

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Kayla is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student at an elementary school in your school district. She has been out of school for the past 21 school days due to hospitalization and subsequent partial hospitalization program (PHP). Kayla was taken to the hospital by her mother due to suicidal ideation and self-harm. In previous years, Kayla has attended an intensive outpatient program (IOP) for children with behavioral issues on two separate occasions. She is currently diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, ADHD Combined Presentation, and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

Per reports from school staff, Kayla has struggled with behaviors of refusal, screaming, head-banging, and peer aggression for the past 6 years that she has been in attendance at this school building. However, these behaviors have had a marked increase in frequency this year.

Kayla has had three suspensions for a total of 13 days for fighting/violence and disobedient/disruptive behaviors. Intensity of these behaviors vary, but have reached the point of significant property damage (kicking holes in walls) and significant disruption to the school setting (evacuation of others from the setting, closure of bathrooms, disruption of learning/working due to loud and persistent screaming, etc). The variable that seems to consistently stop behaviors is access to mom and leaving the school setting. Staff report that behavior goes from highly escalated to regulated immediately once either of these variables are accessed.

Dr. Hall, the school psychologist, has asked you, the parent mentor, to step in and assist the family/school team throughout the school reentry process. She has noticed increasing tension between the school team and the parent and is hoping that Kayla's mother may be more receptive to you as a parent mentor. Dr. Hall reports that Kayla's mother has confided in her that she does not feel welcome with the school team at this point.

In speaking with the school team, you notice that many team members speak poorly about Kayla and state that Kayla's mother reinforces her behaviors by constantly "saving" her. They come across very callous towards Kayla and her mother. Your suspicions are confirmed when you review a completed form about Kayla's discipline infractions from the Assistant Principal who placed a blank "poomoji" Post-it note on the form. When you question him about this, he states, "it's open to your interpretation."

Kayla will phase out of the PHP program this upcoming Monday. Kayla's mother has previously stated that she does not want Kayla to return to this school building and is requesting that her child be moved to another school building within the school district. Kayla's mother also states that she does not want to continue to deal with the administration in this school building.

## **GROUP DISCUSSION**

- 1) What should the school team's next steps be?
- 2) What role(s) should you take as the parent mentor?
- 3) What specific step(s) should you take:

- a. Prior to the reentry meeting?
  - b. During the reentry meeting?
  - c. Post-reentry meeting?
- 4) What types of accommodations might be beneficial to the family during this process?
  - 5) How can you promote an inclusive and empowering environment during this process?
  - 6) What additional resources are you aware of that may be beneficial to the family?

**Group Notes**

\*\* This case (including all names, identities, and details) has been deidentified to protect the individuals involved.