

SESSION 4 AMARILLO CASE

SAMPLE COURT REPORT

CASE NAME:

Amarillo Case

CASE NUMBER:

11-7-012345-6

HEARING DATE:

6/19

CHILD/REN'S NAMES:

Maria Amarillo
 Joanna Amarillo
 Graciela Amarillo

DOB:

May 18th
 Sept 1st
 Aug 19

AGE

16
 6
 4

PERSON'S INTERVIEWED

Albert Gillis
 Maria Amarillo
 Julia Mansfield
 Karen and Stanley Becker
 Consuela Amarillo
 Pedro Valdez
 Anna Valdez
 Lourdes Valdez

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD

Case Worker
 Child
 Guidance Counselor
 Foster Parents
 Maternal Aunt
 Uncle
 Aunt
 Cousin

ATTEMPTED INTERVIEWS

None

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

CPS Case File and Notes

Medical Notes written by Dr. Madeline Bemelmans

DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

Police incident report

PLACEMENT HISTORY

Maria Amarillo

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>TYPE:</u>
July 3	Emergency Foster Care
July 6	Group Home for Girls
November 27	Short-term Foster Home
January 8	Long-term Placement
May 3	Transitional Housing Center
September 26	Karen and Stanley Becker

Joanna Amarillo

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>TYPE:</u>
July 3	Emergency Foster Care
July 6	1 st Foster Home
September 17	2 nd Foster Home w/ Graciela
May 3	Karen and Stanley Becker

Graciela Amarillo

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>TYPE:</u>
July 3	Emergency Foster Care
July 6	1 st Foster Home
May 3	Karen and Stanley Becker

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On July 3rd (three years ago) a neighbor called police as a result of “loud shouting” in the

home of Jose and Myrian Amarillo. Police found three children on the scene (Maria, age 13; Joana, age 3; Graciela, age 1) and removed the children from the home based upon evidence at the scene including parents too inebriated to provide a safe home for their children and mother's bruises and bleeding as a result of a fight between her and her husband. Child Protective Services (CPS) was notified and the children were placed together in emergency foster care.

SUMMARY

This section is to be written objectively—do not include your own feelings or thoughts—just state the facts. Remember, the summary provides the “evidence for the recommendations you will be making to the court.

Maria, Joanna, and Graciela have been in CPS custody for three years. During these 3 years, Maria has lived in 7 different placements, Joanna 4 different placements, and Graciela in 3 different placements. All three girls are currently placed in the same foster home; however, that has not always been the case. Joanna and Graciela have stated that they enjoy living with their current foster parents. Maria has expressed that while she enjoys living in the same placement with her sisters, she is not happy with her current foster parents. Maria believes her foster parents are insensitive to her and her sister's religious beliefs and they force the girls to attend a church that is of a different denomination than the Catholic one they are used to attending. Maria also does not get along very well with her foster parent's daughter.

Based on the information gathered to date, I, the CASA/GAL volunteer, have some concerns regarding the girls' placement as they are still living in a foster home and not a permanent placement. The girls have been in foster care for about 3 years now with multiple moves and their parents' parental rights have been terminated. Foster care is supposed to be a temporary solution for these children. They need safety and permanency in their lives. These children are free to be adopted; however, measures do not seem to be in place to achieve this type of permanency.

Maria is facing several challenges as she is fast approaching adulthood. Maria does not currently have legal permanency in this country. She is in danger of “aging” out of foster care without legal permanency and risks being deported once she exits foster care. Maria has not acquired the skills she needs to appropriately transition from foster care to adulthood. While Maria enjoys school and has a decent academic record, without legal permanency she will not qualify for the funds needed to attend a higher learning institution. Maria is still currently in contact with her parents even though their rights have been terminated. Maria does not want anyone to know about this because she fears that she will not be allowed to continue talking to them.

The foster parents have expressed an interest in adopting the girls but have reservations about adopting Maria as she and their daughter do not get along. Maria has

an Aunt who has expressed an interest in having Maria come to live with her so she can help with her cousins. The Aunt lives in El Salvador and has stated that there are not many opportunities for Maria to be a successful adult. Maria is not interested in moving to El Salvador to live with her Aunt. She has expressed an interest in being placed with kinship relatives; however, CPS has deemed this as an inappropriate placement. The family does not have the resources available to take care of these girls, they are an undocumented family and they already have several other family members living in the house.

I, the CASA/GAL volunteer have other concerns regarding the foster parents as it does not appear that they are being sensitive to the girls' cultural and religious beliefs. There appears to be racial and religious insensitivity and bias on the part of the foster parent and the social worker, as the girls are not living in a placement that allows them the freedom to embrace their cultural and religious beliefs.

PERMANENCY PLAN:

The goal of permanency planning is to provide a child with a safe, stable environment in which to grow up, while in the care of a nurturing caregiver, who is committed to a life-long relationship with that child. This plan is extremely important if the child is not currently living in a permanent home. Please identify one of the following permanency planning options. Consult with your CASA/GAL Supervisor for additional options within your CASA/GAL program jurisdiction.

1. Reunification: return to the home of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian
2. Adoption
3. Third party custody with someone other than the parent
4. Dependency guardianship

The permanency plan for Maria is adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS (please continue to the next page for additional space as needed)

Remember, recommendations to the court are written to reflect the child's best interests and are the result of the CASA/GAL volunteer's work. The judge will decide whether or not to order the recommendations, so it is important to write recommendations that are concise, clear and backed by evidence that you have collected and reviewed.