

F. Mercado

Attendance Assessment

F. M.

Fresno State University

Social Work 274

Professor Carlin

November 15, 2011

**SWrk 274**  
**Attendance Assessment Template for Assignment #3**

**A. Identifying Information:** (10 points)

**Name:** Reason Why

**Age:** 10

**Gender:** Male

**Ethnicity:** African American

**Primary Language:** English

**School:** Urban Heights

**Grade:** 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Teacher:** Mr. Tired- Rm. 35

**Referred by (Relationship):**

Reason Why was referred by Mr. Tired on 11/01/11.

**Reason for Referral:**

Reason is being very disruptive in the classroom. He is often disrespectful to the teacher and is often off task. He is constantly pounding his fist against his desk and making music to distract his peers. Reason also has a history of chronic absences, and has been absent 7 times, just this year. He is also not performing at his grade level and was retained in kindergarten.

**B. Background Information:** (25 points)

**History of Presenting Concerns:**

Reason is the youngest of five children. He has two older sister's ages 15 and 18, and three older brothers who are 12, 14, and 16. Reason lives with his maternal Aunt and uncle. Reason's mother is currently in West care (a drug treatment facility), but does keep in contact with her son. Reason's mother got her parental rights terminated when she did not comply with the recommendation posed by the Department of Social services; three times. Reason has no knowledge of his father, and reports that his mother told him he left before Reason was born. The maternal aunt reports that Reason has many problems because he has lived through many horrible experiences with his mother. The aunt reports that she feels a lot of the behavioral problems stem from Reason having a hole in his heart from seeing his mother constantly on drugs, and not having a father. He and all of his siblings were split up during the adoption, because of limited space in the aunt's house (and licensing standards). He displays lots of anger and aggression towards his family and at times begins to curse and yell saying, "no one loves him or cares about him." The aunt reports that Reason has been living with her for 2 years and that these behaviors have increased over the years. She reports that Reason's mother fills his head with false hope and then continues to use drugs and disappears for months before she checks herself in and out of a drug treatment center. The aunt is very frustrated because she feels Reason may never have a chance to flourish and will have a hole in his heart forever. Reason has worked with various school

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personnel, over the course of the two years; that he has been displaying problematic symptoms.

**Academic Adjustment (academic performance, attendance, behavior, etc.):**

Aunt reports that Reason has had mood fluxes ever since he was diagnosed with ADHD (in March of 2011) by the mental health professional assigned by the department of social services. She reported that initially Reason was dosing off in class with the medication that was prescribed to help with his symptoms, and that his medication is constantly being increased and decreased to find the proper dosage to stabilize his mood to a normal state. He was attending therapy, but his psychologist reports that he seems to shut off during consultation. He has had a history of chronic absences, but this has been due to Reason having placement issues, when initially removed from his mother. He has been exhibiting behavioral problems in school, and has had a total of 7 referrals, since the beginning of the school year. Reason will be working with Mr. Mercado (Social Work School Intern) to work on these concerns.

**Peer Relationships:**

Reason did not get along with his peers at school very well. He is constantly distracting his classmates and is aggressive with peers during recess. He is on the football team, and has a good relationship with his team mates. His best friend is his Cousin More Trouble, who is in the fifth grade.

**Relevant Health/Medical History:**

Reason's birth history was reported as normal with no complications. He was said to accomplish normal milestones at age appropriate levels, until the second grade. At the age of 7 he began to develop the symptoms of ADHD and was diagnosed. He currently takes 5 mgs of Adderal twice a day. This medication is registered with the school health nurse. No other medications or illness are reported

**Student Strengths:**

Reason's strengths are that he loves to play football and draw. He dresses well and takes care of his personal daily grooming needs and chooses his own outfits. He has strong support from his aunt and uncle, as well as from church. Reason likes to do things independently and is able to articulate his needs and wants very adequately.

**Additional Information:**

Reason appears to center around his poor coping and attending skills due to anger outburst and irritability in class. Reason is also very distracted and has a history of disengaging from conversation easily. He also has a hard time getting along with his peers and adults, and has a hard time staying on task.

**C. Neighborhood Information: (10 points)**

**Summary of Neighborhood Environment:**

Reason Why lives in a fairly isolated community. Within this community there are very limited resources, areas for recreation, and has a frequent reputation for crime and gang activity. Reason Why attends a local church that is within a residential area; near Reason's residence. Everyone within Reason's neighborhood has generally lived within this area for most of their lives (according to Reason's aunt). Overall, everyone in the neighborhood is fairly impoverished and comes from minority backgrounds. Unfortunately, Reason's environment is concentrated with drugs, gangs, violence, and a negative influence which makes it extremely difficult for individuals to flourish without hardship.

**Summary of Condition of Home Environment:**

Reason's home has three bedrooms and two baths. It is an older home with a good sized front and backyard. The front yard has a chain link gate around the home about three feet high. The yard is in good condition, as well as the physical appearance of the outside of the home. The inside of the home is visibly clean and has lots of pictures of Reason. The location of the home is in an environment that has a reputation for the aforementioned dynamics, which makes it hard for Reason to have positive influences in his home. On top of not having role models, Reason's aunt has very limited education, and his uncle has been a private landscaper all his life; which makes it hard to give Reason the skills he needs to prosper. Reason's aunt and uncle are very loving and supportive of Reason; but they feel that it is hard to be a role model or give Reason some of the skills he needs as a young boy growing into a man.

**D. Family and Support System Information:** (15 points)

**Family Members:**

Reason's mother is currently in West care (a drug treatment facility), but does keep in contact with her son. Reason's mother got her parental rights terminated when she did not comply with the recommendation posed by the Department of Social services; three times. Reason has no knowledge of his father, and reports that his mother told him he left before Reason was born. The maternal aunt reports that Reason has many problems because he has lived through many horrible experiences with his mother. Reason has contact with his maternal grandparents and 2 of his maternal aunts (who are both single). He has a cousin More Trouble, who is also his best friend. Reason does not really have that much financial support from any of his family members (because they are very limited), but he does attend church with his aunt who is his guardian, his 2 maternal aunts, cousin, and his grandparent's.

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**Household Members:**

Aunt reports that the family is fairly disjointed. Reason reports that he really loves his mother, but most of his family does not care for him; due to his mother's drug use. The aunt reports that extended family members had an opportunity to keep Reason's siblings all in the same placement, but they rejected this notion; because they were trying to punish the mother. The mother has been in and out of West care, and continues to use drugs. She has recently been diagnosed with Bi-polar and seems to be fading slowing out of Reason's life. Reason has never met his father, and considers his uncle as somewhat of a father. Reason's uncle works and his availability is very limited. The family does attend church on a regular basis and has a great relationship with the pastoral staff. Although Reason does not like to attend or participate in the youth activities held by the church.

**Extended Family Support System (extended family, church, community organizations, etc.):**

The aunt and uncle have a very strong faith in Christianity (a strong belief in Jesus Christ and God). The aunt reports that this faith has helped her overcome the various problems she has been through in her life and with Reason. The aunt does wish that Reason would be more involved in the church, but with Reason being on medication it is hard to determine what type of mood he will be in from week to week. Reason has been working with a school social worker who has seemed to get Reason more motivated to participate in church over the past 2 weeks and has created a sense of hope that Reason has been feeding off of, the aunt reports.

**Summary of Family Interaction and Response to Presenting Problem:**

Reason's aunt is very compliant with working with the school in helping Reason have the best possible chance of academic success. The uncle is generally at work, but is very passionate in getting Reason some help and focused on his academics. Reason has demonstrated mixed feelings, and has had a history of not interacting with the professionals that have been recommended to help him in his situation. Furthermore, the family and Reason would like to eliminate some of Reason's medical and behavioral issues, so that he can be more productive at school. Both parties feel that helping the components will help Reason be more motivated about school; which will increase in participation, confidence, and attendance.

**E. Case Formulation:** (15 points)

Reason is a 10 year old male of African American descent. He is the youngest of 5 children. He has two older sister ages 15 and 18, and three older brothers who are 12, 14, and 16. Reason lives with his maternal aunt and uncle. Reason really misses his mother and has never met his father. Reason is suffering from abandonment issues springing from his mother consistently being on drugs and not being able to care for

him. He blames himself for being removed from his mother's custody. Although he lives with his maternal aunt and uncle, his aunt reports that "Reason is persistently rejecting her love and asking for his mother." The aunt does an excellent job working with Reason and is very caring and patient with Reason's spontaneous outburst or disengagement from reality. The lack of a mother and father in Reason's life is causing him to feel incomplete, and is a strong predictor to why he may be exhibiting behaviors of ADHD. He was removed from his mother's custody in first grade, and his grades have been declining ever since. Teachers have appeared to give up working with Reason, and he spends most of his time in ELD, with the psychologist, the social worker, and other school support; rather than in class. Reason does not follow directions well, and only follows directions from people he trusts.

With the aforementioned analysis, recommendations for Reason include: With permission of Reason's guardian(s) he will be referred to the school social worker and they will collaborate to improve Reason's quality of life and social functioning. Reason would need assistance with the following behaviors:

- Increase self esteem/awareness
- Work on Attendance
- Address recurrent loss issues and develop resilient and healthy coping skills
- Build classroom etiquette

**F. Service Plan:** (25 points)

**Student Name:** Reason Why

**Date:** 11/08/2011

**School Social Worker:** F. M.

**School:** Urban Heights

**Goal # 1** Increase self-esteem and self-awareness

**Timeline:** May 2012

**Intervention Plan:**

- a. Conduct individual mindfulness therapy with student 1 time per week for 30 minutes from November through March 2012. Activities will be centered on expressing feelings, self-awareness, and building self-confidence. Utilize mindfulness therapy and the narrative approach to engage youth.
- b. Enroll Reason in the after school program, so that he can receive additional support with his homework. He will be attending in November and will continue to March 2012 to strengthen his academic skills and build confidence in his ability to complete his assignments.
- c. Monthly consultation with teacher and parents to monitor Reason's progress.

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**Goal # 2:** Work on Attendance

**Timeline:** May 2012

**Intervention Plan:**

- a. Enroll Reason in the third grade social skills group. He will be enrolled from November through March 2012 to help gain peer support and to get him more engaged in school (studies show that enrolling students in a group that gives them a sense of purpose can help a child become more motivated and want to be engaged in school more).
- b. Educate the family on the attendance policy (make them feel comfortable and welcomed). Educate the family on how to navigate the system (get Doctor's note, bring Reason for 10 min and then having him go home, etc.), so that Reason does not have any truancy problems.
- c. Create a reward system for every month that Reason has perfect attendance. And make an even bigger incentive if he is in attendance every day of the school year starting in November up to the last day of the school.

**Goal # 3:** Address recurrent loss issues and develop resilient and healthy coping skills

**Timeline:** May 2012

**Intervention Plan:**

- a. Enroll Reason in a social skills group to increase his coping skills and peer-support; which can help him gain additional support. He will be enrolled from November through March.
- b. Work on self-reflection and grieving skills utilizing grieving interventions and activities suitable for Reason's situation.
- c. Work on a family tree (so we can talk about issues and coping strategies for the various people within his family tree) and develop future goals and plans to help build his self-confidence and get him motivated.
- d. Mr. Mercado will continue to conduct one on one intervention with Reason (once a week), to monitor progress and provide support as needed.
- e. Mr. Mercado will keep in contact with Reason's family to monitor Reason's progress with his coping skills.

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**Goal # 4:** Build classroom etiquette

**Timeline:** May 2012

**Intervention Plan:**

- a. Develop a reward system for Reason when he does not obtain a referral for that month.
- b. Work with Mr. Mercado one on one to work on his etiquette. Mr. Mercado will utilize himself as a role model and develop role plays; (with scenarios) to help Reason build these skills.
- c. Will monitor his progress by doing classroom sit-ins (randomly or when needed) and teacher consultations.
- d. Mr. Mercado will educate the family about classroom behavior and teach them techniques to reinforce classroom etiquette.