

Case Study

The **Butler** household consists of an 18 year-old mother and her 9 month-old child. They live in a housing project with subsidized rent. The child's father had been involved with the family until recently. Child Welfare was called to intervene when the child was taken to the emergency room with a suspicious fracture. The mother states that the child fell out of his crib. The mother meets willingly with the caseworker and discussion seems to go well, until the child cries. The mother then becomes angry and wonders why the child is doing this to her and why he does not love her. The mother lacks effective parenting skills, as well as coping/stress management skills. The mother appears to have an interest in developing these skills. She has attended parenting skills classes and parent support groups on an occasional basis. The child is at high risk due to his age.

The **Elk** family consists of a 23 year-old father, 22 year-old mother and a 7 year-old son. The mother is well known by the Child Welfare staff due to her years spent in foster care. The mother admits that her husband has been drinking a lot, but states that everything will be okay, since he has just obtained a job at the local convenience store. The mother notes that the father loves his son and would not hurt him; the injuries the child has suffered when alone with the father, have all been unfortunate accidents. The child is currently in a special needs class. The mother is active in the child's school and regularly attends teacher/parent conferences. The mother has expressed some concern in dealing with the child's behavior at home. She has tried to implement behavior management techniques suggested by the school but has not been able to do this consistently. She has also not been able to obtain support from her husband in implementing the techniques. Recently, the child was observed by the worker to have bruises on his right arm. The child reports his father grabbed him. The father was reportedly drinking at the time of the incident. The child is believed to be in a high risk situation.