

Case 8 – Patience Robinson

Youth: Patience Robinson

Gender: Female

School: On-site high school, Level 14 group home

Age: 14

SSN: 123-00-4567

Ethnicity: Iroquois/African American

Language: English

Family Information

Mother: Serenity Lawrence

Address: 123 Concord Court
Richmond, CA

Ethnicity: African American

Age: 37

Employment: TANF benefits, sanctioned for failure to participate in services

Father: Edward Greyfeather

Address: 66 Shoreline Road
Fortuna, CA

Ethnicity: Iroquois/African American

Age: 41

Employment: Commercial fisherman

Sibling Information:

Sibling Name: Bernetta Robinson

Age: 18

Sibling Name: Robert Robinson

Age: 17

Sibling Name: Daneesha Robinson

Age: 16

Sibling Name: Nanette Lawrence

Age: 15

Sibling Name: LaRon Lawrence

Age: 13

Sibling Name: Troy Lawrence

Age: 11

Sibling Name: Anthony Lawrence

Age: 8

Sibling Name: Tina Johnson

Age: 2

Current Referral/Circumstances:

Patience Robinson is placed at a RCL 14 mental health treatment facility with an on-site school. Patience was first placed on formal probation following a series of serious assaults on group home staff members in three different placements. One assault resulted in her therapist sustaining a broken clavicle.

Patience is developmentally delayed and has been assessed with borderline intellectual functioning and associated behavioral problems. As a result of a long history of deprivation and neglect, Patience also suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

In the most recent incident, Patience and a co-resident were involved in a disruptive incident that required law enforcement intervention. These two young women began running up and down the halls, eventually secluding themselves in a quiet room. Staff locked the doors and the girls began vandalizing the walls. When staff allowed the girls out of the room, Patience punched one staff member on the side of the face. As several other staff members intervened, Patience continued to kick and punch other staff members. Once Patience was released from restraint, she left the facility without permission, but returned a few minutes later.

Prior Juvenile Probation History:

Patience first came to the attention of probation as a result of an assault on a staff member at ABC Group Home in San Francisco. The court ordered that Child Welfare Services continue to serve Patience's placement needs at that time but that probation offer informal services.

Within three months, Patience was referred to Probation for petty theft and vandalism of a local convenience store. Once again, Patience was referred to participate in community programs as a consequence.

Eventually, Patience was charged with a misdemeanor count of making a criminal threat (PC 422) and the court ordered that she be served by Probation in placement.

Child Welfare/Juvenile Dependency Information:

Child Welfare Services records show that between 2009 and 2015, the family was investigated for six referrals for allegations of general neglect and physical abuse. Two were sustained and community referral made and the other four were closed as inconclusive.

In April 2015, Patience, her older sister and several half-siblings were removed from the care of their mother and Patience's stepfather due to "deplorable living conditions" and a sustained period of caretaker absence. After 12 months of Family Reunification services, of which neither parent consistently participated, the court terminated FR services for Patience's mother and her half-sibling's father and the children were placed in long-term foster care.

Due to lack of staff to cover CW caseloads, no efforts to locate Patience's birth father were made during the reunification period.

Interviews with Minor:

During interviews with her probation officer, Patience struggled to understand why staffs at her treatment facility and her probation officer are again considering her placement situation. She minimized her participation in the incident, stating that her co-resident was largely responsible for the vandalism and she was just defending herself when being restrained.

Patience asked the probation officer to consider placing her with her mother and half siblings. She stated she feels ready to go home now. She also wants her probation officer to put her in touch with her father as a possible placement.

During the interview, Patience showed obvious anxiety and moved around the interview room, begging the probation officer to take her to McDonald's for a special meal.

Patience stated she has been doing well in school for the past month and loves her new teacher. She hates doing homework, but likes to participate in class. While she loves to shoot baskets with her therapist during their session, she has not earned the privilege to participate in group sports yet.

Prior to the incident, Patience had completed three of four phases in the **RCL 14** program and she had been getting along well with her peers. At times, she can be very supportive of her peers and is capable of being a good role model for others.

Interviews with Parents

The probation officer interviewed Patience's mother by telephone. She lives several counties away from where Patience is placed. She has successfully reunited four younger siblings born during her legal marriage to Wendell Lawrence as part of the county's Wraparound program. She is residing with Earl Johnson and they have one child, Tina, who is 2 years old. She has never legally divorced Mr. Lawrence. The mother and Mr. Lawrence are currently unemployed and receiving TANF benefits and food stamps.

The mother stated she was born in Palo Alto, CA and lived there much of her life until she relocated three years ago to Richmond with her current partner.

The mother reports that she and Patience's father were never married. They lived together for several years in Palo Alto, CA, during which time Patience and her older sister Daneesha were born. The mother reports she has two older children born to another father, who are currently incarcerated at the local Juvenile Justice Campus for armed robbery and making terrorist threats.

As a result of the care of her younger children, Patience's mother has been unable to attend therapy and counseling sessions at Patience's placement and has difficulty in communicating with her probation officer because of intermittent telephone service. When she can, she participates in therapy sessions with Patience over the telephone. The mother stated that she is frustrated with Patience's unwillingness to change her aggressive behavior so that she can return home like her siblings.

Probation staff conducted an absent parent search and located Patience's birth father in Fortuna, California. He and Patience's mother separated and lost contact not long after Patience's birth. He was surprised, some 13 years later, to learn about the circumstance involving his youngest daughter's disruptive childhood.

Mr. Greyfeather works long hours on a commercial fishing boat out of Eureka. He stated that county Child Support Services have attached his wages to pay off the welfare debt that Patience's and Daneesha's mother has accumulated over the past few years and he rents a small room in Fortuna. Mr. Greyfeather stated that he is a member of the Iroquios tribal community and his parents live on the reservation in New York State.

Interview with Group Home Therapist:

Patience's group home therapist stated that Patience's borderline intelligence, impulsiveness and reaction to trauma has resulted in her being easily influenced by others. She is prone to running away without any plan if prompted by another resident to leave the placement.

Patience longs to fit in with her peers and feels isolated and different because of the hygiene issues associated with nightly bedwetting. She seeks approval from group home staff and therapists and longs for a supportive adult connection. She tries hard to please the counselors and teachers in her placement, then becomes angry and frustrated and acts out aggressively.

She has been diagnosed by the residential treatment program to suffer from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Intermittent Explosive Disorder and Enuresis.

Health concerns include problems with obesity and high cholesterol.

The therapist has spoken several times with the mother during telephone counseling sessions. She appears to be distrustful of public agencies after having her children removed from her care. She appears to be making an effort to connect with Patience any way she can manage. Patience longs to be reunited with her mother and siblings and hopes to eventually return to her mother's home.

Patience has an active IEP, which includes services for her mental health problems. She has been fully engaged in services and her attitude and behavior have greatly improved over the past year. Patience receives Occupational and Vocational Therapy services through the area Regional Center and staff are working with her to improve her ability to navigate in the community without supervision. She participates in Independent Living Skills classes and is employed through the Work Ability program at Ace Hardware.