

JESSE'S STORY

Jesse is 14 years old. His mother referred him to the CPPC site, as he was considered uncontrollable, truant and delinquent. Jesse had not been attending school for the past three months and had been attending only sporadically since the beginning of the school year. There is concern that he is severely depressed. The police have been called to the family's apartment numerous times in the last three months. Cindy, Jesse's mother, placed the calls when Jesse and older brother would be fighting with each other, punching holes in the walls, and threatening her. The neighbors also made phone calls to the police for noise, abusive language, property damage and threats to others by the boys.

Jesse lives with his mother and his older brother, Josh. Josh, who is almost 18 years old, quit school at age 16 years and has not returned. He is unemployed at present, and has had at least ten jobs since he quit school. He drinks, uses drugs and causes problems at home when he is intoxicated or under the influence. He has told social workers that he wants to get a job working on cars, but so far has not been able to find a job that is willing to train him. The family has been involved with Child Welfare since the boys were 10 and 13 for various delinquencies including shoplifting, assault, truancy, underage drinking, drug possession and disorderly conduct.

Jesse and Josh's mother, Cindy has struggled as a single parent, trying to raise the boys alone. Their father, Jordan, who lives in Madison, Wisconsin, contacts them sporadically, stopping in town on his way through the state. He has not seen them for more than a few hours, a few times a year since he left the home when the boys were seven and ten. He does not pay child support and does not stay in one place long enough to be followed up for child support. He has a history of drug and alcohol abuse and Cindy remembers the mention of mental illness in his family. He was extremely abusive to her in front of the boys when they were married, and was physically and verbally abusive to the boys.

Cindy has tried to bring some stability to the family. She has managed to maintain employment in a data entry position at an insurance billing company, but recently has had difficulty getting to work because of the stressful environment at home. She feels she needs to be home to get Jesse to school in the morning and then be home after school to supervise both boys. She is in jeopardy of losing her job. Cindy is very slight in appearance - possibly weighing only 90 pounds. She smokes constantly and, by her own admission, seldom eats. She states it is "nerves," and is under a doctor's care for a possible eating disorder. She is not physically healthy and cries easily. She recently tried to follow through with psychiatric appointment with her clinic, but Jesse and Josh refused to go.

Jesse has not left the house in three months except on occasion to go with Josh cruising. He will spend time on the front porch of the apartment building with the neighbor, Tom, and Tom's dog. Jesse appears very attached to the dog. Most of the time, however, he spends in his room with the shades pulled, smoking, listening to music, playing his guitar, doing drawings and sleeping. He appears to have his days and nights mixed up, and is not interested in changing his schedule. He states he often is angry with his brother for picking on him, and with his mother for "being such a wimp." Most of the time he would just like to be left alone. He states he has thought about killing himself, but that would be "too easy."

Jesse's past school history indicates that he is a very bright young man and did pretty well in school up to age 10 years. He gets bored easily in school and appeared to do best in classes where he would have hands on experiences (science labs, art, music, woodworking etc.) He dislikes most academic subjects, however he seems to like science class. He states that was because the teacher liked him and let him set up the labs for the other kids. He would like to be a musician or draw album covers, both of which he feels he can do now. He has no peer relationship in his school or community at present. His only friend is another 14 year old who lived at their last apartment building. He keeps in contact by phone.

Cindy currently gets little help from her family; however they are concerned about the boy's behaviors. Her parents live in the area, and they used to have the boys over for a weekend a month, but the last time the boys were there they punched holes in the walls and were abusive to the dog. They do not feel equipped to help her, but do provide emotional support. Cindy's sister, Char, has a good rapport with the boys, but is not sure how to help Cindy. Char is very angry with Cindy's ex-husband, the boys' father, as she feels the boys need a father. She describes the boys' father as a "mental case." The only other supports Cindy can identify are two co-workers that are friends, Sharon and Martha. Her neighbor, Tom, who has intervened with the boys when things have escalated, has also been helpful. Both boys appear to respect Tom as he seems to take an interest in them and "doesn't threaten to do things he's not gonna do, like send us away somewhere".