

Emergency Removal of Children

In the following hypothetical cases:

1. Should there be an emergency removal of the child(ren)?
 2. Was adequate attention given to the parents' right to keep the child(ren) at home?
 3. Was sufficient consideration given to the emotional trauma of separation the child(ren) might experience?
 4. Can the children be protected without emergency removal?
-
1. A sixteen-year-old girl and has just given birth to a baby. The hospital called Children Services because they were concerned about her living situation. She ran away from home several weeks ago and is living with friends. Although she has no source of income, the friends with whom she lives have jobs. She has provided no information about her parents saying that even if they knew where she was, they would not help her. The girl will be discharged the next day. Concerned about the safety of both the girl and the baby, the investigating caseworker interviewed the girl at the hospital, then visited the apartment where she is living. She met the friends, all of whom appeared to be appropriate, concerned about this girl, and interested in helping her out. The caseworker noticed that there was a bassinet for the baby, and baby clothes and diapers in the apartment.

 2. The school nurse notified CPS that five-year-old Jason came to school with a severe black eye, and marks resembling a looped extension cord on the back of his neck, shoulders, and forearms. Jason would not explain how the injury occurred. Several weeks earlier he had multiple bruises on the backs of his legs and on his face. He would not explain those injuries either. Upon visiting Jason's home, the CPS caseworker learned that Jason had sustained the injuries when his father hit Jason with a looped extension cord that he keeps on hand for punishing Jason when he “disobeys.” While Jason's mother believed her husband sometimes overreacts in disciplining Jason, she did not think she should contradict him.