

**Client Case Assessment**

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AB and MG are biological brothers that were referred to Alliance Human Services by the local department of social services in April 2023. AB is three years of age and MG is six months of age. AB and MG were placed into foster care because they were exposed to illegal substances and victims of physical abuse. MG was born addicted to fentanyl and is experiencing long lasting effects. When AB and MG were placed into care, their biological parents were homeless and had no contact information. AB and MG continue to have no contact with their biological parents. Alliance Human Services and the local department of social services terminated parental rights on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and made AB's and MG's permanent goal adoption. AB and MG are currently placed with a single foster mother that just became a foster parent in April of 2023. Their foster mother does wants to adopt both AB and MG.

A major issue in AB's and MG's case is that AB has a lot of aggression towards his baby brother, MG. AB has put a pillow over MG's face, stepped on MG's back, and picked MG up by only his ears. Since MG is only six months old these actions can be life threatening so the case manager at Alliance Human services had to come up with a safety plan to prevent further life-threatening actions caused by AB. The safety plan states that AB is not allowed to be unsupervised with MG at any point in time. The safety plan also states that if an incident happens where AB hurts MG then the case manager is to be contacted right away but if the case manager is unable to be reached then they are to call the on-call number and an incident report will be filed.

AB and MG both need services to help them improve their physical health. AB is currently on breathing treatments because he would become extremely out of breath. AB also has trouble with his speech, so the case manager is in the process of getting him into speech therapy.

Since MG was born addicted to fentanyl, he is behind on his developmental milestones, so the case manager is in the process of getting him into early intervention.

Another service that is needed for AB is counseling because AB is showing signs that he was sexually assaulted. One concerning sign is when AB is being bathed, he will get on his hands and knees with his rear end in the air and say that that was how his dad washed his rear end. AB is also very curious about seeing other people's body parts. He will force himself into the bathroom while someone is in there just to see other people's body parts. He will also compare his penis size with his baby brothers and point out that his is bigger than his brothers. He definitely needs counseling to help with the possibility of him being a victim of sexual abuse and to also help with his bad behavior. The issue is that he cannot have counseling until he is evaluated but the case manager is struggling to get him evaluated.

Every foster child in Virginia must go through the Virginia Enhanced Maintenance Assessment tool (VMAT). The VMAT assesses the level of care needed for a child and any additional supervision needed for the child. Foster parents will also get paid more depending on how the child scored. For MG he scored a zero since he is only six months old, and he is considered a non-treatment level of care. Unfortunately, it is the VMAT testing is not accurate for children as young as MG because the test is made for teenagers. This means that the foster mom will get \$95.00 for MG. For AB he scored a 24 because of his aggressive behavior towards his brother and his outbursts at daycare. This means that the foster mom gets \$1,344.00 extra for AB. He is also considered a level three for his placement level because his behaviors cause him to need more supervision which means that the foster mom will get an additional \$487.31 for AB.

AB and MG both have individual service plans that state goals for each child to achieve while in foster care. AB and MG have two short term goals. AB's and MG's first goal is to form a positive bond with their foster mom which they both have. Their second goal is for their physical and mental needs to be met while they are in foster care which is still being worked on with both AB and MG. The second goal is still being worked on for AB since he can not be put into counseling until he is evaluated, and he is still having behavioral issues. The second goal is still being worked for MG as well because he needs to be in early intervention since he is behind on some developmental milestones.

Even though AB and MG are so young their parents could have passed their own trauma onto AB and MG. "Family systems theory suggests that family members are interdependent, with the wellbeing of one member influencing the functioning and wellbeing of other family members through direct and indirect pathways" (Abrams, 1999). Since both AB and MG were most likely born addicted to fentanyl, they have experienced trauma from their biological mother. When it comes to AB showing signs of being sexually abused by his biological father, he is experiencing trauma because of it. Now AB's actions of trying to see other people's body parts were learned from his father but he does not understand it is wrong. There is also a possibility that both of their biological parents have their own childhood trauma similar to what AB and MG are going through but the biological parents may not realize they passed it onto AB and MG.

AB and MG's foster mom is struggling to afford to buy clothing for the both of them especially since they are both at an age where they are growing so fast. Typically, in these situations Alliance Human Services go through the donations that they have and find clothes for the child in need. Unfortunately, there is a diversity issue because they receive several big totes

of clothes for girls but usually one small tote for boys so they did not have anything that would fit AB or MG. Since AB and MG were in desperate need of clothes the case manager asked everyone if they know anyone that has boy clothes in the sizes that they need. Luckily the intern's mother decided to specifically buy clothes for AB and MG since no one else had any clothes to give. This is a diversity issue because if AB and MG were females it would not have been as much as a struggle to get them the clothes that they need.

Since parental rights for AB and Mg were recently terminated, their goal has changed to adoption. Their current foster mom wants to adopt both of them. The case is still ongoing, especially since both of them are in high need of services. AB needs speech therapy and counseling for his signs of sexual abuse and behavioral issues. MG needs early intervention due to him being behind on developmental milestones due to him being addicted to fentanyl when he was born. Both AB and MG have taken the VMAT testing but unfortunately it is not as accurate for MG since he is six months old, and the test is meant for teenagers, but it is still used for all ages. AB and MG should soon have all of the services they need and be adopted by their foster mom.

## References

Abrams, M. S. (1999) Intergenerational transmission of trauma: recent contributions from the literature of family systems approaches to treatment. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*