

Unit 6: Fictitious Supplemental Information for Tammy's Story Video

Author's Note: *This supplemental information was written exclusively for use by the University and course HN330. It represents completely fictitious information about Tammy and her son, Bo; who are portrayed in real-life in the PBS documentary video included in HN330. The reason this fictitious information is included in the course is to provide a broader range of personal and environmental strengths and barriers for students to assess for Tammy and her family. This supplemental information is not intended to demean or diminish Tammy and her family in any way; it is solely added for instructional purposes. In real-life Tammy's story does not present the additional information that is included in this supplement. In real-life Tammy's story presents an amazing story of human resilience and perseverance under very difficult circumstances. Students should use this supplemental information as part of the learning process in studying how to conduct person-centered and strengths-based assessments and individualized service plans within the context of an ecological perspective. **Students are encouraged to use all of the information that Bo shares in the supplemental information when completing their assessment assignment in Unit 6***

The video of Tammy's story represents your initial meeting with Tammy and her family. In this meeting you have an opportunity to experience first-hand her challenging living conditions and working conditions. Tammy and her sons present a number of issues that they deal with on a daily basis. There are numerous strengths presented in this initial meeting as well as numerous challenges and barriers to living healthy lives and to being treated with dignity as all human beings deserve. You should watch the video several times and take careful notes on the three ecological levels encompassing this family; the micro, mezzo, and macro. There are relevant factors in all three of these levels represented in the video.

Following your first meeting with Tammy and her family, as portrayed in the video, you determine that Bo, the younger son, will be the primary client that you will provide case management services to. (Bo is the younger son who does not wear a shirt in the video. He is referred to as "Younger Son" in the video transcript). Federal and state regulations require that one primary client be identified in order to begin case management services. In this case, Bo will be your identified client and you will do your best to work with the rest of his family through working with him. Identifying Bo as the primary client does not preclude you from meeting with the rest of his family or members of his extended support system. You will also have regular contact with Tammy, since Bo is 13 years old and a minor.

In your subsequent meetings with Bo, you continue the ecological assessment process to learn as much as possible about his personal strengths and challenges as well as his expanded support system and other key environmental factors that affect his health

and well-being. The more you learn the more you realize what an amazing family Bo is a part of. He was born into a family that had experienced poverty and a lack of education for generations. His older brother Matt is the first in their family to attend High School. Despite this oppressive environment, Bo shares with you several people who are very important role models in his life. Bo's grandparents and his older brother, Matt has been very influential in his life. Bo mentions in the video that he would like to be like his brother Matt and be "popular." In subsequent meetings Bo also shares that he admires all of the awards that his brother has earned and that he would like to be more successful in school. He goes on to talk about his grandparents, Grammy Tina and Grandpa Bill, and how supportive they were to him and his mom when they lived with them. Grandpa Bill acted as a father-figure to Bo when he was young. Bo discusses the difficulties of growing up in a small rural community and how isolating it can feel. Bo describes Grandpa Bill as his one safe-haven when he was younger. Grandpa Bill would spend hours with Bo creating forts out of boxes and sheets and creating amazing imaginary worlds for them to play in. Bo also went to church every Sunday with his grandparents. He reports that he misses the feeling of "community" that he felt from his church family.

It was during one of these conversations about Grandpa Bill that Bo broke down crying and shared how difficult it has been for him to lose both of his grandparents, as well as his father. Both of his grandparents died when he was 9 from health related complications. Grandpa Bill had smoked his whole life and died from lung cancer. Grammy Tina died from complications related to a stroke. Bo has not returned to church since his grandparents' burials. Bo's father died from liver failure, as a result of alcoholism when Bo was 5. Bo reports that he doesn't have many happy memories of his father. He remembers that his father was a yeller and that he would "push his mom" around when he got home from work. Grandpa Bill is who Bo identified as a father figure in his life.

When asked about his friends and support system now, Bo mentions his brother Matt. He also mentions a friend from school who lives down the street. Bo spends most afternoons hanging out at his friend's house. He reports that they play video games and smoke cigarettes. Bo states that he doesn't feel like he fits in at school. He shares that he is ashamed of his clothes and where he lives. He has been the victim of bullying for years. Bo also shares that he often skips school and instead hangs out with his friend down the street.

Bo has not had the benefit of regular health care or even a regular doctor because his family has never had health insurance. His dental situation is very painful. He reports losing several of his teeth to decay, and he is in need of serious dental work at this point.

Another challenging area that Bo shares in your assessment meetings is his history with substances. Bo shares that everyone that he has ever known has smoked cigarettes. He also has shared that his father was an alcoholic. Bo shares that he has been smoking cigarettes since he was 10 and that he has experimented with alcohol in order to "make life easier." He reports that he had his first drink at the age of 11 after his friend suggested that it might relieve some of his tooth pain. He reports that he continues to use alcohol to help him deal with how sad and lonely he feels.

"I feel so good when I drink, like all my other fears and worries melt away." He also reports that he is not addicted to nicotine or alcohol and that he can "stop smoking and drinking whenever I want to. I just don't want to."

Finally, Tammy reports being concerned about Bo's performance in school. She worries that he has missed more days than she knows about. Bo was held back in third and fifth grades and she is worried that he won't make it to High School. Tammy fears that Bo might have difficulties with learning but he has never been tested.

Every time you meet Bo and Tammy they talk about how they want a better life for themselves. Bo reports that he wants to make it to high school, like his brother. He wants to be able to get a job in the future so that he can get out of his current situation. He also reports wanting to feel better about himself and to feel like he fits in. Tammy hopes that case management services will help Bo to accomplish these things.