**Andrei and Vanya, the Koluchova Twins.**

Andrei and Vanya are identical twin boys born in 1960. (Their name isn't Koluchová. Jarmilia Koluchová is the Czech researcher who publicised their case study.) The Koluchová twins lost their mother shortly after birth, and were cared for by a social agency for a year, and then fostered by a maternal aunt for a further six months. Their development was normal.

Their father remarried, but his new wife proved to be excessively cruel to the twins, banishing them to the cellar until they were discovered at the age of seven. The father (who was quite possibly of limited intellectual ability) was for most of the time absent from home because of his job, and the economic condition of the family was far below the average low-working classes.

On discovery the Koluchová twins were dwarfed in stature, lacking speech, suffering from **rickets** and did not understand the meaning of pictures. The doctors who examined them and confidently predicted permanent physical and mental handicap.

Removed from their parents, the Koluchová twins first underwent a programme of physical remediation, and entered a school for children with severe learning disabilities. After some time, the boys were legally adopted by exceptionally dedicated women. Educationally, from a state of profound disability they caught up with children their own age and achieved emotional and intellectual normality. They were tested at the age of 14 and showed no long term ill effects. After basic education they went on to technical school, to train as typewriter mechanics, and later undertook further education, specialising in electronics. Both were drafted for national service and later married and had children. They are said to be entirely stable, lacking abnormalities and enjoying warm relationships. One is a computer technician and the other a technical training instructor.

**Rickets is a condition that affects bone development in children. It causes the bones to become soft and malformed, which can lead to bone deformities.** The most common cause of rickets is a lack of vitamin D and calcium. Vitamin D comes from foods such as oily fish and eggs, and from sunlight on our skin. Vitamin D is essential for a child to form strong and healthy bones.

**Genie**

When Genie was a baby her father decided that she was profoundly retarded, and subjected her to severe confinement and ritual ill-treatment in an attempt to "protect" her.

Genie spent the next 12 years of her life locked in her bedroom. During the day, she was tied to a child's potty chair in [diapers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diaper); at night, she was bound in a [sleeping bag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sleeping_bag) and placed in an enclosed [crib](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infant_bed) with a cover made of metal screening. Indications are that Genie's father beat her if she vocalized, and he barked and growled at her like a dog in order to keep her quiet. He also rarely allowed his wife and son to leave the house or even to speak, and he expressly forbade them to speak to Genie. By the age of 13, Genie was almost entirely mute, commanding a vocabulary of about 20 words and a few short phrases (nearly all negative), such as "stop it" and "no more". Genie was discovered at the age of 13 when her mother left her husband and took Genie with her.

Although she was almost entirely silent, she constantly sniffed, spat, and clawed. Many of the items she coveted were objects with which she could play. Within a few months of therapy, she had advanced to one-word answers and had learned to dress herself.

After considerable therapy from doctors, Genie later learned to vocalize and express herself through sign language. Her demeanour changed considerably, and she became social with adults she was familiar with. Genie had a strange "bunny walk", in which she held her hands up in front, like paws.

However, due to her excessive privation, she never reached any sort of normal cognitive or emotional development. Genie now lives in a sheltered accommodation in an undisclosed location in Southern California; it is at least her sixth adult foster home. Her mother died in 2003.