

part of the reason for this may have had to do with the manner in which Samantha presented to her doctor and others. She did not believe she needs to have the assessment and therefore likely was not helpful when asked questions regarding its purpose.

Through May to August the couple continued to visits with Phoenix on a weekly basis, Tuesdays from 10:30 am to 12:30 p.m.. It was also learned from Nikki Taylor that they continued to attend the Boys and Girls Club's summer programming, they participated in a program focused on job training. Nikki also reported that the couple seems to be committed to parenting their child and wanted her returned to their care.

The parents were cooperative with this worker however Samantha often appeared angry when she was required to discuss any of the relevant issues with this worker. It was as if that was her general demeanor with those in authority.

By mid July Samantha had still not been successful with having an assessment completed and the # month order was due to expire on August 5, 2000. Given the concern regarding Samantha's emotional stability was still not address the Agency decided to request the child remain in care under a VPA to allow the Samantha more time to have the assessment completed and to allow enough time to properly transition the baby to her parents home. As part of the new plan an Agency in home teaching support worker was assigned to assist with the baby's transition, to assess the parents parenting abilities, and to provide teaching when needed.

At the end of July 2000 Samantha and Steve consented to the plan and signed a VPA for one month, with the goal to return the child to their care once the final issue was addressed.

In early August Marie Belanger, teaching support worker began working with the parents. She was to meet with them twice a week for about two hours. Also access visits increased to twice a week for two hours. By mid August access visits were again increased to longer duration and began to take place at the parents. Observations made by the teaching support worker indicated that the parents were attentive to and appropriate with Phoenix. They had also begun to accumulate all of the necessary attire to care for the baby.

During a meeting with the supervisor, Angie Balan, on August 29, 2000, it was agreed that the child be returned to the parents care on September 5, 2000. The Agency would require the parents sign a service agreement outlining what was expected of them while the baby was in their care. The agency support worker would continue to work with the parents and the baby at home.

On September 1, 2000 the parents moved to a larger apartment at 740B Magnus Avenue. The home was clean, sparsely furnished and very tidy.

On September 5, this worker met with the parents and discussed the service agreement, both parents signed the contract, making an agreement to follow the expectations outlined in it. The signed agreement is on file.

On September 5, 2000 Phoenix was discharged for Agency care and placed with both of her parents in the family home on Magnus.

The first condition of the agreement was that Samantha meet with Dr. Altman and follow any recommendations he made. Samantha and Steve both met with Dr. Altman on September 13, 2000. He advised the following:

- Samantha does not present with a diagnosis of depression, he does see her a "closed book", that she presents as not wishing to tell all of the information there is to tell, he said this could be due to her own style of interacting and/or some of her own life experience
- His impression is that both parents are now committed to each other and to parenting, Samantha indicated that she had not wanted to be pregnant and was somewhat sad about it but since she has decided that this is her child and wants to parent her, she felt she got connected with the child during the visits
- His impression is that the relationship is okay, they both openly shared their feelings for each other and their relationship, Sam feels Steve loves her and they tell each other they love each other
- Dr. Altman does not see the need for any further assessments at this time, he talked to them about commitment but he feels that for now they are committed to one another and to parenting
- He believed the couple's responses and their interactions were genuine
- He seen them sharing parenting responsibilities
- He suspects that there may be some past sexual abuse in her life however she is not ready to address it, this was based on her responses to why she did not see a Dr. when she was pregnant, she expressed concern about a dr. touching her inappropriately, she this was due to watching similar issues on TV
- His impression was that the flat affect people experienced with Samantha is likely due to her method and style of communication, not depression or feelings of sadness, she reported that she no longer had feelings of sadness as she did when she was pregnant

The couple have continued to engage in the services offered by the teaching support worker. Marie reports that the baby is doing well, the parents are very attentive to the baby's needs and they have her on a routine. She continues to meet with the family twice a week at the family home. Marie is in the process of writing her progress report, it should be on the file shortly.

5) Family Assessment and Case Plan

Samantha and Steve have demonstrated that they are committed to parenting their Phoenix. They have done so by meeting all of the expectations placed on them at the time the 3-month order was granted. As a result Phoenix was discharged from care and is now residing with her parents in the family home.

It appears from positive community reports and the in home support worker that Samantha and Steve they are able to meet her basic daily needs. However, now that Phoenix is in their care, ongoing assessment of their abilities to effectively meet her needs and provide her with a safe and nurturing home is necessary.

Given the family's gains and personal improvements are still fairly new, the parents are required to follow all of the conditions outlined in the service agreement they signed on September 5, 2000, it is to be reviewed in six months. The following is a list of those conditions:

- 1) Samantha will meet with Dr. Altman to assess her emotional stability and she will follow any recommendations made by Dr. Altman.