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Pallas Case Study A

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SOCW 441

Introduction to Client

T. Pallas is a 17 year-old Caucasian adolescent that was adjudicated (finding that the court makes after a complaint has been filed and the matter has been heard) as D/N(Dependent /Neglected) and was before the court for the charges of unruly behavior and truancy. The child's previous charges which have not been settled in court as of yet are: simple possession of marijuana, theft, assault and vandalism. The child has been picked up from juvenile court and has been placed in Youth Villages. The child has been diagnosed with asthma, Bi-polar disorder, Cannabis Abuse, Alcohol Abuse, and ADHD and is currently taking the following medications, Seraquell, Wellburtrin, and Prevacid. In the past it has been a problem to maintain a regular medication schedule for him. He is currently receiving counseling services at Joe Johnson MH Services. Youth Villages continues to work with the child on his anger management, truancy, verbal aggression, and the smoking of cigarettes and marijuana.

Evaluation of Systems

The child's last custodian was his mother where they resided in Hixson together. In addition to Mr. Pallas, there are two other siblings; a brother and a sister. The father is not involved in the child's life. He is incarcerated.

Mr. Pallas is in the eighth grade and the last school attended was Hixson High School. Currently, we are working with Cleveland High School on a credit recovery system which allows Mr. Pallas the opportunity to be promoted to the 10th grade and make up missed credits. This allows him to be in the same grade level as other 17 year- olds which after investigation is the main reason he refused to attend school. He did not want to be in the same grade as 14 year-olds. He felt out of place and therefore just refused to go.

As stated earlier, Mr. Pallas is receiving regular counseling sessions with Joe Johnson MH Services and is residing at Youth Villages. Youth Villages provides residential treatment to boys and girls. The [Center for Intensive Residential Treatment](#) (CIRT) provides even more intensive treatment for children and teenagers who require constant supervision due to serious behaviors and mental health issues.

Strengths of Client

Mr. Pallas shows signs of social competence towards his mother and his siblings. He is caring and loving and during our initial contact with him explains that mom has done everything she could to get him to go to school so please don't punish her for his actions. This tells us that he is able to show compassion and regret. He is creative and has a great sense of humor. Mr. Pallas has shown signs of improvement and actual excitement at being promoted to a higher grade at school.

Theoretical Framework

I will be utilizing the Family Systems Theory and the Ecological Approach in evaluating Mr. Pallas's case. Family systems theory, in an organizational context, postulates that a system has its own language, roles, rules, beliefs, needs and patterns. Each member of the system has a role in, and is reciprocally affected by, the system. Each member is evaluated and understood in relation to the system as a whole. Problems are addressed by focusing on and/or changing the way the system works in tandem with a specific member. In Mr. Pallas case, he lacked a healthy father figure throughout his childhood which shifted to role to his older brother. This shift in role created a barrier between Mr. Pallas and his brother. With mom working to provide for the household, it left the older brother in charge and this built up a wall of resentment between the two brothers. At this current time, Mr. Pallas does not want to

go back home. He wants to remain in the states custody until he turns 18 or legal age. He feels that there are too many “bosses” at home.

The ecological approach to organizational functionality stresses the connections and influences between the system and the environment in which it functions (including the courts, local communities and other governmental departments). This approach predicts that constructive organizations have the potential to acquire qualitatively different capacities and new growth through positive interaction and emergence with their environment. Utilizing this approach in Mr. Pallas case, I can show a relationship between Mr. Pallas and his struggles with his school environment. Due to his falling behind at school, he has failed three times during his school career which placed him in a much lower grade level than his peers in his age group should be in. This caused him to feel insecure, embarrassed, and ashamed which in turn was the main reason he would not go to school. He felt ridiculed and identified as an outcast by his peers. This is why we have collaborated with Cleveland High to put him into the credit recovery program. Although it is still early, it seems to be helping Mr. Pallas. He is excited and motivated to get up and go to school everyday.

Social Worker Tasks

As a professional Social Worker, the tasks needed to create success for this client are 1) continue with counseling, tutoring, substance abuse and anger management services, 2) monitor and assist with educational needs and 3) Continue to monitor his medical needs and medication schedule.

Barriers

The primary barrier I see at this stage is that as stated earlier, Mr. Pallas does not want to return home. His wishes are to stay in the foster care system until he turns 18 and he is enjoying his foster care placement. Due to the fact that his mother has not done anything wrong to be proven unfit or neglectful, we have no right to keep him in our custody. Once the permanency plan is created and completed by mom, we have no legal right to hold him. Although mom loves him and he loves her very much, I fear that once he is placed back at home, he might become a re-offender.

References

Policies and Procedures of Tennessee Department of Children's Services Handbook

Standards of Professional Practice for Serving Children and Families, November 2003.