

## **Morgan Family Case Study**

The Morgan family, due to the school's representatives being mandated reporters, came to the attention of the Children and Youth agency in their county. The agency started an indicated report of individuals in the home exposing children to illegal drugs. The agency assigned a Child Welfare Professional to the Morgan case and began its indicated investigation into the allegations.

During Ryan's treatment session, Ryan revealed to the school counselor that he got the drugs from his father who occasionally left him home with his sisters. The counselor asked Ryan who was in charge when his father left the home. Ryan told the counselor that his sister Emma watched over them. The counselor asked how old Emma is. Ryan replied "Thirteen." The school counselor asked where his mother was during these times. Ryan replied, "My mom works long hours and sometimes doesn't get home 'til late, but Emma does a good job watching me and my sister Molly. Emma makes sure that we have food when it's in the house" The school counselor asked how old Molly is. Ryan replied, "Three." Immediately after Ryan's session, because the school therapist believed that the welfare of the children might be in jeopardy, the school counselor again called CYS.

The same day that the school reported to CYS that Ryan had drugs in school, and now that the Mr. and Mrs. Morgan sometimes left the children with no one watching them and without food on occasion; the CYS caseworker assigned to the Morgan case visited the Morgan household. The caseworker arrived at the Morgan household and found only Emma, Ryan, and Molly home. The caseworker, using proper procedure, introduced herself, and asked whether she could come inside. The caseworker noticed old newspapers lying about, half-empty liquor bottles about the room, the youngest child, Molly, hiding in the corner of the room in what Molly called a *fort*, and Ryan watching television. Emma asked the caseworker if she wanted something to drink. The caseworker related that water would be fine. Emma opened the refrigerator. The caseworker noticed no food in the refrigerator. The caseworker asked Emma where her mom and dad were. Emma replied, "Dad is out; and, mom went to the grocery store. She will be back in a minute." While talking to the children, Mrs. Morgan arrived thirty minutes later. After introductions, the caseworker explained why she was in the home and offered her wish to offer assistance to the family as Mrs. Morgan took the first step to seeking help by getting both she and Ryan involved in the counseling. Mrs. Morgan offered that she would be interested in getting help. The caseworker offered that she would be in touch with Mrs. Morgan to set up another meeting.

The following day, Ryan went to school complaining of pain in his arm. The school nurse, after seeing Ryan's severely bruised and swollen arm called Mrs. Morgan to take Ryan to the local hospital for emergency services. The doctor discovered that Mr. Morgan came home after drinking heavily and physically abused Ryan because Mr. Morgan discovered that Ryan took Mr. Morgan's drugs into school and got caught. The doctor called CYS. The caseworker assigned to the case immediately went to the hospital and interviewed Mrs. Morgan, the physician, and Ryan.

## **Morgan Family Case Study (continued)**

The doctor related to the caseworker that the broken arm is consistent with an individual grabbing the child's arm and shaking the child violently, as the doctor noted, "such a break would require excessive force." The caseworker next talked to Ryan who confirmed that his father did it, "but it wasn't his fault because he was drinking and didn't know what he was doing." The caseworker next interviewed Mrs. Morgan who also had apparent dark bruising around her right eye. Mrs. Morgan related that her husband did come home last night, "after drinking a lot." According to Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Morgan, "became really upset after finding out about Ryan, and jerked on his arm very hard." Mrs. Morgan noted that she heard a "snap" when Mr. Morgan pulled on Ryan's arm. The caseworker asked Mrs. Morgan whether she was willing to stay at a friend or relatives or at least place the children there to keep them safe. She said that she had no friends or relatives willing to take Ryan as, "he's caused them trouble in the past, but there are relatives that will take Molly and Em." After the caseworker asked Mrs. Morgan if she was willing, Mrs. Morgan refused to go to a shelter with Ryan noting that, "Mr. Morgan rarely does these types of things." The caseworker asked whether Mr. Morgan would be home tonight. Mrs. Morgan related that Mr. Morgan would most likely be home.

The caseworker, both fearing the risk faced by Ryan, age 10, and for his continued safety, in an emergency hearing, immediately petitioned the court for an emergency placement citing the recent evidence of child abuse and neglect and substance abuse in the home as reasons for removal. Based on the reports made by the doctor, the school principle, the school's counselor, and Mrs. Morgan, the court noted the allegations as founded and found Ryan's status as dependent. The agency changed the report status from *indicated* to *founded* and immediately offered emergency placement services to Ryan in an emergency shelter. The caseworker checked on the status of Molly and Emma from time-to-time. The caseworker believed Molly and Emma to be safe in all aspects in their current relative settings. The caseworker, in conjunction with Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Morgan, and Ryan, immediately began drawing up Ryan's Child's Permanency Plan and...



*From this point, you make up the scenario. In your groups, keeping in mind concurrent planning and using the PA Child's Permanency Plan provided, discuss and create at least two goals for the Morgan family's Child Permanency Plan based on the scenario above. From those goals, create objectives, and actions for the Morgan family. Do you petition the court to reunify Ryan with his family? Do you petition the court permanently to place Ryan in another better-suited living arrangement? Why? What events led you and your group to your decision? Were ASFA timelines a consideration? Be prepared to reveal your plan to the larger group considering how you attempted to ensure Ryan's safety, permanency, and well-being while collaborating with your Drug and Alcohol and other system partners. Be prepared to justify your scenario's outcomes and offer the two concurrent planning goals upon which you and your group members initially decided. What steps did you take during planning to ensure your concurrent plan would succeed?*