

## WHAT IS FAMILY?

Hello, I'm Itxaso. Itxaso Garate. I live in Azkoitia and I am 18 years old. I have finished high school and entered university to study mathematics. It's a 4-year degree and I'm a little scared because I'll have to study a lot in the next 4 years and I don't know if I'm ready for it. 4 years can be very long and I don't know if maths are really what I want.

I live with my mother and my sister, her name is Hafsa and she is 12 years old. Hafsa came to our house 5 years ago and is from Morocco. My mother wanted me to have a sister and Hafsa needed a family. When Hafsa came I didn't feel well, I missed my mother and Hafsa was young compared to me. He used to steal my old toys and I was very angry. My mother spent a lot of time with Hafsa and I missed her a lot.

Hafsa didn't want to get close to me, I think she was afraid and thought that I didn't want to play with her. However, I did not want to get close to Hafsa, because I thought that she wanted to take everything around me for herself and that I would be left alone.

As the years passed, things changed and when I was 15 my mother, Hafsa and I went on holiday to Benidorm. It was the first time the three of us went on vacation together and to be honest, at the beginning, I didn't really like it. As our holiday in Benidorm went on, Hafsa and I built a very good relationship. We played with the waves on the beach, and our conversations took place under the sun. We talked more and more, Hafsa told me about her life in Morocco and how she lost her family and had to come to find a new life, she had to go and live with her closest family in Bilbao but the family couldn't take care of her, that's why she ended up in our house.

Hafsa's fear of me began to disappear, and I, too, began to listen and learn about Moroccan culture and traditions. As our relationship began to grow, I told Hafsa that she would find her home among us and never have to look for another family again.

Today, Hafsa and I are very close and we talk a lot. She is at a difficult age, she is 12 years old and she brightens up my college days by saying that maths are very easy. She doesn't really know how much she will have to study in college and I hope she continues with that innocence for many years. Hafsa is my sister, my family, we have the same mother, even though we were not born from the same mother.

The holidays in Benidorm brought us together and I love Benidorm so much, we've been going there every year since then and the three of us have a great time together. I have the best family in the world.