

Practice Activity Information

Case #1: The Smith Family

1. Petition:

On or about March 3, 2004, Bobby Smith (age 2) was seen wearing only a diaper on the roof of his house. Further investigation by the police department determined that Bobby was home alone. A short time later, Bobby's sister, Joyce (age 7) returned to the home with a loaf of bread and a jar of peanut butter that she had stolen from the corner store. There was no food in the Smith home. Joyce explained to the police that she had not seen her mother since she came home from school the day before and did not know where her mother was. Neither of the children has contact with their fathers' and no other adult could be located to keep the children until the mother, Evelyn Smith, was located. As such, Joyce and Bobby Smith dependent children in that she/he is without proper parental care or control necessary for their physical, mental, or emotional health or morals. This action is in the best interest of the child and reasonable efforts were not made. Due to the necessity of an emergency placement, the lack of such services was reasonable under the circumstances.

2. What further information might the Child Welfare Professional explore before the hearing?

- Interview Joyce to find out how often they are left home alone.
- Have both of the children examined by a physician to ascertain their physical health.
- Look for suitable relatives who may be able to take the children.
- Begin a search for the children's fathers.

3. Who else could be interviewed?

- Personnel at Joyce's school.
- Neighbors to determine if other neglect is present in the home.

4. If placement occurred, were reasonable efforts made to prevent the placement?

- Yes, Reasonable efforts were made to locate a suitable adult to take the children.

Practice Activity Information (continued)

Case #2: The Jones Family:

1. Petition:
On or about October, 2004, the McKain St. Middle School reported to CYS that Levona Jones had missed 17 out of the first 32 days of school. In the 2003-04 school year, Levona had missed 96 out of 180 days of school. Efforts by the school to engage the mother to solve this truancy problem have been unsuccessful. Over the past five years and at present, CYS has provided multiple in-home services in an effort to get Levona to school. As such, Levona Jones is a dependent child as she is habitually truant and without justification truant from school. This action is in the best interest of the child.
2. What further information might the Child Welfare Professional explore before the hearing?
 - Get copies of school attendance records
3. Who else could be interviewed?
 - Child Welfare Professionals and service providers who have worked with the family in the past
4. If placement occurred, were reasonable efforts made to prevent the placement? This could go either way. In order to get Levona into school immediately, protective custody or a voluntary placement could be considered. Reasonable efforts must be considered. She and her mother have had services before and currently have services, all to no avail. On the other hand, a petition could be filed and CYS attempt to provide services until the Court hearing. This varies from county to county.

Practice Activity Information (continued)

Case #3: Billy D. Williams

1. Petition:
On or about October 31, 2004, Billy D. Williams did throw eggs, smash mailboxes, and soap windows at neighboring homes. Additionally, Billy D. Williams did throw a brick through a neighbor's picture window, causing the window and a vase valued at \$1,500 to break. As such, Billy D. Williams is a dependent child in that he is under the age of 10 years and has committed a delinquent act. This action is in the best interest of the child.
2. What further information might the Child Welfare Professional explore before the hearing?
 - Where were Billy's parents when Billy was vandalizing the neighborhood?
3. Who else could be interviewed?
 - Billy's school: grades, attendance records could be reviewed.
4. If placement occurred, were reasonable efforts made to prevent the placement?
N/A

Case #4: The Rose Family

1. Petition:
On or about February 5, 2004, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh called CYS to report that they had 2-year-old Abby Rose in the ER. The initial examination revealed that Abby Rose had a fractured left tibia, which was not explained satisfactorily as accidental. Further examination, including a full set of skeletal X-Rays, revealed that Abby Rose had a healed fracture of her right ulna and healing rib fractures on both sides of her chest. The mother, Monica Rose, could provide no reasonable explanation for these injuries. Additionally, the hospital staff reported that the child winces whenever her mother approaches her and that the mother has a strong odor of alcohol on her breath and seems "out of it". The child's father, Robert Iman, is currently incarcerated for 2-4 years at Western Penitentiary after his 2nd conviction for possession of crack cocaine. He has never lived with Abby Rose and has not paid support. As such, Abby Rose is a dependent and abused child as she is without proper parental care and control necessary for her physical, mental, or emotional health or morals AND a determination that there is a lack of proper parental care or control may be based upon evidence of conduct by the parent that places the health, safety or welfare of the child at risk, including evidence of the parent's use of alcohol or a controlled substance that places the health, safety or welfare of the child at-risk.

Practice Activity Information (continued)

Case #4 (continued): The Rose Family

Additionally, Abby Rose is an abused child in that she suffered serious bodily injury which created a substantial risk of death or which caused serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of function of any bodily member or organ (CPSL). This action is in the best interest of the child. Due to the serious nature of Abby's injuries and the mother's lack of explanation, preventative services were not offered. Due to the necessity of an emergency placement, the lack of such services was reasonable under the circumstances. By this document, CY5 is putting Monica Rose on notice that CY5 intends to prove that the injuries suffered by Abby Rose present aggravated circumstances in that the injuries are so egregious that a child's safety may be in serious jeopardy, and even with services, it is unlikely that Abby's safety can be assured.

2. What further information might the Child Welfare Professional explore before the hearing?
 - Get child's records from her pediatrician
3. Who else could be interviewed?
 - Neighbors
 - Relatives
 - Other hospital personnel who interacted with mother
4. If placement occurred, were reasonable efforts made to prevent the placement? Due to the serious nature of Abby's injuries and the mother's lack of explanation, preventative services were not offered. Due to the necessity of an emergency placement, the lack of such services was reasonable under the circumstances.