

Owen and His Family

Owen is a 13-year-old boy with mild to moderate developmental delays. He is diagnosed with Anxiety Disorder and meets the clinical definition of Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED). He experienced repeated physical abuse from birth to age 4 by an uncle who was living with the family at the time. As a result of the abuse, Owen was hospitalized several times as an infant. Owen has nightmares about his abuse, often refuses to go to bed, and seldom gets a good night's sleep. He also gets extremely anxious when he sees men who remind him of his uncle, and is uncomfortable in large or busy public settings. A family physician prescribed medication to address his anxiety, and also recommended Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which has not been pursued yet.

Owen's mother, Jane drinks alcohol on a daily basis. Family, friends, and service providers are concerned. She admits she likes to "relax with a few glasses of wine now and then", but doesn't want the team to address this as an issue. One of the concerns is safe transportation for Owen – Mom is currently the primary provider of transportation for Owen to school and appointments.

Owen misses an average of 1 – 2 school days a week. Owen says it's because Mom doesn't wake up in time to take him; Jane says it's because Owen refuses to go. As a result, he is not progressing toward many of the achievement goals of his Individual Education Plan (IEP). His teacher shared that Owen really enjoys drawing, and that he gets a lot of pleasure out of sharing his drawings with others.

Jane expresses she has trouble "keeping track" of Owen. Some evenings he leaves the house with a neighborhood friend and doesn't come home until 9:00 or later. Jane says it doesn't matter how much she yells at Owen, he just doesn't listen. A month ago, they vandalized a storefront, breaking a window and damaging a door. As a result, Owen is involved in the Juvenile Justice system; his social worker made the referral to the Coordinated Services Team (CST) initiative.

Owen's grandmother lives nearby and was very supportive and involved in the past, but felt taken advantage of and hasn't been involved in the family's life in months. Jane says her only support is her best friend Sue; she and Sue meet at the corner bar several nights a week. Jane used to enjoy exercising and had friends at the local health club, but stopped going because she couldn't afford a membership. Owen used to enjoy being involved in Boy Scouts, but stopped going about a year ago.