

Case 7—Rachel Evers

Current Date: September 17, 2011

Youth: Rachel Evers **DOB:** 11/12/95 **Age** 17
Gender: Female **School:** High School -- **SSN:** 123-00-4567
Ethnicity: Filipino/Hispanic Special Education
Language: English, Spanish, some
Tagalog

Family Information

Mother: Alyssa Evers **Age:** 34 **DOB:** 4/26/78
Address: Chowchilla State Prison

Ethnicity: Filipino **Employment:** None

Birth Father: Brian Phelps **Age:** 34 **DOB:** 6/16/78
Address: Whereabouts unknown

Ethnicity: Hispanic **Employment:** Unknown

Step Father: Albert Greggs **Age:** 32 **DOB:** 1/29/80
Address: Pelican Bay State Prison

Ethnicity: Hispanic **Employment:** None

Sibling Information:

Sibling Name: Jennifer Greggs **Age:** 12 **DOB:** 7/27/00
Sibling Name: Michelle Greggs **Age:** 9 **DOB:** 3/19/02

Current Referral/Circumstances:

On September 19, 2011, Rachel Evers is appearing before the court as a 241.1 dual jurisdiction ward (probation lead agency) for purposes of reviewing her permanent plan. She has been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months without a permanent plan of legal guardianship or adoption.

Rachel and her middle sister Jennifer have been dependents of the Juvenile Court since Jennifer was 7 years old. Their youngest sister Michelle was taken into custody shortly after her birth and placed in relative care.

Rachel has been in dual jurisdiction status since September 11, 2006 as a result of throwing a lamp at a group home staff member and breaking a window. She was detained in Juvenile Hall and charged with vandalism and assault.

Prior Juvenile Probation History:

Rachel first came to the attention of Probation in 2006 when she was referred for spitting at and threatening emergency shelter care staff. The case was closed at intake and no petition was filed.

On January 22, 2008, Probation filed a petition on charges of assault on group home staff. The petition was dismissed and Rachel was continued as a WIC 300 dependent.

Child Welfare/Juvenile Dependency Information:

Seven-year old Rachel Evers and her younger stepsister were referred to Child Welfare Services after Rachel told a schoolteacher that her "stepfather," Albert Greggs, her mother's live-in boyfriend and the father of Jennifer had been sexually abusing her and her sister.

Interviews were conducted and both girls disclosed repeated and escalating incidents of sexual abuse. When Rachel and Jennifer's mother was interviewed, she adamantly refused to believe that her boyfriend had been sexually abusing either Rachel or Jennifer. Her mother was pregnant at the time with her youngest daughter Michelle at the time of the incident. As a result, the girls were taken into protective custody and petition was filed on their behalf alleging sexual abuse and failure to protect.

The whereabouts of Rachel's birth father, Brian Phelps, had not been determined during the Child Welfare Services court intervention.

During the adversarial and tense adjudication hearing process, Rachel's mother accused her daughters of lying and staunchly defended Mr. Greggs, who was released on bail pending felony charges of child abuse. When the youngest daughter was born shortly after the disposition hearing, she was also taken into custody and placed in a foster home.

While the sisters were placed in shelter and foster care during the early months of court hearings, the mother did not visit them. Rachel reacted badly to this abandonment by her mother and began to engage in aggressive behaviors toward other children. As a result, Rachel was placed in a foster home without other children and her sisters were placed in a foster home together and Family Reunification services were ordered for the mother and Mr. Phelps (as to his daughters).

The Child Welfare worker learned a short time into the first six months service period that the mother and Mr. Phelps had been arrested on felony charges of drug sales, drug use, and assault with a deadly weapon during a convenience store robbery. Both were convicted and sentenced to 15 years in state prison. At the next Family Reunification status review hearing, the mother waived further Family Reunification services for all three children. The father continued to receive services for his older daughter until his services were terminated and a permanency hearing set.

At the Selection and Implementation Hearing, Rachel's sisters were referred for adoption with their foster parents and later adopted. Rachel, who had been having adjustment problems in several placements, was found to be difficult to place for adoption due to her behavioral problems and placed in Long Term Foster Care. Her behaviors included refusing to eat, breaking belongings in the foster home and cursing at foster parents. Rachel's paternal grandmother, Dorothy Phelps, was approved as a relative and Rachel was placed with her at 11 years of age. While living with Ms. Phelps, Rachel began stealing money from her grandmother's purse, played hooky from school in the afternoon and not returning until after dark. Mrs. Phelps eventually asked for Rachel to be placed in another home, but she continued to maintain contact with her through letters and occasional visits.

Child Welfare Services worker then recommended that Rachel be placed in group home care to address her behavior problems. Placed in a RCL 10 girls' program, Rachel initially made some progress and then began associating with known gang members at

the local school and insisted on wearing “colors. Group home staff tried to dissuade her but eventually felt she should be moved to another setting for her own safety. In the next group home, Rachel fought with a supposed “rival” gang member also placed in the home. She returned to county emergency shelter while awaiting a new placement. While placed there, Rachel spit at and threatened a male shelter care worker and was referred to Probation.

At age 12, Rachel was placed in another group home. Within three months, she began cutting school and fighting with other residents at the group home. In one instance, a group home staff member attempted to break up a fight between Rachel and another resident and Rachel gave the worker a black eye.

Interview with Minor:

Rachel has been placed in a group home treatment program that specializes in the treatment of female adolescents who have been victims of sexual abuse trauma. In the past several months, she has been working hard on her trauma issues in therapy and has successfully connected with an adult female mentor who volunteers at the program. Bev Daly, who works at a local supermarket, volunteers her time because of her own history of sexual abuse as a child. Rachel reports that she is doing well at school and was given permission to search for a job with her mentor’s assistance.

Rachel stated that she wants to return to live with her grandmother and attend local high school while preparing to be emancipated. She stated that she does not see the purpose in legal guardianship or adoption, since she is almost an adult.

Rachel is focused on emancipation and has worked for three months at a local bowling alley as a counter sales person. She does not handle money. She also works part time at a coffee shop near the group home and has earned about \$480.00. She has started a savings account that now has a balance of \$337.00.

Interview with Paternal Grandmother:

Paternal grandmother Dorothy Phelps stated that she lost contact with her son many years ago after he got involved with drugs. It has been her heartbreak that her son failed to become a successful adult and she wants to do anything she can to help Rachel through her problems.

When Rachel lived with her grandmother, she had difficulty in connecting emotionally with any adult and was secretive and manipulative in her behaviors. Mrs. Phelps and her former husband, Don Phelps, separated and divorced when they fought bitterly over Rachel's provocative behavior with Mr. Phelps.

Dorothy does not know Rachel's mother well, but considers her a sociopath who preyed upon her son. She knows that Rachel's mother had many relationships with men before and after her relationship with Brian.

Dorothy stated that she visits Rachel regularly in her group home setting and hopes to be reconsidered for care when Rachel returns to the community. She is reluctant to assume legal guardianship or adoption out of concerns that if Rachel commits another offense in the community, she will be liable for the restitution.

Interview with the maternal aunt

Alyssa's sister and Rachel's maternal aunt Shelley Jackson was contacted about her willingness to provide Rachel with a permanent home. Shelley has had regular contact with all three children over the years and would be willing to consider placement of Rachel in her home (she has four young children and is a full-time homemaker) as long as Rachel's therapist can assure her that she will not pose a threat to her own biological children.

Shelley is aware that Rachel's mother suffered from a long-term heroin addiction that led her into drug sales and other desperate efforts to obtain money for drugs, including armed robbery. Shelley stated that both she and Alyssa were victims of sexual abuse by their maternal step-grandfather for 11 years and while she sought help to deal with this trauma, Alyssa never got over this abuse. Alyssa went from one violent man to another during her adolescence and adulthood. When Rachel was born, Alyssa exposed her to unsafe men and violent episodes.

Interview with Child Welfare Services:

According to Child Welfare Services records, Rachel's mother and father were never married. Their relationship was brief and Rachel's mother Alyssa became pregnant. When asked about the whereabouts of Rachel's father, Alyssa stated she does not know where Brian is and his mother has been secretive about his whereabouts for many years. He was last known to reside in Arizona.

While in the care of Child Welfare Services, Rachel was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder at the age of 11 years and has been treated by several therapists. Due to the frequency of placement disruptions, however, Rachel never remained with the same therapist for more than a few months, making real progress slow.

Rachel qualified for special education services at the age of 13. Her behavioral problems combined with delays in written language comprehension qualified her for special education services. She has a current Individualized Education Plan.

During her time in care under the supervision of Child Welfare Services, Rachel has been healthy with no chronic health concerns. She suffered with a bout of Valley Fever this spring and her lung function continues to be compromised as a result.