

Initial Smith Family Risk Assessment

PENNSYLVANIA MODEL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

ASSESSMENT CODES: Z - NO RISK L - LOW RISK M - MODERATE RISK H - HIGH RISK X - UNABLE TO ASSESS

CASE NAME: Smith

CASE #

A. CHILD FACTORS	NAME: AGE:	Carley 10	Christian 4				HIGHEST RISK FACTOR
1. VULNERABILITY		M	H				H
2. SEV/FREQ AND/OR RECENTNESS OF ABUSE/NEGLECT		M	H				H
3. PRIOR ABUSE/NEGLECT		M	M				M
4. EXTENT OF EMOTIONAL HARM		H	M				H
B. CARETAKER, HOUSEHOLD MEMBER, PERPETRATOR	NAME: AGE:	Crystal 30	Colin 30				HIGHEST RISK FACTOR
5. AGE, PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL OR EMOTIONAL STATUS		M	M				M
6. COOPERATION		M	M				M
7. PARENTING SKILLS /KNOWLEDGE		M	M				M
8. ALCOHOL/SUBSTANCE ABUSE		H	X				X
9. ACCESS TO CHILDREN		H	H				H
10. PRIOR ABUSE/NEGLECT		M	L				M
11. RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN		H	M				H
C. FAMILY ENVIRONMENT	D. PLEASE USE BACK OF PAGE FOR NARRATIVE					RISK FACTOR	
12. FAMILY VIOLENCE						Z	
13. CONDITION OF THE HOME						L	
14. FAMILY SUPPORTS						M	
15. STRESSORS						M	
WORKER	DATE	OVERALL SEVERITY				H	
SUPERVISOR	DATE	OVERALL RISK				M	

Initial Smith Family Risk Assessment, (cont'd)

RISK/SEVERITY ASSESSMENT FORM

- D. Note specific evidence supporting all High Risk and Moderate Risk conclusions and justify all "Unable to Assess" ratings. You must provide conclusions regarding Overall Severity/Risk based on the interaction of all factors. Attach extra pages if needed.

The overall severity rating for the Smith family is high due to the fact that the Smith family children have repeatedly been left alone by the mother for extended periods of time. This occurs several times per week. While the children have not yet experienced any injuries, the frequency of the children being left alone increases the likelihood that they will be injured in the future. Because of this, and the concern that Crystal does not recognize the danger in leaving the children alone and Colin makes no effort to correct this issue.

Crystal Smith admits to having a significant substance abuse problem. She reports using alcohol and crack cocaine approximately 5-6 times per week. The mother's substance abuse is currently affecting the mother's ability to adequately supervise the children as well as consistently meet their basic needs for safety. Crystal Smith leaves the home when she uses, leaving Carley Smith, aged 10 to care for herself and her 4-year-old brother, Christian. Due to the substance use/abuse this pattern of behavior is not likely to change in the future.

Carley is developmentally appropriate and physically healthy although she appears to be emotionally and intellectually mature for her age. This is due to her being parentified which supports a rating of high for the Severity, Frequency, and/or Recentness of Abuse/Neglect risk factor. Carley has assumed the role of caregiver for both her mother and brother. Crystal stated that Carley takes care of her when she is feeling poorly. This occurs multiple times a week and is correlated to Crystals' substance abuse. Christian presents as very attached to Carley and looks to Carley for his physical and emotional care. Carley is somewhat preoccupied with the family situation as she expresses concern for the welfare of her mother and she is also protective of her younger brother. Both children have expressed fear in being left alone and have fear of their neighborhood. The mother does not deny that the children were left alone but minimizes the severity of the concerns. This is exemplified by mother's report that Carley is capable of providing the needed supervision. Both children are physically healthy although Christian's behavior is withdrawn.

The overall risk rating for the Smith family is moderate. Crystal Smith appears to be intelligent, articulate, and sociable. She is able to communicate her needs but has difficulty meeting those needs in adaptive ways. She has limited ability to solve problems (particularly with regards to long-term problem solving). She expresses having a positive vision for her future (e.g., to get out of the "projects."). However, her ideas and thoughts about changing her current circumstances are not planned out. Crystal has difficulty managing stress. She has feelings of insecurity and becomes easily threatened. Crystal lacks self-control (e.g., substance abuse, leaving the kids unattended). She appears to have poor self-esteem. There may be some dependency issues as evident in her history of failed relationships with men. Also, she appears to frequently rely on others to get her needs met (e.g., Colin, Carley, her mother). While she is somewhat open about her drug usage, she remains guarded. Crystal expressed feeling "guilty" about some of the choices that she has made in her life.

At some level, she remains in denial about the significance of individual problems and tends

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to blame others. Even though Crystal expresses love for her children and describes positive interactions with both Carley and Christian, the Relationship with Children factor is rated as high because of Crystal's parentification of Carley and Christian's dependence on Carley for his care.

The children being left home alone is not an isolated incident and has been occurring over a period of time. There have been previous referrals made on the Smith family related mostly to Carley being truant from school which appeared to be as a result of previous drug and alcohol use by Crystal. The previous referrals were unsubstantiated but did result in Crystal receiving and successfully completing a drug treatment program. She did remain sober for two years. It is unclear, at this point what prompted her current drug and alcohol abuse; however, information supports that that abuse is increasing. This may be as a result of her relationship with her current boyfriend, Colin.

Colin is clearly able to communicate needs, feelings and perceptions regarding the family situation, but generally keeps the conversation at a superficial level. He appears to be somewhat guarded, distrustful and does not talk much about himself. He tends to remove himself from any direct responsibility for family problems by focusing attention toward Crystal. He is controlled and seems thoughtful. He appears to be resourceful and intelligent. Based on interviews with the children, it appears that he is distributing drugs within the community and has been responsible for supplying Crystal with drugs. He denies selling drugs but is vague about his employment. He avoids conflict (e.g., prefers to leave the home during conflict). Colin has no apparent mental health issues. Although he denies substance abuse/use, there are concerns that he might be involved with drugs which led to the X rating. He presents as emotionally controlled and stable.

While the interior of the home is clean and free of hazards, both children are fearful of the neighborhood that they are living in. There are also financial stressors in the home. Crystal is not employed and, as previously mentioned, Colin's employment is unclear. Crystal does have some support from her mother although she blames her mother for becoming involved with CCYA. Crystal does not actively reach out for support from her mother, although Carley looks to her grandmother as a resource she can access when needed. Crystal has not been forthcoming with information regarding the biological father of either Carley or Christian. Efforts have been made and will continue to be made to locate the fathers of both Carley and Christian and they will be incorporated into future risk assessments once they are located. Colin does not have family supports and was not forthcoming with other resources available to him.