

SUMMARY AND CASA'S POSITION:

Over the past few months, CASA has seen Ben adapt to his environment at McKinley and that he has a supportive team who responds well to his needs. While he is coping the best he can with his situation, CASA feels that Ben is really struggling with his relationship with his mother and wanting to reconnect with his family, especially his grandmother and sister. CASA also believes that mother and maternal grandmother love and want to support Ben, but are struggling with understanding Ben's behaviors and where he is coming from.

Based on CASA's observations, CASA understands that family is important to Ben. CASA has observed that there is tension between mother and Ben, but feels that they still care for each other. CASA believes that reunification is still in Ben's best interest, and that continued therapy would be important for Ben. Given this, CASA recommends family therapy for Ben and his mother as reunification services continue.

In addition, sports seem to be a healthy coping mechanism for Ben and he would benefit from more opportunities to participate in such activities. CASA and Ben have researched possible after-school sports activities for Ben to participate in and CASA has observed that Ben is very eager to participate.

Additionally, CASA would like to see Ben improve his educational outlook so that he can pursue his goals. CASA feels that a tutoring program may help Ben overcome some of his challenges with math.

CASA has found Ben to be an engaging young man, who has great potential. CASA feels that by addressing Ben's mental needs in both individual and family therapy and focusing on his education, Ben can stabilize his current placement.

Example Recommendations

Please check off the recommendations that would be appropriate for this court report.

Ben to remain suitably placed at McKinley Group Home. ✓

This recommendation is well supported in the summary and position. While the recommendation is not necessary, it can be included in the report.

DCFS to refer Ben and mother to conjoint therapy. ✓

CASA offers supportive information on why this would be beneficial for child therefore, this recommendation is appropriate.

School to schedule IEP meeting as soon as possible. ✗

The CASA is only able to make recommendations for things that the court is able to order, the court is not able to order the school to do anything. Therefore this recommendation is not appropriate.

DCFS to facilitate visitation with maternal grandmother and sister. ✓

CASA mentions the importance of family for Ben and mentions Ben's desires to be reconnected with his grandmother and sister.

DCFS to facilitate Ben's participation in sports, including funding for necessary equipment and uniforms. ✗ ✓

While this recommendation is not wrong it is likely not to be approved because it's too vague. The CASA needs to provide more information about the sports program and make a specific recommendation. For example: DCFS to facilitate Ben's participation in baseball and to provide funding including \$50 for enrollment and \$100 for uniforms.

DCFS to ensure that mother completes her parenting classes. ✗

The report and recommendations need to be child focused- not parent focused. Additionally we can't make mother do anything.

DCFS to assist Ben in enrolling in a tutoring program for math. ✓

CASA points out Ben's challenges with math and the need for additional support.

Reunification services for mother and Ben to continue. ✓

CASA reports progress made by mom and the need for additional services.

DCFS to find a new placement for Ben as soon as possible. ✗

This recommendation contradicts the first recommendation and it's not supported.

Therapist to provide Trauma-Informed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to Ben. ✗

The CASA is only able to make recommendations for things that the court is able to order, the court is not able to order the therapist to do anything.

DCFS to provide funding for Ben to have a laptop. ✗

This recommendation is not supported at all, CASA makes no mention of the need of a laptop.