

Trainer Handout 2-2A:
Family Background Information
Activity 2-2: Screening Interview

Sonia Everett, 26, single mother
Alisa Everett, 5, daughter
Samuel Everett, 4, son

Current Report

A Hotline Report is received alleging a severe burn on the arm of Sam Everett, 4. The hospital social worker called in the report after Sonia Everett, mother, brought the child to the emergency room for treatment. The mother told the medical staff that the burn was accidental and resulted when her daughter (Alisa, 5) was boiling water to make oatmeal for breakfast and inadvertently spilled some of the water on Sam.

Previous Records Review

There is one prior report (from 18 months ago) for inadequate supervision with “Not Substantiated” findings. At that time, Alisa, 3, and Sam, 2, were reported to be frequently playing outside unsupervised. The incident for the report was that the siblings were throwing rocks into an unfenced stormwater retention pond. The reporter (anonymous) took them home. The reporter stated that the mother did not seem very concerned and that there was a strong smell of “incense and pot” coming from the home.

A FCIC check shows two reports. The first, when the mother was 18, for possession of marijuana (under 20 ounces) and having an open container of alcohol while visiting a state park. The second, from 8 months ago, shows an arrest for DUI which was pled down to reckless driving. The police report indicates the mother was driving erratically and after the arresting officer smelled alcohol on her breath, he gave her a field sobriety test. Her blood alcohol level was .08. Both children were in the car with her at the time of the arrest. They were released to Sonia’s mother without child welfare involvement.

Home Visit

When visiting the home, the CPI noticed that the family was living in complete disarray. The living room was cluttered with empty pizza boxes, soda and beer cans, and dirty dishes were piled high in the sink and on the stove. The refrigerator had little food, no milk or vegetables, and a twelve pack of beer. Clothes were strewn throughout the home’s two small bedrooms.

The two children were dressed in clothes that they had outgrown and that were filthy and worn out. Both children appeared to have upper respiratory infections. They stated they had not eaten that day. During the visit, Sonia drifted in and out of the conversation and, in general, seemed unconcerned about the condition of the house or children. Regarding Sam’s injury, she stated that “accidents happen.” There were no overt signs of drug use in the home, such as drug paraphernalia.

Sonia appears frail and underweight.

Sonia's Family Story Summary

Sonia's story of the agency's involvement began with the night before the accident. Her migraine headaches had been coming on more frequently and she had taken her "little white pills" to get to sleep. She slept in late the next morning and Alisa had started to make breakfast for herself and Sam, as she sometimes did. Sonia feels the hospital over-reacted because, "after all, I took Sam in for treatment right after it happened." She also dismisses the DUI charge stating she only got pulled over because she made the mistake of mixing alcohol with the pain medication she was on at the time for her migraines. She states she knew better, but the headaches get so bad that, "you don't think straight sometimes . . . you just want the pain to go away."