

## Mary's Story: Part III

In the 5 months that Mary has been in kinship care with her Grandmother, significant progress has been made. Mary has had medical treatment for her syphilis and the doctor has declared that she is STD free. She has had an evaluation by the Families First Counseling Center and has been attending individual counseling. Her therapist believes that she is just about ready to enter group therapy and join a peer group with other sexually abused children. She has been meeting regularly with her guidance counselor at school and her grades and behavior have improved markedly, but there are still some issues that need to be addressed. Mary has joined the Girl Scouts and is taking a ceramics class with her grandmother. Mary misses living with her mother and wants to go home.

Lillian Raymond, Mary's grandmother, reports that while Mary is doing very well and has come a long way, she still wakes up crying at night on occasion and is fearful that Willis will come into her room again. Lillian continues to dislike Willis and is very verbal about her feelings to the caseworker.

Grace Raymond has also had an assessment at the Families First Counseling Center. She too attended individual counseling and is now a regular participant in a non-offending parents group. She has only missed one session and that was when she was sick with the flu. She is again attending church and volunteering at the local food bank. Grace has visited Mary on a regular basis and has accepted that Mary was telling the truth about what Willis did to her. She does, however, continue to visit Willis in prison about every other month. She contends that she "loves" Willis and is convinced he will attend sexual offender counseling and they can be a family again when he "gets out."

After Mary testified at his trial, Willis was found guilty of sexually abusing Mary and was sentenced to 3-5 years at the state penitentiary. He is on a waiting list to attend sexual offenders counseling.

1. Should Mary's placement goal be changed? Why or why not?
2. What documented evidence might there be to support a goal change?
3. How did your own values and feelings impact your decision?
4. How did the feelings and responses of others involved in the case play a role in your decision?