

Background and Directions for Role Play

Two months ago Melanie's case had been opened following a report from the school nurse that bruises were found on Melanie's right arm. The father was indicated as the perpetrator of the abuse. Within two weeks of opening the case, Melanie's father murdered her mother. The maternal grandparents, who are in their 70's, agreed to raise Melanie. The caseworker had arranged for Melanie and her grandparents to see a therapist when Melanie continued to have nightmares about the murder, developed fears about leaving her grandparents, became withdrawn at school, and showed difficulties concentrating at school.

A meeting has been called by the caseworker because the grandparents are overwhelmed by the loss of Melanie's mother and the demands of suddenly raising a nine year old granddaughter. Attending the meeting are: Melanie's grandparents, the caseworker, therapist, third grade teacher, and school guidance counselor. The meeting is being held at the school for the convenience of the grandparents and because the therapist's office is located two blocks from the school.

The purpose of the meeting is to find continued support for the grandparents and Melanie, to assess the current treatment plan already in place, and to determine the need for further support, if necessary. As members of this role play meeting, first spend a few minutes discussing each other's roles in the meeting. Begin the meeting and proceed for about 25 or 30 minutes. At the end of the meeting, you will be asked to provide your thoughts and comments on the effectiveness of this meeting in accomplishing the specified goals and the degree to which participants exhibited a collaborative approach.