

Case Study for NE CP training Initial Placement: Young Family

Name	Age	Relationship	Ethnicity
Claire	8	Oldest child	Native and European American
James	6	Half sibling to Claire	European American
Robert	3	Half sibling to Claire	European American
Jessica Young	29	Mother of all 3 children	European American
Nathan Young	31	Father of the boys	European American
David Clark	33	Father of Claire	Native American
Jane and Mark Smith	32 33	Jane is sister of Jessica	European American
Melissa Jones	64	Mother of Nathan	European American
Linda and Manuel Rodriquez	36 40	Licensed foster home and Possible Resource Parents for all three children	Mexican American –

Maltreatment:

The children were left alone for two days when the parents went out one night to use meth with friends. They became so intoxicated they did not realize how much time had passed. Claire missed two days of school. When her teacher called Claire said her parents were not home and she had to babysit the boys. The teacher called in the referral. The teacher says this is not the first indication that Claire is having problems at home. She has missed school to take care of her brothers on several occasions. The teacher also believes Claire may be being hit by her parents but has no direct evidence.

Upon examination the children had bruises on their legs and back that appeared to be intentionally done with a belt or similar object. Claire had many bruises and both the boys had a few bruises each. Claire and Robert both reported that Nathan uses a belt, hand, rope or whatever he has available to hit them and James would not say if he had been hit or by whom.

Their parents were arrested for drug possession and physical neglect when they arrived home to find the police and the agency worker interviewing the kids. They were released 24 hours later when bond was posted and they disappeared for several weeks. The worker has contacted them and they have agreed to a family meeting at their home.

Children were first placed in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rodriquez as no known family members were located and the parents were not present to give more information. This home is dually licensed. It is their first placement. They have no other children in the home.

Facts known early in case:

- Jessica says Claire's dad (David) was violent towards her and that is why she left him. She has not had contact with him for years. His parents live on the XX Indian reservation in Kansas. Jessica's sister (Jane Smith) lives about 20 miles from the parent's home but has not had recent contact with the family. She is married and has two children.
- Nathan's mother (Mrs. Melissa Jones) lives in the town of YY about 150 miles away. The children have had regular contact with her on holidays, vacations and by phone.
- Nathan has usually been employed and supported the family. Jessica does not work.
- Physical punishment is mostly directed at Claire by Nathan but both parents use physical discipline that they refer to as "spanking" with all of the kids.
- Drug abuse occurs mostly on pay day weekends. Neglect and physical punishment occurs mostly during the times of their drug use. It appears that Claire has been left to care for the children alone in the past.
- Jessica wants her children home with her. The caseworker believes the children will be unsafe at home.

Small Group Discussion

Discuss the following questions, and take notes to share with the larger group.

1. Assume your usual role in child welfare matters (Judge, child's attorney or advocate, caseworker, parent's attorney etc) and determine what information you still need to know to formulate your position in the case. What is your position on visitation or contact with the children and the parents if the children remain out of the home? Assuming that the children will be removed from the parents' care, where do you think the children should be placed at this time and why?
2. How will you formulate your concurrent planning position on the case?

Case Study for NE CP training 3.5 months later: Young Family

Assume for this portion of the exercise that the children were moved from the emergency placement with the Rodriguez family and have now spent the last 3 months with the Smith family (maternal aunt and uncle).

The court adjudicated both parents to have maltreated the children on default as the parents were still missing at the time of that hearing. The parents then reappeared just before the disposition hearing, reporting their intentions to enter drug treatment. The court's dispositions included that the children would remain out of the home and that the parents would attend substance abuse programs and parenting classes and would visit the children regularly. Jessica checked into inpatient treatment shortly afterwards, while Nathan disappeared again. Jessica left treatment just a few weeks later and resumed using drugs. She is believed to have continued to use for about six weeks but then she re-entered drug treatment and currently appears to be compliant. She has not tested positive

for the last month and a half. The parents have been offered parenting classes. Jessica has attended classes but Nathan has not attended any to the best of anyone's knowledge.

The Smith family has agreed to be the concurrent planning family for all of the children. They have been allowing the paternal grandmother to come for Sunday dinner each week and the children are happy to see her.

Parents and children have been offered have regular visits 3 times a week, supervised, and several phone calls per week. Jessica visits the children but can be sporadic when she is using. During visits Jessica has been able to play and discipline the children without any physical force. Jessica responds well to encouragement by the worker. The visits have now been increased to 3 hours in length. Some of the visits occur in the aunt's home under the aunt's supervision.

Nathan, since he has been gone most of the time, has only visited once. He does call his sons several times a week. He has been appropriate on these calls. Nathan told the worker that he does not believe in counseling. He just wants to visit his sons and prove that he is a good dad. He says that he is working and not currently using drugs but he is not in any program. Nathan is upset that the Smiths are a possible adoptive family. He was not at the meeting that determined the concurrent planning family and says he does not agree with this decision or understand why this was done. He thinks the children should be with his mother until they can be returned to him or Jessica.

Jessica states she has left Nathan and has a new boyfriend that she is living with but she will not identify him – "he does not want to be involved with CPS" - or provide any details of their living situation.

Claire's father was located after the children had been in care for about 2 months. He is incarcerated and not expected to be out of prison for at least 5 more years. He admits he has not seen Claire in years and claims that this is due to a serious alcohol problem that he is getting help for while in prison. He would like Claire to be brought to the prison to visit him and he would like his parents to be explored as a temporary or possible permanent placement for Claire. He also reports that he thinks his tribe would consider Claire an enrollable member.

The caseworker has been able to contact Claire's paternal grandparents who live on the XX Indian reservation in the state of Kansas. They have just responded to her contact by saying that they are interested in a possible placement of Claire.

Yesterday there was an incident where Jessica and her new boyfriend showed up at the Smith's home and appeared to be intoxicated. The Smith's acknowledged that they have been allowing Jessica access beyond the visitation that the agency knew about and Mrs. Smith said to the worker "She is my sister and they are her kids". However, when the mother and her boyfriend showed up yesterday clearly intoxicated, the Smith's refused to let them see the kids. Today Jessica called and apologized. She says she is working with her substance abuse counselor to continue her drug treatment.

Small Group Discussion

Discuss the following questions.

1. Has your position in the case changed? Why?
2. How about the children's placement? From your role's perspective, should they be returned to the mother? Should they continue in the home of the aunt or uncle? Should Claire go to live with her grandparents? Are there ICWA issues?
3. How will you formulate your concurrent planning position on the case? Has it changed from 3 months ago and why?