

**Report by the State Agency for Child Protection on the Mogilino Institution for
Children with Mental Disabilities, 15 September 2007**

Published with slight editing in "Trud" Daily on 14 February 2008

The home is situated 60km from Rouse and 30km from Dve Mogili. There are no road signs to Mogilino. The home includes one administrative building and two residential buildings, where 44+25 children are placed. The rooms where the children mixed according to sex prevail, including 14-15 years old. There is a practice two children to share one bed. The commission saw a case in one of the beds where two children with severe disabilities were placed and one of them kicked the head of the second one with a leg. The staff witnessed that but did not react. We asked them why the children share one bed and they answered that they have enough beds but "they have decided to do so".

The dormitories are sodden with the smell of urine. The staff keeps the windows opened day and night because of this. Only two of 10 rooms have thermometers. One of them showed 18 degrees. Some of the children were covered with sheets, some of them with thin wraps. The children who can walk spend the day time in the study rooms. During this time the dormitories are cleaned, and the sheets are taken off and changed with "covers". During the check up none of the beds was covered with a clean sheet. The explanation of the staff was that they do not have enough clean sheets; the dirty ones are washed, dried and put again on the beds.

The commission checked the washed sheets and noticed that the laundry was closed by the time of the check up at 1pm and the commission did not count the required number of sheets on the washing line.

The light in the rooms of the bedridden is not enough. The blinds were up only on one of the windows.

The children have no personal possessions. They put on the available clothes of the day, although clothes are bought with their personal pensions. Most of the children wear torn shoes or shoes with different size. There is not a child who cleans his/her teeth. We required tooth brushes and only nine old brushes were shown to us and they were obviously not in use. The staff could not comment on this fact.

The commission discovered that the bathrooms and the toilets, used by the children are locked with riddle doors and the worker unlocked them when they escort a child. The toilets are without any inside doors and the cans are without covers and place to sit. The children go to the toilet in specific time of the day in groups. There is no soap or toilet paper inside. We saw one of the boys to wear panties and we asked why but no answer was given by the staff.

The commission observed the meal time. Those children with severe disabilities are fed by the staff. Seven of them are on a liquid diet and eat with feeding-bottles. The quantity is 380 gr. per each child regardless of illness, age or weight. The staff thinks this quantity is sufficient. The diet is one and the same every day: pap in the morning, fruit puree for lunch and yoghurt for supper. And this is for years.

For the rest of the children the meal was: soup, chicken with rice, mellon. Two children eat from one and the same bowl and the staff changed just the spoons. The conversation with the nurse made clear for us that the children have never been consulted by a dietologist. The nurse and the cook decide on the menu. During dinner one worker was trying to feed 15 children. She gave bottles to the children who could hold them. The commission was impressed by the fact that a bottle was given to one child with malformations of the hands and because of this he held the bottle with elbows. During this time there wasn't any member of the staff in the rooms to watch

the children and to prevent them from gulping. Some of the food poured out and the children lied on it.

None of the children received water during the meal and the time of the check up. Despite of the fact that the children were wet the worker started with the food instead of changing their nappies or sheets. She said that they change the children three times per day, not when they need it. There is not a practice the children to leave their beds during the meal time or dressing.

The commission observed the meal time of the mobile children. The girls and the boys were divided into two shifts. They all washed their hands with one soap and one towel. One of the children – entirely blind – was escorted by another child who pushed him to the dining-room and the child hit himself on the door. The staff wasn't impressed by this. The children ate fast and greedily. Two children argued for one bread crust. Some of them waited for another portion.

The balances in the kitchen haven't been regulated therefore the quantity of the food is under suspicion.

The commission talked with three of the staff members. Mrs. Bahtishan Ahmedova was difficult in her answers. She explained that during the subject "labour education" she taught the children "how to wash themselves and how to brush their teeth." We asked her how they are doing this in practice when the children do not have tooth brushes she didn't answer. We asked her to improvise a lesson. It was written in the notebook that the children know how to write the numbers from 1 to 10. She didn't manage to organize for work for 10 minutes. After that she showed the children numbers but they didn't pay any attention and continued to repeat stereotypical movements. The commission discovered that the worker wasn't familiar with the individual problems of the children and according to her all of them were with "paralysis and disabilities". One of the children – Ana Goranova – was different from the others. She was vivid and understood the conversation. The staff told the commission that "she cannot speak". The commission made contact with her for 10-15 minutes. Her reaction was absolutely adequate. We asked the staff if she has any contacts with a specialist to develop her abilities but they said that they "talk to her". The conclusion of the commission is that the educators just watch the children and do not organize any activities which would lead to progress in the condition of the children.

The commission discovered that the number of the children in the home is 69, 29 of them above 18 years old. The staff consists of 60 people, 14 of them without the required education. During the check up there were only three educators for six of the groups.

The commission discovered that one child had died on 8 August 2007 but was in the menu book until 13 August. Similarly, another child was in the book from May to September.

The mortality in the institute is high. Seven children have died in 2006, one in 2007.