent in the sense to take care of oneself, to earn money for oneself, to live alone. Since I often think about that, I have come to the conclusion that it is not at all easy, simply it takes a lot of things, primarily courage, and certainly, it is essential to ask yourself if you really want it.

After some time, my reasoning has turned into a wish, but on the other hand, I am analyzing how to realize that? Will there be any obstacles? Yes, I am positive! I want to get independent. To begin with, I will find a job, I will maximally save money, and in time I believe I will succeed. Of course, I talked to my foster mother, and she supported me in due time; there are, naturally, also my great friends of Familia who supported me from the very beginning and started encouraging me even more and, of course, counsel me.

I think I am gradually beginning to realize my wish, I started working and I like my job very much, and it is highly important to me. I have not become any richer, and haven't managed to save money for my own "flat", but of course, I am not giving up, in view of the fact that social workers "are of no use". At least for now! There is no information what will happen to us who are of age and simply, our foster carers are not in a position to keep us with them, or to us who have simply decided so. I do believe that with their help everything would be much easier, but it is not the case, so we simply have to cope on our own or with somebody's support that I luckily have. I have support of my mother and my second home - Familia. Of course, I am not giving up, I am going forward and am making great efforts. Many things could not become immediately visible, it takes some time and patience.

Life is simply like that, it makes you face a lot of obstacles and petty things that you don't know what to do with. But, pals, if you have confidence in yourselves and your wishes, stop for a moment and think about how to make your wishes true. Slowly, step by step, and even if you stay a bit longer on one of them – don't return, just go on and you will succeed – trust me. Sooner or later.

Jovanovic Ana