

# Tyler and Jade

Mother: Julie, age 30, Caucasian  
Father: Charles, age 30, African-American  
Children: Tyler, age 10, Bi-racial  
Jade, age 2, Caucasian

## Presenting Situation

Neighbor, Mrs. Smith, contacted DHR On-Call worker at 9:30 PM to report Tyler and Jade alone at home. Tyler was apparently responsible for watching Jade while his mother, Julie, was at work. Jade became ill. Tyler was unsure as to what to do and walked next door to Mrs. Smith for help. Mrs. Smith attempted unsuccessfully for two hours to contact Julie with numbers Tyler provided. Mrs. Smith was concerned because Jade was running fever and vomiting. Mrs. Smith decided to contact DHR for assistance.

On-Call Worker, after consulting her supervisor, went to the home and spoke with Mrs. Smith and Tyler. Tyler reported he "thought" his mother would be home around 11:00 PM. She was working at the hospital as a nurse. Worker found that Ms. Smith had given Jade a dose of ibuprofen that she found in Jade's daycare bag. Jade's fever was down, and she was playing quietly. Worker observed the home which was strewn with toys and clothes. There were dirty dishes in the sink. In speaking with Tyler, worker found that, recently, he was having to watch Jade after school for Julie to work.

Mrs. Smith indicated willingness to wait for Julie and the On-Call Worker also decided to remain to talk with Julie. At, 11: 15 PM, Julie arrived home. The On-Call Worker explained the situation. Julie, angry at first, listened when Mrs. Smith explained that Jade was sick, and Tyler was scared and unsure. Julie, alarmed that Jade was ill, responded appropriately to the children. She thanked Mrs. Smith for her concern and expressed embarrassment regarding not being available for her children. She stated she could not keep her cell phone on at work and was moved to a different floor for her second shift due to short staffing. Julie stated she was having money problems and covering extra shifts at the hospital for additional income.

The On-Call Worker explained that she did not observe any immediate safety issues at this time. However, she was concerned about Julie having the children at home unattended. The On-Call Worker explained another worker would be in touch the next day to follow-up. Julie stated she did not have to work the next day and would be available. Mrs. Smith agreed to assist Julie with Tyler if Jade needed medical attention through the night.

## Current Situation

Investigative Worker goes to interview Julie, Tyler, and Mrs. Smith the day after the on-call report is initiated.

## Background Summary

Julie was born into an upper middle-class family in a small city in Alabama. Julie describes her childhood as normal and uneventful. Her parents were married at a young age. Her father worked his way up to partner in a large local construction company. Her mother worked her way through nursing school and after working for a few years decided to stay home with Julie and her younger brother. Her parents remain married and live close to Julie.

Julie was successful in school and described herself as popular and in many extra-curricular activities. In her senior year in high school, she met her future husband, Charles. She describes their meeting as "love at first sight". Charles was the first African American quarterback at their high school and was also academically successful. Julie and Charles began secretly dating and their relationship progressed quickly. Charles' family knew of the relationship and though having reservations did not voice strong opposition. Julie hid their relationship from her parents due to her concerns regarding her family's acceptance of Charles' race.

After high school, Charles received a football scholarship to a small in-state university close by and Julie decided to follow him there. She continued to hide their relationship from her family while she pursued nursing school. In her sophomore year, Julie discovered she was pregnant with Tyler. Julie and Charles, while apprehensive regarding an unplanned pregnancy, had no reservations regarding getting married and having the child. Julie, however, realized she could no longer hide her relationship with Charles from her family and did not want to. Julie and Charles went together to talk with her parents. Julie's parents were extremely angry and hurt. They demanded Julie break-up with Charles and have an abortion, or they would cut off all support to her. Julie chose to stay with Charles and have the child. Julie's parents stopped paying her tuition and housing.

Julie and Charles were able to secure student housing and began using the local health department for her prenatal care. By securing part-time employment, Julie and Charles were able to continue college. Julie's graduation was postponed due to Tyler's birth, however, she eventually completed her nursing degree. Charles reluctantly decided after Tyler's birth that he needed to work full-time. He gave up his scholarship and began working at a local manufacturing company.

Through years of struggling financially with little family support, Charles and Julie were unable to hold their marriage together. They divorced when Tyler was five-years-old. Charles was active in Tyler's life and provided monetary and emotional support to Julie after the divorce. A few years after the divorce Julie had a brief relationship with another man that resulted Jade's birth. Jade has never met her father, and Julie does not know his whereabouts. Charles was very hurt by Julie's relationship and while maintaining visitation with Tyler has distanced himself from Julie. Also, Charles was recently laid off from his job and is unable to make regular child support payments for Tyler. Julie is working extra shifts at the hospital to keep up with bills. She has daycare for Jade, and Tyler is in school. She uses her dinner break between shifts to pick up Tyler at school, pick up Jade at daycare, and settle them at home before returning to work a second shift. She typically works two to three extra shifts per week.

Julie expresses regret for relying on Tyler for the care of Jade but sees no alternative. She describes Tyler as mature, responsible child who is "no trouble" and is able to take care of himself. She expresses confidence that he can also care for Jade. She describes Jade as a rambunctious two-year-old who loves

her big brother. Julie mentioned several times how much Tyler loves his sister and wants to take care of her. She also mentions that he helps care for Jade when Julie catches up on sleep or is "feeling down". Julie is very concerned about her financial situation but expresses that Charles is doing the best he can, and she is reluctant to talk with him about her struggles after "everything that happened with Jade's dad". She also states she has no one else to turn to for help.

### Safety Issues

- The lack of adult supervision while Julie works
- The inability to contact Julie at work
- Inadequate financial resources
- Julie's mental health

### Strengths

- Julie has steady employment
- Julie loves her children
- Tyler is responsible
- Charles loves his child
- Charles is involved in Tyler's life
- The family has their basic needs met (food, clothing, shelter)
- Julie is willing to discuss her financial situation
- Julie has sought help before (i.e. health department)
- Julie has a marketable college degree
- Julie has transportation

### Needs

- Julie needs consistent adult supervision for Tyler and Jade
- The family needs financial stability
- Charles needs steady employment
- Julie needs to take care of herself
- Julie needs to expand her support system
- Julie needs to pursue child support for Jade

### Available Resources

Julie and her family live in a small city with a population of 50,000 - 60,000 people. There is a medium sized hospital, a mental health center, and several physicians. There is a small state university in the city. There are several churches and schools located throughout the city. Julie lives in a safe close-knit middleclass neighborhood consisting mostly of older couples and young families.

## Child Welfare Competency One Knowledge of Human Development

### Case Scenarios

- A. During the initial home visit it becomes apparent to the worker that Jade has some developmental delays. Jade does not use any words and she crawls a lot during the visit.
- B. During the initial home visit Julie makes several comments about Tyler providing care for Jade. Julie explains to worker that Tyler cares for Jade after school while she is at work. Julie also states to worker that Tyler watches Jade when she takes naps after her long shifts.
- C. During the assessment process, worker speaks with Tyler's teacher and finds out that his grades have dropped from A's and B's to C's and D's. Teacher explains to worker that Tyler has always been a good student, but lately he is coming in without his homework and seems to be sleepy most of the time.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, discuss the stages of human development, in particular at age 2, and variations in the human development across the life span. (CWCD 1)
- Based on Case Scenario B, discuss the safety factors of a 10 year old caring for a 2 year old, as well as, the impact of a 10 year old being in the parenting role for his younger sister. Explore ways Tyler could have more contact with children his own age. Discuss childcare resources that may be available to help Julie with Jade. (CWCD 1)
- Based on Case Scenario C, role-play a conversation between the worker and Julie discussing the recent drop in Tyler's grades. (CWCD 1)

## Child Welfare Competency Two Knowledge of Abuse and Neglect

### Case Scenarios

- A. During initial home visit, the worker notices fresh bruises on Tyler's arms and legs. When worker talks with Tyler privately, he becomes tearful and withdrawn when asked about the bruises. The on-call worker did not see bruises on Tyler when interviewing him the previous night.
- B. In interviews with Jade's child care provider, the worker learns that Jade is often ill with stomach ailments. The provider documents bringing this to Julie's attention verbally and in writing on numerous occasions. However, Julie has not followed up with a physician. Jade is small for her age and often refuses to eat.
- C. A background check produces information regarding numerous physical abuse allegations against Charles' father. When interviewed, Charles describes his father as a strict disciplinarian. Charles acknowledged that many times he was interviewed by DHR regarding "whippings" his father gave him. Charles insisted that he needed the discipline, as he was difficult as a child.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, role-play a conversation between the worker and Julie discussing the bruises on Tyler. Explore the worker's decision making process regarding Tyler's safety in the home. (CWCD 2.1)
- Based on Case Scenario A & B, discuss the safety risk factors for Tyler and Jade. What dynamics are present in the family that put them at risk for abuse and neglect? (CWCD 2.1, 2.2)
- Based on Case Scenario C, discuss how issues in Charles' childhood may impact his parenting skills as an adult. Review research to explore the issues of adults who were abused as children. Read "A Child Called It". (CWCD 2.3)

## Child Welfare Competency Three Knowledge of Services

### Case Scenario

- A. The protective services social worker assigned to Julie's case explores systems of support available. He finds many formal and informal resources/services that would be helpful to her.
- B. After receiving in-home services for three months the family's situation is deteriorating. The decision is made that Tyler and Jade are at imminent risk of removal from their home due to Julie's lack of decision making skills regarding the children's safety.

### Teaching Tools

- Create a comprehensive eco-map for Julie, Tyler, and Jade. Discuss how eco-maps can identify services and resources for families. (CWCD 3.1, 3.2)
- Based on Case-based Scenario A, hold a mock ISP with Julie. Determine who should attend the meeting. Focus the ISP on strengths, needs, goals for the family, and identifying necessary services. Discuss consequences of "throwing services" at a family. (CWCD 3.1, 3.2)
- Based on case-based Scenario B, research family preservation programs including history, philosophy, technique, and success rate of the programs. Debate the pros and cons of family preservation vs. out-of-home care for children. (CWCD 3.1, 3.2)

## Child Welfare Competency Four Knowledge of Policy

### Case Scenario

- A. Charles' grandmother is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Tribe east of the Mississippi. Charles has recently established membership in the Tribe.
- B. Tyler and Jade were removed from their parents custody and placed in foster care twelve months ago, due to Julie's depression and poor decision making and Charles inability to financially care for them. Julie nor Charles have maintained contact and are not making progress toward the necessary goals to regain custody of Tyler and Jade.
- C. Tyler and Jade are currently living in separate foster homes.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, research the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. Discuss the following: How does this Act impact Tyler should foster care become necessary? What are the ramifications of Jade not falling under the jurisdiction of the ICWA? (CWCD 4.1)
- Based on Case Scenario B, research the Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997. Research the R.C. vs. Walley Consent Decree. Discuss how these policies apply to Tyler and Jade's situation. What are Julie and Charles' options regarding regaining custody of Tyler and Jade? (CWCD 4.1)
- Based on Case Scenario C, review DHR's sibling visitation policy. Brainstorm ways to facilitate visitation between Tyler and Jade. (CWCD 4.1)

## Child Welfare Competency Five Knowledge of Systems Theory

### Case Scenario

- A. Due to a decrease in federal funding to the hospital, Julie is laid off. Unable to locate a job in the medical field, Julie is working two retail jobs to make ends meet.
- B. Julie's mother and father are in a car accident. Her mother is seriously injured and is no longer able to care for herself. Julie's father is recovering but unable to assist in caring for Julie's mother.
- C. Jade's father moves back to town and decides to pursue visitation with Jade. He also expresses a desire to pursue a relationship with Julie.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, discuss how Julie's change in employment may affect the family unit. List the additional stressors this adds for Julie, Charles, Tyler and Jade. (CWCD 5.1)
- Based on Case Scenario B, research the issues surrounding adult children caring for elderly/disabled parents. Create a comprehensive list of resources available for information and support. (CWCD 5.1)
- Based on Case Scenario C, using the P-1-E perspective identify the systems in Tyler's life. How could Jade's father's reappearance affect them? Julie? Jade? Charles? (CWCD 5.1)

## Child Welfare Competency Six Knowledge of Strengths Based Perspective

### Case Scenario

- A. In the initial ISP meeting, Julie and Charles cannot name any strengths in their situation. They are focusing on the negative aspects of their situation, blaming each other and bickering.
- B. Tyler's teacher describes him as being a "perfectionist and hard on himself". He has trouble describing things he does well and does not accept constructive criticism.
- C. Julie calls her social worker three to five times per day with questions and concerns about her case. She has begun paging her social worker after hours. Julie becomes upset when the social worker does not respond promptly or answer her page and threatens to complain to the social workers supervisor.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, role play a dialogue between the social worker, Julie and Charles creating a comprehensive list of strengths, needs and goal statements. Discuss how strengths, needs, and goals interrelate. (CWCD 6.1)
- Based on Case Scenario B, list and describe strength-based age appropriate interventions that would assist in building Tyler's self-esteem and decrease the pressure he puts on himself. (CWCD 6.1)
- Based on Case Scenario C, research burn-out in the social work profession. Explore the causes, signs, and interventions. Role play a discussion between the social worker and Julie regarding appropriate boundaries and problem solving Julie's need for support throughout the day. (CWCD 6.2)

## Child Welfare Competency Seven Knowledge of Role of Social Work

### Case Scenario

- A. Tyler begins having behavior problems in school and his grades begin to drop. Julie is concerned that Tyler is in need of specialized educational services. However, Tyler's school refuses to test him.

### Teaching Tool

- Based on Case Scenario A, research educational advocacy including the individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Invite a school social worker, teacher, and public child welfare social worker to speak to the class regarding advocacy in the school. Lead a class discussion regarding effectively advocating in the school system. (CWCD 7)
- Research the role of a child welfare social worker in the court system (i.e. termination of parental rights hearing, dependency hearing, 72-hour hearing, etc.). Have a panel discussion regarding the role of the child welfare social worker. Include in the panel a juvenile court representative, attorney, public child welfare social worker, and a CASA representative. Provide students with examples of court reports. Discuss what information should be included in the court reports. (CWCD 7)
- Based on Case Scenario A, research the OHR-ISP process and facilitate a mock initial ISP. Focus on leadership skills of the social worker and have the social worker clearly define her role and the roles of the other stake holders. (CWCD 7)

## Child Welfare Competency Eight Knowledge and Application of Evidence Based Practice

### Case Scenarios

- A. A new child welfare social worker is transferred this case. It has been open for in-home protective services for almost one year. Tyler has been seeing a counselor for "self-esteem issues" for 10 months. The counseling notes indicate no improvement.

### Teaching Tools

- Group Activity: Research evidence based practice in social work. Have groups provide oral presentations on social work interventions supported by evidence. (CWCD 8)
- Facilitate a class discussion on evaluation of intervention effectiveness. Have groups identify tools to assess effectiveness of services. Make a plan to expedite progress in this case that is supported by evidence. (CWCD 8)
- Have students write individual position papers regarding the importance of evidence based practice in social work, including exploration of challenges and opportunities of evidence based practice in the field of social work. (CWCD 8)

## Child Welfare Competency Nine Understanding of Cultural Competence

### Case Scenario

- A. During family therapy, Julie begins to discuss the fact that her family does not approve of her relationship with Charles due to his race. She states that "this causes her and Charles to argue a lot".
- B. During the initial home visit, Tyler and Jade were removed from their home and placed in foster care. They were both placed with an African-American family.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, role play a discussion between Julie, Charles and her family. Have Julie and Charles discuss how the treatment of Charles by Julie's family is hurting their relationship. (CWCD 9)
- Based on Case Scenario B, research the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994. Have a child welfare social worker from the Resource Unit at DHR speak to the class regarding the process of placing children in foster homes when they come into care. (CWCD 9)

## Child Welfare Competency Ten Understanding of Crisis Intervention

### Case Scenario

- A. During an ISP meeting, Julie states that "my kids would be better off if I was dead"
- B. During the initial home visit, Julie became very angry at her neighbor and the social worker. Julie yelled at Ms. Smith, "you had no business calling DHR on me".

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, research the Six-Step Model of Crisis Intervention by James and Gilliland. Lead a class discussion on the severity of this crisis situation. (CWCD 10)
- Based on Case Scenario B, research the Six-Step Model of Crisis Intervention by James and Gilliland. Have students role play a conversation between the social worker and Julie with the social worker trying to de-escalate the situation. Use the six step model as a guide. (CWCD 10)

### Suggested Resource

Richard K. James and Burl E. Gilliland, Crisis Intervention Strategies, 4th Edition, Brooks/Cole, 2001.

## Child Welfare Competency Eleven Knowledge of Social Work Values and Ethics

### Case Scenario

- A. During a visit with Tyler, he divulges information about his mother and drug use. Tyler makes you promise that you will not tell anyone.
- B. You are a child welfare social worker that was molested and raped as a child. After several months of working with this family, you discover that Jade may have been molested by mom's boyfriend.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, role play a conversation between the worker and Tyler explaining, on his level, confidentiality and the reasons why you would need to tell someone about the drug use. (CWCD 11)
- Based on Case Scenario B, have a class discussion regarding some of the issues that could arise from this social worker working with this family. Include the idea of "Self Disclosure" in the discussion. (CWCD 11)

### Suggested Resource

- NASW Code of Ethics - [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)

## Child Welfare Competency Twelve Communication Skills

### Case Scenario

- A. The protective services social worker assigned to Julie's case explores systems of support available. He finds there are many formal and informal resources available, however, Julie is very resistant to accepting assistance.
- B. After several weeks of working with this family, you receive a call from Tyler's teacher stating that "Tyler has a bruise under his right eye". You arrive at the school to investigate the situation, but Tyler will not talk to you about the bruise.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, discuss ways to engage resistant clients. Role play a conversation between Julie and the social worker discussing the different services and encouraging Julie to participate in the intervention. (CWCD 12.1, 12.2, 12.3)
- Based on Case Scenario B, discuss ways to engage children in difficult situations. Have students come up with a list of open ended questions that may help Tyler open up to the social worker. (CWCD 12.1, 12.2, 12.3)

## Child Welfare Competency Thirteen Assessment Skills

### Case Scenario

- A. During a family therapy session, Julie admits that she is depressed. Julie also said that her maternal grandmother committed suicide several years ago and that she "does not want to end up like her".

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A and the background summary, create an initial Comprehensive Family Assessment (CFA) on this family. Use the CFA template from your local DHR as a guide. (CWCD 13)
- Have students research different assessment tools. Divide students in groups and give each group a different assessment tool to discuss. Have each group list the pros and cons of the assessment tool. (CWCD 13)

## Child Welfare Competency Fourteen Organizational and Technology Skills

### Case Scenario

- A. You are a new child welfare social worker who has a tendency to procrastinate on paperwork. You have a court report due in two days and you have just been given a brand new case to be opened for services.

### Teaching Tools

- Based on Case Scenario A, have students research DHR policy and timelines. Have a panel of child welfare social workers (a CA/N worker, foster care worker, protective service worker and resource worker) speak to the class regarding timelines, why they are important, what can happen to prevent it from occurring, and what tips they have to stay focused and caught up. (CWCD 14)

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