

## Interview Scenarios

**Instructions:** Within your assigned interview scenario, each person in your triad will have the opportunity to be in the role of the child welfare professional, parent and observer. Each person in the triad should choose which of the three interviews they would like to use when they are in the role of the child welfare professional. Answer the 3 preparation questions related to that scenario as a small group, have each group member name what materials they might need prior to the start of their interview and then begin with the interview the group has decided would be first.

### Case Scenario #1

Ruth is a 38-year-old African-American mother of three girls, ages 16, 11 and 12. She has worked in a factory for the past 8 years. Ruth has not seen the father of her children since they divorced 8 years ago. His whereabouts are unknown.

The 16-year-old, Shenice, is in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. She was always an average student; however, by the middle of 9<sup>th</sup> grade, her grades began to decline and she is now in danger of repeating 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Additionally, she has had a number of days absent from school, complaining of not feeling well. When she is at school, she makes a number of trips to the nurse's office stating that she feels nauseous. You have been working with the mother, child and school about these issues.

About a month ago, Shenice ran away from home for three nights and stayed with a friend's family after a particularly heated argument with her mother. Upon her return home she became increasingly argumentative and oppositional with her mother. During the most recent argument, Shenice shared that she is a lesbian. Ruth reacted with disgust and told Shenice that she was a bad influence on her sisters. The next day Ruth called the Children and Youth agency and stated, "Either you get her out or I will throw her out."

Who would you meet with first (Ruth, Shenice or the siblings)?

As an ongoing, in-home worker, what would be the purpose of the interview?

How would you talk to the mother about contacting the father?

## Interview Scenarios (Cont'd)

### Scenario #2:

Annette is a 14-year-old Asian-American female who resides with both of her parents and 10-year-old brother in a lower middle class section of an urban city. Both parents were born in southern Korea and immigrated to the United States when Annette was 5 years old. Her 50-year-old father works in a local grocery store and her 36-year-old mother works in a local department store.

Annette and her family were involved with Children and Youth 7 years ago after a report from the school nurse. At that time, lacerations were found on Annette's arms and legs. The father admitted to whipping her when she was disrespectful. He described Annette as a very strong-willed child who needed to learn respect for adults. The caseworker at the time worked with the family on alternative discipline techniques and on building parenting skills in general. The case was closed after the family met all of the goals in the family service plan.

Yesterday the school nurse called to report lacerations on Annette's arms. Additionally, the nurse noted numerous cutting scars on both of Annette's arms. Annette told the nurse, "Cutting is just something I do sometimes when I get bored. It doesn't hurt at all when I do it."

What beliefs do you have about children who cut themselves?

Who would you meet with first (father/mother, Annette or the brother)?

As an intake worker, what issues would you explore?

### Scenario #3

Tanya is an 11-year-old White female in 5<sup>th</sup> grade who is placed with her 55-year-old grandmother, Pearl, in kinship care. Tanya was removed from her mother 6 months ago, after being sexually abused by the mother's boyfriend. The mother has been in and out of a number of drug treatment programs and continues to use. Tanya sees her mother sporadically.

Tanya has a history of physically aggressive and violent behavior at school and in her neighborhood. She seemed to improve after being placed with the grandmother; however, last week the grandmother called Children and Youth because Tanya had become verbally abusive with her grandmother. The grandmother stated that she can no longer handle her in the home and will not tolerate her aggressive behavior. She has agreed to keep Tanya until you can find an appropriate home; however, the guidance counselor contacted the grandmother over an intense verbal argument with a group of girls yesterday. The grandmother feels that things are escalating again with Tanya.

## Interview Scenarios (Cont'd)

Who would you meet with first (Pearl, Tanya or the guidance counselor)?

As a permanency worker, what would be the purpose of the interview?

What past successes or exception-finding questions might you use?

### Scenario #4

Walter is a 32-year-old, college-educated man. He states that he was recently divorced because his wife was fed up with his "mood swings." He admits to sometimes "flying off the handle" occasionally. Walter has lost five marketing jobs in two years because "everyone" in his profession experiences high job turnover. Walter is presently living with an acquaintance he met at his bartending job. He is calling Children & Youth because his wife left him with the children and he "can't make them listen." His ex-wife is now getting alimony and he says he doesn't have enough money to make ends meet. He doesn't want his children to go with their mother because then he'll "have to pay child support, too," which will "leave me with no money at all." He wants the Children & Youth to fix the problem.

As a screener, what are your feelings about this father?

What is the purpose of your telephone interview?

What issues will you address?

### Scenario #5

Jim is a 13-year-old Haitian immigrant who lives in a neighborhood known for crack users and dealers. The family moved there to live with extended family members. Jim is the youngest of three siblings. His oldest brother, 19, is in prison for gang-related activity. His 17-year-old sister, Asante, and her two-year-old son live in the household. Jim's mother, age 39, is employed in the kitchen of a local restaurant. Jim's father, age 40, is a construction (day) laborer. They have lived in the U.S. for six years, having escaped political oppression in Haiti.

Jim is two years behind in school and has a great deal of difficulty concentrating. You have received a referral that the house is overcrowded and often his only meal is his school lunch. School will be letting out in 2 weeks.

## Interview Scenarios (Cont'd)

Who will you interview first (Jim, parents or extended family) and where will the interview be held?

What factors make this family unique?

How will this affect the purpose of your interview?

### Scenario #6

Albert and Arlene Givens are the foster parents for Melissa, age 6 years. Melissa is in care because her mother, Rosalie, placed Melissa in a bathtub of hot water as punishment for a bed-wetting incident. Melissa sustained second degree burns on her buttocks and legs.

Melissa is fearful of her mother and pulls her hair out and has bitten herself prior to visits with her mother. Melissa told the foster mother that, if she is ugly, her mother won't want to visit. Melissa experiences nightmares before and after visits with mother and is destructive with her toys after visits.

The Givens would like CYS to take action stop or reduce the visits which currently take place every other week. The previous caseworker provided the foster parents with an adequate clothing supply and arranged for follow-up medical care for Melissa's burns. The previous caseworker left the agency to go on maternity leave and you will be covering for her while she is out.

Who will you meet with first (foster parents, mother or Melissa)?

As the new caseworker, what will be the purpose of your visit?

What issues will you address?