

A feral child is a human being that was raised in an isolated environment away from human interaction from an early age, and has no familiarity of human behaviour, human care and of human language. Some feral children have been confined by people. Others are alleged to have been brought up by animals. There are hundreds of supposedly feral children known. Case can be traced as far back as the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In this essay, I will share with you three modern cases of feral children and one case of an isolate, and how their brain development affected their language and behaviour.

In 1991, John Ssebunya was a feral child that was discovered by Milly Sebba while he was wandering the forest for firewood. John Ssebunya was then brought back to a local village and fed some food and he fell. A villager then identified this feral child as John Ssebunya last seen in 1988 at the age of two or three when his alcoholic father murdered his mother and disappeared. John is believed to have run away to the forest from around the age of 2-5. For the next three years, he lived uncivilized. He unclearly remembers green African Vervet monkeys coming up to him, after a few days they accepted John into their society. Unfortunately after John was discovered, his father was traced, and his father was not interested in caring for his wild son. The boy was adopted by Paul and Molly Warsaw, who run the Kamuzinda Christian Orphanage in Masaka. He has been studied by a host of experts, who were convinced that he is a genuine feral child. John believes that the monkeys were suspicious at first, but then they took care of him within about two weeks and taught him, to travel with them, to search for food and to climb trees. Many scientists and sociologists believe that John was not raised by these monkeys but raised alongside of these monkeys. This is because the Green African Vervet monkey is one of the very few species of mammals that tolerate a lone individual from another group. Sociologists think John was tolerated by the group, not accepted as a part of the group. John is believed to have a degree of mental handicap after seeing the murder of his mother; also he is believed to have some language skills when he chose to run away. When the local tribe's women found him he was not able to cry or talk. Over the years of rehabilitation from the locals, John can now speak very limitedly and he talks slowly/shyly. Due to John's environment and exposure to human contact during the years of his early life, John is believed to be mentally retarded. Sociologists and psychotherapists have observed John's brain development and have noted signs of delays in oral language development, difficulty learning social rules, difficulty with problem solving skills. John has the same intelligence level as a kindergartener and is expected to remain the same for life.

Amala and Kamala "the wolf girls" is undoubtedly one of the best known cases for feral children. Amala was 18 months old and Kamala eight years old when they were found together in a wolf's den. After Amala and Kamala were found they were brought to an orphanage. The girls acted exactly like a wolf and appeared to have no trace of human characteristics. They refused to wear clothes and only ate raw meat, only during night hours were they active. They had spent so long on all fours that their ligaments and joints had reduced to the point where it was impossible for them to uncurl their legs and even attempt to walk upright. Amala died one year later from illness, Kamala happened to survive. Many tried to rehabilitate Kamala, but made limited success. Even after 5 years of intensive rehabilitation, Kamala only knew very few things. Kamala knew some 3 names and the concept of colour. Kamala's intellect was that of a 12

month baby. Unfortunately, Kamala was chosen to be examined by the philologist society of New York and Kamala's physical health when downhill.

Genie was discovered in 1970. She had been locked in an isolated room in her parent's house for 12 years. When they found her she was about 13 years old. She was discovered only after her 50-year-old mother applied for social assistance. When authorities saw Genie they called the police right away. Indications are that Genie's father beat her with a large stick 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 prevented them to speak to Genie. By the age of 13, Genie was almost entirely voiceless, commanding a vocabulary of about 20 words and a few short phrases, nearly all destructive, such as stop it and no more. Genie stood silent for a while after she was rescued, Genie later was educated to vocalize and express herself through signs. While in custody she was provided with few toys or objects to stimulate her; the majority of her time was spent in a dark room staring at a yellow plastic raincoat. Genie had very few emotions and lacked a sense of being human. Many therapists and other professionals hoped they could nurture her normal. Genie's case helps physiologists prove truth to the critical period hypothesis. Most of Genie's life was exposed to an environment where she was not nurtured to emotions. This caused her almost to appear emotionless all of her life.

I feel that isolated children have it harder than feral children raised by/with animals. John Ssebunya, Amala and Kamala had made more progress than Genie. John Ssebunya, Amala and Kamala had emotions and could learn emotions. Genie made progress solely on communication mostly negative and limited. Genie's emotions were nonexistent and she mostly had a plain face. I feel that the longer one is an audience to neglect of human contact and emotions, the harder it will be for one to progress. The years of your child's life are the most crucial stages of development and growth.