

## ***CASE STUDY OF KEISHA***



*Directions: Read the following case study and determine the following utilizing **Handout 3: Correlates of Truancy** and **Handout 4: Strategies for Prevention and Intervention (Children/Adolescents Section)**.*

- 1. The child/adolescent risk factors exhibited by Keisha.*
- 2. How you would go about assessing the risk factors with Keisha?*
- 3. The prevention and intervention strategies that you would want to implement with Keisha and her family.*

Keisha is a 14 year old African American female in the seventh grade at Wiley Junior School that houses grades 7 and 8. She is one of only a handful of African American students in her school and the faculty is predominately Caucasian. She is the oldest of two female children in a single parent, working class household. Her younger sister, age 12, attends the elementary school in the same district. Her mother, age 35, is a postal worker who holds a high school diploma. Keisha's parents divorced when she was in kindergarten. Her father, who also completed high school and works as a car mechanic, lives about one hour away. She sees him approximately 8 or 9 times a year and he provides child support for both girls on a regular basis.

Keisha is in good physical health but started complaining of not feeling well in the mornings at the start of 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Keisha's mother wakes both of her daughters up in the morning but must leave for work before they get on the school bus. A few weeks into the school year Keisha was truant from school for 5 days. The school notified the mother and Keisha attended school for the next month. However, she was then truant again and the school filed a truancy petition. A hearing was held and the mother was fined \$300 plus court costs. Keisha attended school regularly for the next few weeks but started missing school again. Keisha was then referred to Children and Youth.

The caseworker met with Keisha's mother. She reported that she can not miss work to get Keisha on the bus and has no one to rely on to do so. Keisha has been angry and sullen since the start of the school year. The mother has tried to find out why Keisha refuses to go to school but can't get to the bottom of it. The mother also reported that Keisha had a lot of separation anxiety during kindergarten. The mother's nerves are on edge because she can not afford any more fines or court costs. The mother seems to care about both of her children and has generally good parenting skills, but is at a loss as to how to help her daughter. The mother took Keisha to the doctors but no physical cause

## ***CASE STUDY OF KEISHA***



was found for Keisha's complaints of feeling sick. When the mother talked with the school principal, he simply stated, "You just have to make her get on the bus every morning." He was not helpful in assisting the mother figure out what is going on with Keisha nor was he understanding of the fact that she would lose her job if she was late for work one more time.

When the caseworker met with Keisha, she barely spoke at all. She stated that her absences from school were because she does not feel good many days and that no one believes that she is sick. She stated that things were okay at school until she went to the Junior High School. She doesn't like the girls at the school, doesn't feel like she has any friends there, and doesn't feel good a lot of days.