

## **ACTIVITY: ASSESSING PRESCHOOLERS – CHERYL PART 1**

Cheryl is four years old. She and her-nine-year old sister were referred to the Public Children Services Agency for neglect when neighbors found her trying to cross the street, unsupervised, at 10:00 PM on a Saturday evening. The subsequent investigation found that she had been severely, chronically abused, and occasionally neglected. Her mother was addicted to opioids. Her mother often locked Cheryl in the closet for punishment, beat her, and left her alone with her sister when she went out. Cheryl's mother recently lost her job due to her substance use.

Cheryl and her sister were placed in her aunt's (Ms. Robertson) care on a safety plan while the Agency filed for custody. At the shelter-care hearing, mother arrived under the influence, and the Agency was granted temporary custody of both girls and maintained them at Ms. Robertson's home.

Ms. Robertson was not surprised that the Agency became involved. She stated that she had been worried about the girls for some time, and that she had kept them overnight on several occasions, when the older sister would call her for help. Ms. Robertson had not reported the situation to children services, hoping to avoid outside intervention.

Ms. Robertson is a single mother, with three children. She skillfully makes ends meet with her salary as a nurse's aide and the child support she receives from her ex-husband. She stated that she loves the girls immensely and is prepared to care for them for "as long as it takes."

You are an ongoing caseworker and this case was transferred to you today. The investigation occurred three weeks ago, and Cheryl and her sister have been in the aunt's home since that time. Your supervisor asked you to assess Cheryl's developmental needs, in preparation for developing the case plan. (You will discuss only Cheryl, not her sister.)