SSFSS Ketchum and DSS intern Kerstetter conducted a face-to-face visit with Esmeralda on March 1, 2023, at the Chesterfield County Detention center.

SFSS asked Esmeralda how her relationship with her mother and family is. Esmeralda stated her relationship with her mother is complicated but is better than what it used to be. Esmeralda stated that when she started running away from home her mother started showing her more affection. Esmeralda reported that her “mom never liked her”. Esmeralda noted that the nickname her mother gave her was Spanish for “disgrace”. Esmeralda stated that she is very close to her older sister Brianna. Esmeralda expressed that Brianna is her best friend and that Brianna is having a hard time adjusting to Esmeralda being away. Esmeralda stated that she used to see her father every weekend but now only seems him a couple times a year. Esmeralda stated that her brother will often be drunk and will say mean things to her. Esmeralda stated that her mother and her brother would talk poorly about her and she would need to leave because of her mental state.

SFSS Ketchum asked why Esmeralda started running away. Esmeralda stated that the first time she ran away was at the age of 14 and was an “accident”. Esmeralda stated she just wanted to go see her friends and cousin. Esmeralda stated that her sister texted her stating that Esmeralda’s mother knew about her sneaking out and was going to call the police on her. Esmeralda stated that her cousin invited her to stay with her for the night. Esmeralda stated that her cousin’s mom called the police on them because the mom found weed. Esmeralda stated that the police let her go but she didn’t want to go home. Esmeralda stated that she runs away to different places and goes with her friends. Esmeralda informed SFSS that when she runs away, she sleeps in a car, hotel, or at someone’s house. Esmeralda stated that she does not get scared when she runs away. Esmeralda stated that the longest time away from home was from “around October to August”. Esmeralda stated that she is more comfortable living in a “trap house or care” than going back home.

When asked about her friends Esmeralda stated that her friends ages vary between 13 and 30. Esmeralda stated that she met the 30-year-old at a park one night and he asked her for her snapchat and Instagram. Esmeralda stated that she provided the information to him and later went to “smoke” with him and his friends. Esmeralda stated that when she met his friends, they became her friends as well. Esmeralda stated that her friends sell drugs to get them money for food, hotels, gas, etc. Esmeralda stated that her friends sell cocaine, weed, meth. When asked if Esmeralda participates in the sale of drugs, she stated no. Esmeralda stated that she has previously used meth, percs, molly, acid, marijuana, and cocaine. Esmeralda stated that she received these drugs from her friends. Esmeralda stated that she started using drugs last year. Esmeralda stated that she is sexually active and identifies as bisexual. Esmeralda stated that she is not safe during intercourse. Esmeralda stated that her last menstrual cycle was February 17, 2023. Esmeralda stated she has no pregnancy concerns.

Esmeralda stated that she tried to commit suicide by overdose last summer after she broke up with her ex-boyfriend. Esmeralda stated that her ex-boyfriend has hit her in the past. Esmeralda stated that she has self-harmed using needles, razors, plastic, and anything else she could find in the home. Esmeralda stated that she has learned to self-regulate when she has thoughts of suicide or self-harm. Esmeralda stated that she prays for an hour a day, meditates, draws, and writes to help herself. Esmeralda stated that she has suicidal ideations 3 to 4 times a week. Esmeralda expressed that therapy does not help her and she just needs to figure it out on her own. Esmeralda stated that she received intensive in-home therapy 4 years ago for anger management and suicidal ideations. Esmeralda stated that therapy has not been helpful. Esmeralda stated that she previously was a resident at Tuckers for 1 week in May and has also had in-patient treatment. Esmeralda denied services at this time but understands that if the services are court ordered she must participate in them. Esmeralda stated she has no diagnosis and no use of medications. Esmeralda stated that even if she had a prescription medication, she would not take it because she does not like medications. SFSS engaged in conversation with Esmeralda about her transition into the detention center. Esmeralda stated that she is eating and sleeping in detention. Esmeralda reported that before detention she would go months without eating and days without sleeping. Esmeralda stated that she functions normally on days that she did not sleep. Esmeralda stated that she is experiencing symptoms of paranoia since returning to school in 8th grade. Esmeralda stated that she gets paranoid that she is going to get shot at school and if there is not more than one exit in the building.

SFSS Ketchum asked Esmeralda why she cut off her ankle monitor. Esmeralda stated that the school was going to drug test her because she had allegedly been using a THC pen in the bathroom. Esmeralda stated that it was not her smoking in the bathroom but because she smoked marijuana outside of school her drug test would have come back positive either way. Esmeralda stated that either way she was going to break house arrest, so she decided to run away again.

Esmeralda stated that she is going to talk to her mother at visitation about going into foster care. . Esmeralda stated that she believes foster care would be a better environment for her. Esmeralda stated her father does no work in Virginia but his home residence is here. Esmeralda stated that she would like to live with her father and step-mother and would “more than likely stop running away”. Esmeralda stated that at her father’s house they have a room for her. Esmeralda stated that she is tired of detention and not getting anywhere in life. Esmeralda stated she is interested in getting her GED and building cars or going to cosmetology school. At this time SFSS Ketchum had no more questions for Esmeralda and Esmeralda had no more questions for SFSS.