



Eleven-Month-Old Billy

The hospital social worker just called your agency to report that an 11-month-old African –American child named Billy was brought to the emergency room at noon today by his grandmother, Pauline Hamilton. Her 21 year-old-son had left Billy with her the previous evening and said he would be back in a few hours. She hadn't seen or heard from him since. Mrs. Hamilton reported that Billy had been crying almost constantly since his father left him. She noticed bruises on his upper back when she bathed him. His left arm and hand were swollen and beginning to look bruised as well, and he was not using them. The neighbor who brought Mrs. Hamilton to the hospital confirms that Billy arrived the previous evening.

X-rays indicate a spiral fracture of the left arm that is three to four days old and previous fractures of the upper left arm and ribs. According to the doctor, the injuries are strongly suggestive of abuse. Billy is also low weight for his age and is developmentally delayed. He has been clinging to his grandmother and was very resistive during the examination and x-rays.

Mrs. Hamilton is 66, nearly blind due to diabetes, and has a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis. She is moving to the nursing home at the end of the month where her husband now resides. Their only source of income is Social Security benefits.

Billy visits Mrs. Hamilton often. She would like to care for him but cannot provide the attention he needs. Her son has cared for Billy since his girlfriend, Billy's mother, left him several months ago. She has paranoid schizophrenia and did not respond to medication or counseling. Her whereabouts are unknown. Mrs. Hamilton knows of no other family members who can care for Billy.

Mrs. Hamilton thinks her son is involved in the drug culture. He disappears for long periods often with Billy. She worries that Billy is being exposed to "bad elements" and is not getting the proper care.

Billy needs placement. You are Billy's intake worker and are planning his placement. Consider the following:

- What tasks would you perform to prepare Billy, his grandmother, his prospective caregivers, and his family for the move?
- How would you place Billy to minimize stress to all parties?