

Case Studies for March 26, 2014 Liaison Professional Development WebEx: Is It Resistance or Is It Something Else?

Rose

Rose is a fifth grade Hispanic female who lives with her single mother, Angel. Angel has a paramour who has two kids of his own and he and his children come and go from Rose's home frequently. There are also extended family members who often live at the house as they need to. Rose has been referred to the SAP program at her middle school due to a significant drop in grades including math and English, which she is in danger of failing. Prior to this Rose appeared to like English and enjoyed writing poems, but now she is not handing in her work. She also has outbursts of anger at peers and teachers, especially male teachers. Rose does relate well to her art teacher who is also a male. She does well in his class and has asked him on several occasions if he thinks she could be an art teacher someday. The outbursts are becoming more frequent and she has displayed physical aggression on two occasions. When the school has called home to talk to Rose's mother, she is usually at work and another person answers and the school leaves a message for Angel. However, the calls are never returned.

Rose was also referred to SAP in fourth grade when she first began displaying outbursts of anger. After several attempts to arrange a meeting with the mother, Angel came in on her lunch hour. The guidance counselor learned that Angel worked as a paralegal and typically worked long hours. Angel said she could only stay fifteen minutes because she had to get back to work. She told the guidance counselor she would tell Rose to "shape up" and that it would not happen again. She also made it clear she could not be called at work and the school would need to contact her at home.

Brian

Brian is a 16 year-old Caucasian male in 10th grade. He divides his time between his parents who divorced a year ago. The parents are currently involved in a custody dispute over Brian and his two younger siblings, a brother in 8th grade and a sister in 6th grade. Father remarried a month ago. Father is a surgeon and mother teaches part time at a local community college. Brian was referred to SAP after his grades began to slip and he started skipping gym class. He was scheduled for the honors program for his junior year and recently told his guidance counselor he wants to be removed from the program, but would not give any explanation why. He has been on the track team, but the coach reports he has not been at practice for the last three weeks and is going to be dropped from the team. When the school contacted the parents the father said he was too busy and to call the mother who "is responsible for those kinds of things." When the mother is contacted she refuses to come in without the father whom she blames for Brian's recent difficulties, citing the father's affair and subsequent remarriage as the cause of Brian's behavior. The school often receives calls from Brian's stepmom saying she suspects Brian's mom of leaving Brian to care for his younger siblings for extended periods of time, sometimes even overnight.