

CASE SUMMARY

REVIEW: TRANSFER: X CLOSING:  
 DATE COMPLETED: October 2, 2000  
 FAMILY NAME: KEMATCH  
 FAMILY WORKER: Kerri-Lynn Greeley FILE NUMBER: S007676

1. Family composition:

Mother: Samantha Kematch  
 Address: 740B Magnus Ave.  
 Winnipeg, MB  
 Telephone: no phone  
 Birthdate: September 9, 1981  
 Treaty Status: Pine Creek # 2820176001

Father: Steve Sinclair  
 Address: 740B Magnus Ave.  
 Winnipeg, MB  
 Telephone: no phone  
 Birthdate: May 15, 1980  
 Treaty Status: Lake St. Martin # 2750133601

Children

Name: ██████████  
 Address: Temporary Ward with Cree Nation CFS  
 Birthdate: July 23, 1998

Name: Phoenix Sinclair  
 Address: with parents  
 Birthdate: April 23, 2000

2. Extended Family/Significant Others/Other Agency:

Name: Nikki Taylor  
 Relationship: counsellor Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club  
 Support person to the family

Telephone: [redacted] (wk) [redacted] (hm)

Name: Marie Belanger  
 Relationship: Agency Teaching support worker  
 Telephone: [redacted]

Name: Heather McCheyne  
 Relationship: Couple's Income Assistance Worker  
 391 York  
 Telephone: [redacted] fax -- [redacted]

Name: Germaine Brass  
 Relationship: [redacted] worker with Cree Nation CFS  
 Telephone: 989 - 4800

Name: Rose McKay  
 Relationship: supervisor with Cree Nation CFS  
 Telephone: 989 - 4800

3. Children in care (If Applicable, (See Child in Care Review)

Samantha's son is a Temporary Ward of Cree Nation CFS and her daughter was in the care of this Agency from April 24, 2000 to September 5, 2000. Phoenix was placed with this Agency's foster mother [redacted]

4. Psycho-Social Assessment

a.) Date of source of and reason for referral

On April 24, 2000 HSC social worker, [redacted] called the Agency to advise that Samantha gave birth to baby girl, Phoenix, after having no prenatal care. In discussions, it was discovered that Samantha had another child that was in the care of Cree Nation CFS. When asked why, Samantha thought that it was because they thought that she might hurt the baby, as her mother did her. In further questioning the couple, it was discovered that they had not made any purchases for the baby whatsoever and Samantha indicated not being emotionally ready to parent. N/Duty workers attended the hospital on this date to meet with the parents, and both indicated that they were not prepared to care for this baby, either financially or emotionally. Some of the options were discussed with the couple (around adoptions, VSG etc). Both parents indicated that they required some time to think about their options and required the baby be placed in Agency care in order to do so. The workers noted that Samantha presented as quite immature in her presentation and did not seem to understand the seriousness of the matter at hand. In the end, Phoenix Sinclair was placed under Apprehension with the Agency on April 24/2000.

b) Problems Identified

- 1) Samantha appeared to have hidden her second pregnancy as she had her first one, with [REDACTED]
- 2) Samantha's lack of motivation and/or interest in caring for her first child. It appeared she has not played a role in his life since he was a few months old, over 18 months ago.
- 3) The couple's ambivalence regarding the long term plans for the child. They had not received any prenatal care and had not done anything in preparation for the birth of the baby. Also the parents initial reaction was they were unsure if they wanted to parent the child, there was an ambivalence regarding their commitment to the baby.
- 4) Samantha's reported flat affect and the reason for it. There was some concern that she may have been suffering from depression. Some form of psychiatric/psychological assessment with respect to Samantha was suggested.
- 5) Due to the couple's young age and Samantha's history, it was suspected they had limited parenting experience and skills.

c) **Brief History of Agency Involvement**

The Agency appears to have one history of involvement with Samantha Kematch, dating back to July 1998, when her son, [REDACTED] was born. At that time, the family was referred to our Agency from Cree Nation CFS, with whom Samantha was a Permanent Ward. They had serious concerns about Samantha's ability to parent, as, she had kept her pregnancy a secret, had received no prenatal care and had been resistant to any kind of assistance. Winnipeg CFS apprehended [REDACTED] on their behalf and he was eventually transferred to Cree Nation CFS.

It is important to note that Steve Sinclair permanently came into Winnipeg Child & Family Services care when he was 13 and he remained in the care of this Agency until attaining the age of majority. At this point Steve's biological mother's file [REDACTED] (File #935858) remains closed and his CIC file is sealed. He has been resistant to allowing the workers to review his file. However his previous worker is Cathy Epps, at the Jarvis office, and she may be able to share any information she can recall. He did advise that his experiences in Agency care have prompted him to parent his child so that Phoenix might escape similar experiences.

d) **Brief History Of Cree Nation CFS Involvement**

Samantha had been a Permanent Ward of Cree Nation CFS since 1993, when she was apprehended from her mother due to issues of alcoholism, neglect, abandonment and abuse. Samantha's years in the care of that Agency were fraught with difficulties for her, in that she was often AWOL from placements, involved in criminal activities, sexually promiscuous, didn't attend school, was hostile and aggressive and generally had difficulties following any rules. Cree Nation CFS made attempts to place Samantha in a Level IV setting due to these behaviors, and she was eventually placed in an Independent Living program supervised by MacDonald Youth Services.

In July 1998 Samantha had her first child, [REDACTED] (DOB July 23/98) he was born in Winnipeg at St. Boniface Hospital. Prior to giving birth, Samantha had concealed her pregnancy and

d) ot receive any prenatal care. St. Boniface Hospital made a referral to Cree Nation CFS when Samantha gave birth as she appeared very distant with hospital staff and from her newborn son. She appeared emotionally flat when discussing future plans for her child. She had also informed the nursing staff that she did not know she was pregnant with [REDACTED] until she took a pregnancy test when she was approximately 8 months pregnant.

The baby [REDACTED] was apprehended, at birth, by this agency on behalf of Cree Nation CFS. He was moved from the hospital to a foster home. Cree Nation CFS had developed a plan with Samantha, she was to be given an opportunity to parent her son with supports. He remained in the foster home and Samantha remained in the Independent Living program with MYS. Biweekly access visits were arranged while Samantha waited for an opening at the Oskki-Ikwe, a facility for young mothers at WaWayseecapow First Nation. They were expected to remain there for six months.

On September 14, 1998 [REDACTED] was removed from his foster home and placed with Samantha at Oskki-Ikwe. Just after eleven weeks at the facility both Samantha and [REDACTED] were discharged because of safety concerns for [REDACTED]. Apparently Samantha was not able to feed him or meet his basic needs.

Samantha returned to the Independent Living program and [REDACTED] returned to his initial foster placement. [REDACTED] has remained in the care of Cree nation CFS and they planned to seek a permanent Order. They advised that that Samantha has taken no interest in [REDACTED] and has no contact or communication with him or his Guardian Agency.

The court date was scheduled for May 17, 2000 however this Agency is not aware of the outcome. It seems that Samantha did not become involved in that process.

Currently, [REDACTED] is placed in Winnipeg, however, he will soon be transferred to Island Lake to live with his father's relatives. The Island Lake Agency will take over case management on behalf of Cree Nation.

In terms of Treaty Status and which Agency to serve for Phoenix, Rose indicated that she was unsure of this. Apparently, the family is originally from Shoal River band, however, at some point, Samantha's mother was trying to register with the Pine Creek band. At that time, it was up to Samantha which reserve she would register with, however, it is unclear which one she chose. Subsequently, both Cree Nation CFS (Shoal River) and West Region CFS (Pine Creek) were served court papers.

Please refer to the information on file from Cree nation CFS for more details regarding Samantha's history and the events that resulted in [REDACTED]'s initial apprehension and eventual removal from Samantha's care.

e) Recent Agency Intervention

On April 24, 2000 HSC social worker, [REDACTED], called the Agency to advise that Samantha gave birth to baby girl, Phoenix, after having no prenatal care. In discussions, it was discovered that Samantha had another child that was in the care of Cree Nation CFS. When asked why, Samantha thought that it was because they thought that she might hurt the baby, as her mother did her. In further

gioning the couple, it was discovered that they had not made any purchases for the baby whatsoever and Samantha indicated not being emotionally ready to parent. N/Duty workers attended the hospital on this date to meet with the parents, and both indicated that they were not prepared to care for this baby, either financially or emotionally. Some of the options were discussed with the couple (around adoptions, VSG etc). Both parents indicated that they required some time to think about their options and required the baby be placed in Agency care in order to do so. The workers noted that Samantha presented as quite immature in her presentation and did not seem to understand the seriousness of the matter at hand. In the end, Phoenix Sinclair was placed under Apprehension with the Agency on April 24/2000.

On April 25, 2000 the intake worker met with Samantha and Steve at the hospital. Both were in the room with Phoenix and appeared attentive and excited by her. Samantha indicated to the worker that she had "changed" her mind and no longer wanted the worker to leave with her baby. She indicated that her mother and her aunt were on their way to Winnipeg from their home reserve (she did not know which reserve her mother lives on) and would be here at 6 p.m. to pick Phoenix up. The worker indicated that Phoenix is currently under Apprehension with the Agency, therefore, no one can simply come and pick the baby up. Samantha was advised to give her mother the worker's phone number to discuss her interest in caring for Phoenix. It was at this point, that Samantha reiterated that her mother used to abuse her when she was younger and that this is why she was in Agency care. The worker then indicated that her mother would likely not make an appropriate care alternative for Phoenix under these circumstances. Samantha then thought that she had an aunt that may want to care for Phoenix. She was again directed to get anyone who is interested to make contact with the worker to further discuss the matter. The worker invited the parents to help her dress Phoenix and only Steve did so. Samantha seemed only vaguely interested in the process, and when they were walking downstairs, she seemed more interested in chatting and giggling with a friend. The girl that the couple met up with, appeared extremely shocked that they had just had a baby. She made it sound as though the couple had kept this a secret on purpose.

The worker talked with hospital staff and the baby's nurse, Be, who indicated that Phoenix is perfectly healthy and there are no specific care instructions. All of the appropriate forms were filled out for Phoenix's discharge, and information was left on the mother and child's charts.

Phoenix was moved from the hospital to Agency shelter, [REDACTED], by the worker without incident.

Beginning on April 28, 2000 Samantha and Steve visited with Phoenix at the Intake office every Friday from 11am-1:15 p.m..

After the visit on April 28, 2000 the intake supervisor and previous case manager conducted interviews with Samantha and Steve. At the couple's request, Nikki Taylor (parents advocate from Boys & Girls Club) was excused for part of the meeting. She rejoined the meeting in its latter stages. During this meeting the parents indicated a desire to continue their common-law relationship with Phoenix being in the family fold. They advised that they came to this position after much deliberation and discussion. The supervisor aggressively challenged the couple on their ambivalence towards parenting this child and the lack of pre-natal care. The "hiding" of the pregnancy and Samantha's seeming disinterest with respect to [REDACTED] were raised as well. Throughout the meeting Samantha remained flat and stoic. She responded to questions in a simple and cautious manner, often pondering her response for a moment or two before uttering same. Complex questions often received simplistic responses, which failed to shed any meaningful light on issues, especially around why she hid this pregnancy and why she has failed to

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maintain any contact with [REDACTED]. Her responses heavily consisted of shrugs and "I don't know". Her presentation was suggestive of some developmental or psychological difficulties, however same will need to be determined.

Samantha also had great difficulty expressing why [REDACTED] was in the care of Cree Nation, nor could she account for why she had expressed no desire in maintaining any contact with the child.

Steve presented as a relatively articulate and thoughtful young man. He did share that he himself had been a child permanently in care of Winnipeg Child and Family Services. He was not prepared to consent to a review of his sealed file.

The couple denied any domestic violence, or substance abuse.

On May 5, 2000 the couple consented to a three month Temporary Order for Phoenix. The following plan was agreed to.

- 3 month Temporary Order of Guardianship
- This Agency will await further case history from Cree Nation C&FS and incorporate same into the on-going case plan.
- Some form of psychiatric/psychological assessment will need to be undertaken with respect to Samantha – this to be arranged by the Agency or the couple (with Agency approval).
- Both parents are to commence participation in an appropriate parenting program.
- Both parents to attend all weekly visits with Phoenix.

The case plan also suggested that Steve's CIC file might need to be reviewed should he agree to sign the appropriate consents for same.

Nikki Taylor planned to help Samantha locate a psychologist for the assessment and Steve was to approach Andrew Street Centre regarding a parenting program.

The file was transferred to this worker in early May 2000.

On May 5, 2000 Phoenix was moved from the Agency emergency shelter to an Agency foster home, [REDACTED]

On May 11, 2000 Nikki Taylor advised that she was still assisting the parents access resources in order to meet the Agency expectations. She was having difficulty getting a psychologist to do the assessment, this worker made attempts to have a consultation with Dr. Gary Altman. He unfortunately was not available until late summer, early fall.

By mid May the couple had started a parenting support group at the Andrew Street Center, they attended every week for eight weeks and completed the program.

During May, June and July 2000 Samantha and Nikki Taylor made several attempts to have a psychological assessment completed. Unfortunately they were unsuccessful. It is this worker's sense