

*Your family is where your home is.*

*Your home is where you feel good.*

Hi - I'm P. and I live in the Pink House together with another six children. It was still cold outside when I came here. I used to live somewhere else before. There were a lot more children there so when I arrived it felt quieter here. I was really happy to find that here, in the Pink House, every child has their own room. My room is on the second floor. All my toys are there and I can arrange them the way I like. There is a cabinet in my room and I keep all my clothes neat and tidy inside (with a little help of course). I learned from M. that some of the clothes are suitable to wear when I am at home and some, when I go out. Initially it was difficult for me to know which clothes to put on correctly but now I'm very good at it!

There are a few women 'living' with us at the Pink House. They help us to cope with everything which we need support for. They also clean the house. Each of them spends a certain time with us and then goes home but the good thing is that they always come back. When I see that a lady sets about leaving I always ask her if she is going to come back again and when she says 'Yes' I feel calmer.

In the mornings, when I get up, I go to the bathroom and wash myself. (Ah, do you know that here another two children and I share a bathroom which is just for the three of us!). Then I put on my house clothes and go downstairs to have my breakfast. To make my bed is not one of my favorite things to do but I feel better when my room is clean and tidy and I feel cosy. Quite recently the ladies here showed me how to clean the floor in my room by myself and I think that I am getting better and better.

Then I go to see if I can be of any help around the place. The rest of the children look much younger than me although some of them are nearly at my age. They need somebody to feed them. At the time when I arrived all of them used to eat just like little babies (I do call them 'babies' even to this day) but now some of them can hold the spoon themselves and need just a little help... Well, yes, they mess their clothes a little but then the women dress them with clean clothes. Lately I see that the babies have started growing higher and I have a little dream: I hope they can become as tall as I am. When I came here the 'babies' didn't want to play with me because they used to lie in their beds or somewhere where they had been placed so they could quietly think about their own things for hours and hours. Come and see them now: nearly all of them potter around, tease each other and the playroom echoes with their laughter.

After we finish with our breakfast we get together in the playroom. There are many toys there. We can play and we can listen to some music: it's great!



Later on M. and V. put the babies in their prams and they go to visit their doctors. Sometimes a woman comes to visit the babies and makes them move their legs and arms in a strange way. Every week T. comes and teaches us to speak one by one. It is not easy at all especially for some of the babies but I think they are getting on bit by bit. I have some difficulty too, but believe me I'm trying and lately it seems like that even person who meets me for the first time can catch what I say. At times I feel it very difficult when I want to say something and in these cases I get angry. But there is always somebody near me to support me and assure me that if I take it slowly I will manage to say the things I want.

I have a colouring book and colour pencils and I can fill the white spaces in without going out of the black lines of the pictures. Some of the coloured pictures look so great that we hang them on the wall and this way it becomes lovely and I am so happy that I am eager to show my achievement when somebody comes to visit me.

Oh, I said 'visit'! Something which is absolutely great: my sister, her husband and their three babies come to visit me every now and then. I am really happy when they come! The last time they came they gave me a new T-shirt and shorts as a present

We had wonderful time together! I feel a little bit sad when they are leaving but they promise to come back and I know for sure that I will see them again.

This summer I had many interesting things to do because many children from the town used to come to the Big Yellow House so we could play different games together.

I get used to traveling by taxi unaided. Somebody at the Pink House takes the 'hullo' (I know that you can catch what that means) and calls the taxi and then a yellow car comes. The lady tells the driver where to drive me and this way I get to the Big Yellow House. When we arrive, there is somebody waiting for me and ... that's it! At the beginning I liked to use the taxi very much but then I explained to M. that I am eager to get to the BYH on foot and asked if somebody can support me: there were so many interesting places I could see while traveling and I was curious to stop and visit them. And, yes! – it worked! We began walking so I could see and visit many shops and remember where they all are. It's great! I really do like having walks! I always go with V. when she goes to the big supermarket. What is more, I know where the shelves with my favorite goodies are.

I have been to see the children who I used to live with several times already. I am very excited when I go there because I've spent many days at that house. BUT! Always, remember - always before leaving the Pink House I want to ensure that at the end of the day I'll come back and I will sleep in my own bedroom.

And do you know what we made at the back garden of our house? I have never ever seen such a thing! When we started they simply explained to me that we were going to make the garden look nicer and naturally I wanted to get involved. Then some men delivered wooden



beams, old tyres and whatever you can imagine. And a huge work began: carrying heavy things, assembling pieces, painting... I am really proud of myself because I worked hard together with the guys and they praised me a lot saying that I was doing really well. They call this place 'Sensory garden' now. Honestly, I'm not quite sure what 'Sensory garden' means but the babies and I have a lot of fun there. When the wind blows the strange pendants that we've hung on the beams of the harbour make pleasant sounds or shine or change their colours. I've found something that gives me a lot of pleasure: there is a strange type of dust filled in the hole of one of the tyres (I was told that it is called 'sand') and it is very pleasant to touch and I like to play with it very much. I was shown how to pack the sand into a small plastic bucket and then when I turn it upside down – here is a house! I take some of the smooth pebbles and shells that are scattered in the garden and arrange them around the sand house. It is too good to be true!

The children who play with me at the BYH and I visited a distant place this summer. It was such an adventure! We got there on an enormous white bus. We saw the sights of many places that I've never visited before.

And now! The biggest news is that the babies and I leave for a big journey tomorrow. We are going to Tryavna. I know the place because we have already visited it. I was told that we are going to stay there 'for a week'. 'For a week' means that I will sleep in another bed for some time. D. promised me that she would call me often and this way I will feel like we are together. She let me take my favorite toy car with me and I am happy about that as it reminds me of my room here and makes me feel okay.

Well, I'll have to finish now because I need to pack my luggage for the trip. M. will help me with that because it is very important to have enough clothes when I'm away from home.

Regards:

P.

P.S. I forgot to tell you something which is VERY IMPORTANT: I am going to start going to school after we come back from Tryavna! They will teach me to cook there! And the babies will attend 'their schools', too. I am really curious to see what interesting things they will learn there.

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*Recorded with the modest contribution of Diana Georgieva,  
Manager of the Small Group Home (The Pink House)*

