

HAYAT SENDE ASSOCIATION

FOR YOUTH UNDER STATE CARE

Evaluation Report of Psychological Support Service



Ankara
2025



CONTENTS

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Hayat Sende Association</u> | <u>1</u> |
| <u>Thanks.....</u> | <u>2</u> |
| <u>Volunteer Psychologist Network</u> | <u>2</u> |
| <u>1.Introduction.....</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>2. Summary of the Project.....</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>3. Evaluation Objectives, Purpose, and Scope.....</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>4. Evaluation Questions.....</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>5. Evaluation Methodology.....</u> | <u>4</u> |
| <u>6. Data Analysis.....</u> | <u>4</u> |
| <u>6.1. Participant Group 1: Psychologists from the Volunteer Psychologist Network and Association Psychologist.....</u> | <u>4</u> |
| <u>6.2. Participant Group 2: Young People Benefiting from the Volunteer Psychologist Network.....</u> | <u>8</u> |
| <u>7. Key Findings.....</u> | <u>9</u> |
| <u>7.1. Participant Group 1: Psychologists and Supervisors.....</u> | <u>10</u> |
| <u>7.2. Participant Group 2: Young Beneficiaries</u> | <u>12</u> |
| <u>7.3. Broader Observations.....</u> | <u>12</u> |
| <u>8. Recommendations.....</u> | <u>13</u> |
| <u>8.1. Recommendations from Young Beneficiaries.....</u> | <u>13</u> |
| <u>8.2. Recommendations from Psychologists.....</u> | <u>14</u> |
| <u>8.3. General Recommendations for Program Improvement.....</u> | <u>14</u> |
| <u>ANNEX-A: Survey for Psychologists Providing Psychosocial Support</u> | <u>14</u> |
| <u>ANNEX-B: Psychological Support Evaluation Questionnaire.....</u> | <u>16</u> |

Hayat Sende Youth Academy Association (Hayat Sende) was founded in 2007 by a group of idealistic young people who were also raised under state protection and carries out work with the vision of ensuring that children and young people raised under state protection gain basic life skills and enter life without discrimination. The young people who founded the association aimed to establish a support mechanism for their friends who will leave protection after them, based on the difficulties they experienced when they left protection.

It is seen that most of the studies in the field of children growing up under protection in the society are based on mercy and compassion. Hayat Sende opposes this perspective and defends a rights-based approach, and carries out its studies for the purpose of equal opportunities, based on the idea that every individual has rights, but some individuals have more difficulty in accessing rights than others in the society.

It carries out advocacy and awareness activities against the discrimination, exclusion and labeling that children and young people growing up under protection face in society. In addition, the association tries to carry out specialized studies for groups growing up under protection and experiencing multiple sensitivities. Girls and women are at the forefront of these. Girls and women growing up under state protection carry a high risk of being labeled and targeted much more in society. For this reason, specialized projects and programs are being developed to empower girls and young women.



Thanks

We would like to thank

The Family for Every Child for their support of the project;

Beyza Sarihan, Dilara Bekçibaşı and Rumeysa Bozdemir from the Hayat Sende Association who carried out the evaluation process;

All of our psychologists who added value with their time and energy in providing psychosocial support to young people growing up under protection.

Volunteer Psychologist Network

Psychological support is a service provided to help individuals solve their emotional, social and psychological problems. Hayat Sende Association established a "Volunteer Psychologist Network" in 2021 so that young people growing up under state protection can receive psychological support and began providing free psychological support with volunteer clinical psychologists. In 2023, it began providing additional support through a part-time psychologist. While psychological support was provided for a maximum of 10 sessions in 2021-2022, in light of feedback, it was provided for an average of 25 sessions from 2023 onwards, and if needed, 30 sessions.

In the Volunteer Psychologist Network,

7 psychologists in 2021,

7 psychologists in 2022,

7 psychologists in 2023,

12 psychologists in 2024 provided voluntary support.

Supervision is provided by 2 clinical psychologists and 1 social worker. In the Volunteer Psychologist Network, cooperation between different professional groups is emphasized, and the social worker who follows the processes of the beneficiaries provides support in supervision within the limits of their professional experience and field.

A total of 66 young people growing up under protection, 52 from the psychologist network (10 male, 42 female); 14 from the association psychologist (1 male, 13 female), have benefited from the psychological support we have provided since 2021. The age range of the beneficiaries is 18-30 years old. Their educational status is high school graduates, university students and university graduates, and the majority of the beneficiaries are university students.

This report is based on the analysis of the results of one-to-one structured interviews conducted with psychologists, young people who benefit from psychological support, and supervisors who provide supervision to psychologists in order to evaluate the usefulness of the services provided by the association.

1. Introduction

This evaluation report provides a comprehensive analysis of the psychological support service offered by the Volunteer Psychologist Network, established under Hayat Sende Association. The report captures the perspectives of psychologists and young beneficiaries, reflecting the impacts and opportunities for further development of the service.

2. Summary of the Project

Hayat Sende Youth Academy Association (Hayat Sende) is dedicated to empowering children and young people raised under state protection. To address their emotional, social, and psychological challenges, the Volunteer Psychologist Network was launched in 2021. This initiative has since provided free psychological support to young people aged 18–30 through voluntary and part-time psychologists, with an average session length increased to 25–30 sessions by 2023.

A total of 66 young people, primarily university students, benefited from this program between 2021–2024. The service also includes supervision for psychologists, ensuring professional development and effective service delivery.

3. Evaluation Objectives, Purpose, and Scope

The main objectives of this evaluation are:

- To assess the usefulness and impact of the psychological support service.
- To identify challenges and areas for improvement in service delivery.
- To gather feedback from psychologists and beneficiaries for continuous development.

The evaluation covers the period of 2023–2024, focusing on both psychologists and young beneficiaries involved in the program.

4. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation aimed to answer the following key questions:

- How effective is the Volunteer Psychologist Network in supporting young beneficiaries?
- What are the challenges faced by psychologists in delivering psychological support?
- How can the program be improved to enhance its impact and sustainability?
- What are the experiences of young people in receiving psychological support?

All interview questions are presented in Annex A and Annex B.

5. Evaluation Methodology

An evaluation process was carried out to improve the psychological support service provided through the Volunteer Psychologist Network and the association psychologist. The evaluation process was carried out under the leadership of the association's general coordinator Rumeysa Bozdemir, the questions were prepared, and the interviews with the participants were conducted by Dilara Bekçibaşı and Beyza Sarihan, senior psychology undergraduate students who were doing their internships at the association. The analysis of the results was carried out by Rumeysa Bozdemir and the report was provided.

Within the scope of the evaluation, one-on-one structured interviews were conducted with 7 psychologists, 2 psychologists who provided supervision, and 1 social worker, and 5 young women who benefited from the Volunteer Psychologist Network in the 2023-2024 period. The interviews were reported and then the outputs of the two groups were analyzed separately.

6. Data Analysis

6.1. Participant Group 1: Psychologists from the Volunteer Psychologist Network and Association Psychologist

Within the scope of the evaluation, one-on-one structured interviews were conducted with 7 psychologists, 2 psychologists who provided supervision, and 1 social worker. All participants were female and their ages ranged from 26 to 34.

Psychologists' fields of expertise include children, adolescents, young people and adults. Participating psychologists stated that they carried out the processes they presented at Hayat Sende Association face-to-face and online. The themes and contents that emerged as a result of the interviews are as follows:

Professional Experience and Volunteering Processes of Psychologists

The length of professional experience of the participants varies. The length of experience ranges from 1.5 years to 4 years. While the average professional experience of the psychologists participating in the study is 2.5 years, the average professional experience of the supervisors is 7 years.

The volunteer psychologists participating in the study provided psychological support voluntarily between 2021-2024.

Professional Approach and Therapy Methods of Psychologists

Methods Used: Most of the participants use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). In addition, other methods such as dynamic approach, Schema Therapy and Gestalt therapy are also used.

Primary Techniques: Techniques such as changing negative automatic thoughts, Socratic questioning and empty chair technique are primarily used.

Challenges Faced by Psychologists and Coping Strategies

Participants stated that they encountered various difficulties in the psychosocial support process. These difficulties included clients having difficulty understanding the logic of therapy, forgetting sessions, and difficulties in establishing a therapeutic relationship. In addition, there were also participants who stated that weekly supervisions became tiring after a while.

It has been noted that the free support provided may pose a risk in terms of the client not taking the process seriously. However, there have also been psychologists who have stated that it is good for some clients to be free of charge and that it does not make them feel alone. It has also been stated that it is important to evaluate the person's motivation well and include highly motivated people in the preliminary evaluation process.

“It can be a problem if it is completely free, so a symbolic fee can be charged. A small amount like 100-200 TL can be more efficient. When it is free, it is not productive unless the client adapts to the process.” It was stated that volunteering in the civil society field can be challenging at first. Similarly, it was stated that working with young people who grew up under state protection for the first time and the traumatic life stories of the young people constitute a difficulty.

“This is the first time I have encountered a disadvantaged group. Since I come from a psychodynamic background, working in an NGO is a different situation. I had to improve myself in this area.”

More than one psychologist has emphasized that supervisors should attend supervisions regularly and that supervisions should be carried out on a specific day and time.

“Our supervisor could not attend due to their own work, so I felt more insecure at that time. I wanted the supervision meetings to be more organized, otherwise there may be deficiencies in conveying information.”

“I find it meaningful to have a disciplined and clear time allocation. I want it to be regular.”

As strategies for dealing with these difficulties:

Supervision Support: The supervision meetings provided participants with different perspectives and helped them better understand their problems and develop solutions. **Research and Reading:** Research on the field allowed participants to gain a better perspective. **Patience and Communication:** Methods such as patience and repetition were used in communication with the clients.

“Hearing about other cases increased my professional experience. It was good to hear other opinions about my own case, and it made me feel more confident. It enabled me to handle the case more comprehensively. I received this supervision while I was studying clinical psychology and it facilitated my adaptation to the profession.”

Psychologists' Suggestions for Evaluation and Improvement of Supervision Interviews

"The supervision meetings were an important resource for the participants. Participants stated that supervision offered them different perspectives, they received feedback on the techniques they applied and had the opportunity to solve the issues they had difficulties with. It was also emphasized that the supervision process should be regular and different techniques should be taught.

"I think supervision is sufficient both to hear the comments of different schools and to work on the places where I have difficulties."

"It is good that it is organized. Frequent follow-up is productive."

Participants mostly evaluated supervision by different professional groups as positive.

"The opinions of the social worker and the psychologist make a difference. It was very useful for me to get ideas about therapy from the supervising psychologist, and it made me realize what I was doing."

Participants stated that it was important to have constant access to supervisors and to receive support for working with trauma.

"When I had no experience in trauma, it was good to have access to a supervising psychologist and social worker at any time. It is good that the psychologist assesses from the therapist's perspective and the social worker assesses from the client's perspective. It is good to benefit from the social work perspective."

In terms of how supervision could be improved, the most common suggestion was that people from different schools could be included in the process and training, case analysis and supervision sessions could be organized.

"We can invite someone different and do a case analysis. We can find someone who is more competent in different fields such as dynamic technique or CBT, or someone who has worked in a certain technique or techniques for a long time and hold a meeting."

Participants drew attention to the lack of resources related to working with young people under state protection and being a psychologist in NGOs and stated that there could be improvement in this regard.

"There are not many organizations in NGOs that provide psychosocial support for young people under state protection and there are not many resources. If there is a resource, the association can deliver it to us. There can be trainings on this subject for young people under protection."

Impact of the Volunteer Psychologist Network on Psychologists from the Psychologists' Perspective

Psychologists stated that being in such a network and receiving supervision was positive for their careers and professional development. It was stated that it was important to work with new colleagues, to learn about different schools and cases, and to support each other. It was also stated that having knowledge about the field of social work and working with a client group that they are not likely to encounter normally is also developmental.

“It is a client group that you cannot easily encounter everywhere. I think it is an experience that cannot be obtained everywhere. Working in the field of NGOs provides a good experience for a psychologist. Working with this group also provides professional satisfaction.”

Thanks to the client profile and supervision support, participant psychologists stated that they gained self-confidence in their careers and that working with different groups was beneficial for them. It was also stated that gaining this kind of experience as a volunteering activity is also important in terms of professional satisfaction.

The Effects of Providing Psychological Support on Clients from the Psychologists' Perspective

Psychologists reported that the psychological support provided had positive effects on the clients. It was observed that the clients did not feel lonely when they participated in the program, they received support to cope with the difficulties in their lives and made progress in overcoming their problems. It was noted that the clients started to care for their self-care and that the therapies brought a new order to their lives. In addition, clients who received psychological support showed increased insight,

Clients' daily functioning increased, their motivation increased such as attending school and looking for a job

It was stated that the support offered was especially useful for clients who had difficulty in accessing social support mechanisms.

“I think it has positive support especially for young women who are more lonely and disadvantaged in terms of family support.”

6.2. Participant Group 2: Young People Benefiting from the Volunteer Psychologist Network

As part of the evaluation, one-on-one structured interviews were conducted with 5 young women who benefited from the Volunteer Psychologist Network in 2023-2024. The ages of the participant women ranged between 20 and 22. The number of sessions received by the participants, all of whom are university students, is in the form of “5, 20, 25, 30, 30” sessions from less to more. Accordingly, the least number of sessions was 5 and the most number of sessions was 30.

All of the interview participants stated that they would recommend this service to another young person and that they have a positive approach to receiving psychological support in their lives from now on.

Usefulness of the Service from the Young People's Perspective

Participants stated that they experienced significant positive changes compared to their situation before receiving psychological support. Following the support process, individuals stated that they observed a decrease in anxiety, increased self-confidence and improved coping skills. For example, one participant emphasized the positive impact of psychological support on his well-being by saying, “If it was ten to one before we started, it became ten to ten after”.

Participants evaluated the process of receiving support positively, some participants stated that it was difficult at first, but then they felt better. During the termination process, some participants stated that they did not want to finish and were worried about the aftermath. In this case, it was stated that the psychologist's consistent approach was facilitating.



Positive Aspects

- **Psychologists' Approach:** Participants praised the professional and supportive approach of psychologists and stated that their self-awareness increased in this process.
- **Opportunity to Benefit at an Early Age:** The importance of free access to psychological support at an early age was emphasized.
- **Facilitation by the Association:** The association facilitated the management of the process and the participants had the opportunity to receive support at many points. For example, offering the opportunity to have face-to-face sessions at the association office and including information about psychologist support in the association's scholarship application were mentioned as facilitating the process.

Negative Aspects

- **Duration and Number of Sessions:** Most of the participants stated that the duration of the sessions was limited and it would be useful to increase the number of sessions.
- **Efficiency of Online Interviews:** Participants expressed the opinion that face-to-face sessions would be more effective. Some participants stated that online interviews were inefficient for them. In addition, it was stated that finding a meeting place is a problem when online interviews are conducted, especially for young people staying in dormitories.

Young People's Suggestions for Service Improvement

Participants stated that the duration and number of sessions should be increased. However, some participants stated that face-to-face sessions would be more beneficial. It was also emphasized that more psychologists should provide services and the network should be expanded. Since young people who benefit from psychological support once cannot benefit from it again, it was suggested that it should be made easier to benefit from it again.

Privacy and Security for Young People

In general, participants expressed that they did not have any concerns about confidentiality and security issues. Trust in the Association's confidentiality policies helped participants to experience the support processes in a positive way.

7. Key Findings

7.1. Participant Group 1: Psychologists and Supervisors

Professional Experience and Volunteering Context

Psychologists interviewed had professional experience ranging from 1.5 to 4 years, averaging 2.5 years. Supervisors had an average experience of 7 years.

Volunteer psychologists provided support between 2021-2024, both online and in-person, working primarily with children, adolescents, young adults, and adults.

Therapeutic Methods and Approaches

Most psychologists employed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), supplemented by Schema Therapy, Gestalt Therapy, and dynamic approaches.

Common techniques included changing negative automatic thoughts, Socratic questioning, and the empty chair technique.

Challenges and Coping Strategies

Psychologists faced challenges such as:

- Clients having difficulty understanding therapy processes or forgetting sessions.
- Establishing rapport in therapy, particularly during online sessions.
- Maintaining regular supervision schedules.

The pro bono nature of the service occasionally led to concerns about client commitment, with some suggesting a nominal fee to enhance perceived value.

Strategies to overcome challenges included supervision support, self-directed research, and employing patience and clear communication techniques.

Supervision Insights

Supervision was highly valued as a platform for gaining new perspectives, solving case-related challenges, and enhancing professional growth.

Regular and structured supervision was deemed essential, with psychologists suggesting sessions featuring experts from various schools of therapy and focused on techniques like CBT or trauma-informed care.

A lack of resources for working with youth under state protection and in the NGO context was noted, with psychologists requesting access to more training and written materials.

Professional Impact

Participation in the Volunteer Psychologist Network provided significant career benefits, including:

- Improved skills in handling diverse client profiles.
- Opportunities to engage with cases and client groups not typically encountered in standard practice.
- Professional satisfaction from contributing to a meaningful cause.

Perceived Client Outcomes

Psychologists observed positive changes in clients, such as improved coping mechanisms, better emotional regulation, and increased daily functioning, particularly for clients lacking social support systems.

The program was especially beneficial for young women with limited familial support, providing them with a sense of connection and self-confidence.

7.2. Participant Group 2: Young Beneficiaries

Demographics and Engagement

Interviews were conducted with five young women, aged 20-22, who received between 5 and 30 therapy sessions in 2023-2024. All participants were university students and expressed willingness to recommend the service to peers.

Perceived Benefits

Beneficiaries reported a significant decrease in anxiety, increased self-confidence, and improved coping skills. Therapy helped some participants overcome initial skepticism about psychological support, reinforcing its importance during life challenges. Participants noted improvements in daily functioning, including better academic performance and increased motivation to engage in activities like job-seeking.

Areas for Improvement

Suggestions included increasing the number of sessions and providing options for face-to-face therapy.

Beneficiaries expressed a desire for easier re-entry into the program for those needing ongoing support.

Challenges included logistical issues with online therapy, such as difficulty finding private spaces in dormitories.

Privacy and Security

Trust in the association's confidentiality policies was high, which contributed to positive experiences.

Facilitating Factors

The association's structured approach, including offering in-person sessions and integrating psychological support information into scholarship applications, was highly appreciated.

7.3. Broader Observations Program Strengths:

The program successfully reached its target group, offering a rare and much-needed psychological support service tailored for youth from state protection. Both psychologists and beneficiaries highlighted the program's flexibility and its focus on long-term benefits.

Areas for Improvement:

A more systematic approach to training and supervision for psychologists is needed to address the unique challenges posed by the target population.

Expanding the program to include more psychologists and increasing session availability could improve accessibility and reduce waiting times.

8. Recommendations

This report shows that the psychological support provided by Hayat Sende Association has generally had a positive impact on psychologists and the young people who benefit from psychological support.

Both psychologists and young people receiving psychological support agree that the support has positive effects on young people's lives, empowering them and increasing their well-being. In addition, it is seen that the process was very instructive not only for young people but also for psychologists, and that psychologists benefited in terms of collegial solidarity, professional development and satisfaction.

Young people who benefited from psychological support evaluated it in terms of its duration and its impact on their lives, while psychologists evaluated it in terms of the supervision support provided by the "Volunteer Psychologist Network" in which they participated. Various suggestions were expressed in both areas.

8.1. Recommendations from Young Beneficiaries

Participant young people stated that they were satisfied with the service they received. In order to improve the support provided, the following suggestions were made:

Increase in Session Duration and Number:

It was suggested that the duration and number of sessions should be increased and that those who benefited once should be able to benefit again.

Expand the Psychologist Network:

Young people suggested that more psychologists should be included in the service and more young people should be offered this service.

Facilitate Face-to-Face Meetings:

Some of the participants expressed that it was difficult to find a place to attend an online session and that face-to-face sessions were more effective. It was suggested that opportunities for face-to-face meetings should be improved.

8.2. Recommendations from Psychologists

The majority of the psychologists stated that they were satisfied with the current psychological support program. However, a few suggestions were made to develop or improve the program:

Enhance Supervision Processes:

It was emphasized that supervision processes should be carried out in a more disciplined and planned manner. Some participants stated that it would be useful if supervision meetings were not held every week and if they were spaced out.

Offer Pricing:

It has been suggested that introducing a symbolic fee for psychological support sessions could enhance client commitment and engagement. It is thought that this will make it more difficult to cancel sessions and allow clients to be more involved in the process.

Offer Additional Training and Resources:

Participants drew attention to the lack of written resources on children and youth under protection and stated that their experiences should be translated into academic publications. In addition to online meetings between psychologists, face-to-face meetings could also be useful.

8.3. General Recommendations for Program Improvement

Strengthen Supervisor Engagement:

Ensure regular supervision attendance and use structured reporting for tracking progress.

Raise Awareness and Accessibility:

Conduct awareness campaigns to inform young people of available services. Consider ways to make psychological support more accessible, especially for youth under state protection.

Maintain and Enhance Confidentiality Standards:

While trust in confidentiality policies is high, processes should be periodically reviewed to ensure continued trust.

Provide clear communication about privacy policies to both psychologists and beneficiaries.

Establish a Feedback Mechanism:

Regularly collect participant feedback via surveys or interviews to identify areas of improvement.

Use this input to make iterative enhancements to the program.

ANNEX-A: Survey for Psychologists Providing Psychosocial Support

- **Personal Information:**

1. Your Name:

2. Your Age:

3. Your Gender:

4. Your Contact Information (e-mail, phone):

5. Your Professional Experience:

6. When did you volunteer in the psychologist network?

- **Target Audience and Communication:**

7. Which groups do you provide psychosocial support to? (e.g.: youth, adults, elderly, trauma victims)

8. What communication methods do you use to provide support? (face-to-face, online therapy, phone calls, etc.)

- **Professional Approach and Methods:**

9. Which therapy methods do you use when providing psychosocial support? (e.g.: cognitive behavioral therapy, solution-focused therapy, psychoanalytic approach, etc.)

10. Are there any areas or techniques that you prioritize in your approach?

- **Challenges and Coping Strategies:**

11. What are the challenges you encounter when providing psychosocial support?

12. What are your strategies for coping with these challenges?

- **Supervision Interviews:**

13. Do you think the supervision meetings you attended as part of the program were beneficial to you? If so, what kind of benefits do you think they provided?

14. What are your opinions and/or suggestions you can add regarding the supervision meetings?

- **Effects of the Psychosocial Support Program and Evaluation:**

15. What are your observations about the effects of the psychosocial support program on clients?

16. What are the success criteria of the program or the points you think are effective?

17. Do you think this experience will benefit your career? If so, what kind of benefits can it provide?

- **Recommendations and Feedback:**

18. What are your suggestions for the development or improvement of the psychosocial support program?

19. Can you share your feedback on our survey?

ANNEX-B: Psychological Support Evaluation Questionnaire

- **Personal Information**

1. Name and surname:

2. Your age:

3. Your gender:

4. In which year did you receive psychological support?:

5. How many sessions of psychological support did you receive?:

- **Support process**

6. How did you feel during the time you received psychological support? Why?

7. Compared to your situation before receiving psychological support, evaluate the effects of the support on your life:

8. Evaluate the psychological support process you received in terms of its positive and negative aspects.

- a. Number of sessions:
- b. Psychologist's approach:
- c. Facilitation of the association:
- d. Session termination process:

9. How do you view continuing to receive psychological support in your future life? Did the support you received from Hayat Sende have a positive or negative effect on this? If so, what were the effects?

10. Did you have any concerns about confidentiality and security while receiving psychological support? What was your experience in this regard?:

11. Would you recommend getting psychological support from Hayat Sende Association to other young people?:

12. Were there any factors that made it difficult for you to get psychological support?

-Is this factor related to you or the association?

-If it is related to the association, what improvements can be made regarding the factors that make it difficult?

13. Is there anything you would like to add to improve the psychological support provided by Hayat Sende Association?



HAYAT SENDE STANDS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT EVERY STEP!

Assessment Team Leader: Rumeysa Bozdemir

Assessment Team Members: Beyza Sarihan ve Dilara Bekçibaşı

Report Design: Kübra Nur Ayrancıoğlu

CONTACTS



Kızılay Mah. Necatibey Cad. No: 27/11
Çankaya / Kızılay/ ANKARA / TÜRKİYE



+90 312 229 44 46 | 0552 159 50 56



bilgi@hayatsende.org



www.hayatsende.org | @hayatsendeorg