

THE VILLA STORY

FAMILY MEMBERS

Mercedes Villa
Braydon Roberts (age 3)
Lowell Roberts

The initial home visit identified several safety concerns. Braydon was left unsupervised near the family's pond several times. Braydon was able to exit the home without anyone's knowledge by unlocking the doors and leaving. There were also several environmental hazards both in and out of the home. The home had hunting knives and arrows within Braydon's reach, and there was a rusty, damaged trampoline and wheelbarrow that Braydon frequently played on.

The caseworker observed Braydon interacting with Mercedes and the caseworker and follow Mercedes directives. The caseworker also observed Braydon unlocking the front door. The caseworker had to direct Mercedes attention to this. Mercedes redirected Braydon's attention and then pointed out to the caseworker "how smart he is".

The caseworker observed the home to be generally cluttered with old food, beer cans, and random household items. Mercedes described feeling overwhelmed and stated she did not have the energy to constantly keep the home organized. Mercedes disclosed that her current situation in life fell significantly short of her earlier expectations in life. Mercedes expanded by explaining she wanted to work, have more education, and have a better relationship with her fiancé. Mercedes described arguments with her fiancé Lowell and made several comments about Lowell needing to approve of anything that she did. Mercedes was very concerned about making Lowell upset and initially did not want him to know that the caseworker had visited the home. She also described Lowell as becoming easily angered, drinking frequently, and rarely being at home; sometimes staying with his mother for days at a time.

The day after the caseworker's initial visit, Lowell was arrested and incarcerated for his third DUI. The caseworker visited Lowell at the local jail. It is unclear when Lowell will be released, but he is hoping that his mother will post bail. Lowell was not interested in discussing Braydon or Mercedes. His focus was primarily on whether or not the caseworker would be able to help him get his truck back since it had been impounded. He asked the caseworker repeatedly to talk to the judge so he would be able to take care of his dogs. He became noticeably angry when talking about Mercedes refusing to care for his dogs. Lowell was not concerned with Braydon's well-being and stated that it was Mercedes job to take care of the baby. Lowell was also not concerned about losing his employment as he believed that his employer had been looking for a reason to fire him anyways.