

Darla

In September of 2013, Darla was reported as a runaway. When contacted by law enforcement, she indicated that she had run away because her cousin, who also lived in her home, was sexually abusing her. Law enforcement admitted her into Polinsky Children's Center. She was subsequently interviewed and reported being raped and molested by the cousin. She subsequently recanted. When later asked about the recantation Darla indicated that she was molested, but that because she and her mom lived with her family (and molester) she and her mother could not remain there if she did not recant. She indicated that she did not wish for she and her mother to become homeless or to be removed from her mother's care so she recanted her previous statements. While being interviewed by the social worker, the social worker observed numerous visible scars on her arms and multiple healing superficial cuts on both arms and upper right thigh. The minor admitted to cutting herself. She further disclosed that she suffered from an eating disorder as students at school, in addition to her mother, commented negatively about her weight. No further law enforcement or child protection services were given and she remained with her mom.

Darla was again arrested on 1/1/14 for shoplifting at Wal-Mart. She was arrested with another minor female. At the time of her arrest, she was very disrespectful towards the arresting officer and thought the situation was funny. When questioned, the minor admitted to ditching school and to entering Wal-Mart to steal. She also told police she's stolen merchandise in the past. A social worker started investigating to see what if any interventions should be provided.

During the social worker's investigation, on 2/8/14, Darla was stopped by loss prevention officers in Macy's after being observed taking tags off clothes and concealing them in her purse. She then walked out of the store without paying for the items. When questioned by police, Darla said that she'd been staying with a friend "Danny" (whose last name she didn't know) and that she'd run away from her mom. Darla reported that she needed a change of clothes but did not want to return home because that would start another argument with her mom. During questioning by police, Darla's mood changed from calm, to crying uncontrollably, to angry and then belligerent. The police contacted the mother and the mother indicated that she had no transportation to pick up the minor, so the police drove her home.

Darla is now 15 ½.

History

After Darla's first arrest (in January 2014), a meeting was held with probation, Darla, her mom and the minor's social worker. The mother reported that she was "pissed and mad" when she learned about her daughter's behavior because she should have been in school that day.

The mother had attempted to give her consequences for missing school but Darla either runs away or cuts herself. The mother then reported that Darla cut herself the last weekend and required hospitalization. Per the mother, Darla has been cutting herself for the last 3 years. There was a recent homicide in their garage wherein a friend of her nephew was shot and Darla was on the property when the incident occurred. Darla did not witness the shooting but did see the body before the police arrived. This incident was described a drug transaction and the home is known as a home with frequent drug activity. Additionally, another female cousin had recently passed away.

The cousin was interviewed and admitted to engaging in sexualized behavior with Darla but reported it was consensual and consisted of "mostly groping". The cousin denied that Darla ever told him to stop and seemed "surprised" by the allegations.

When interviewed in January, 2014 Darla admitted that she first drank alcohol at 12 and last drank alcohol one month prior. She admitted consuming alcohol once every two months. She also admitted that she first smoked marijuana at 12 and last used one week prior and smokes about 3 times per week. She has experimented with cocaine and heroin on two occasions within the last month and once experimented with mushrooms and Ecstasy at 14. Darla admits to being truant at school and that she's been suspended from school for fighting but that she is bullied at school and the school does "nothing about it". She feels that she has no one to hang out with at school so she does not see the point of going.

The Agency felt they had no other choice but to keep Darla with her mother because it was thought that Darla would only run away from foster placements. Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) were put into place and have attempted to work with Darla and her mom. Darla is now an active dependent of the juvenile court and has an open probation case due to her shoplifting. She has both a social worker and probation officer.

Child Welfare History:

Darla and her mom are both Caucasian. Darla does not know who her father is. Darla has a previous CPS history in another county. From 1/2003 to 8/2004, she was removed from her mom at age 4, due to neglect and the mother's drug use. She did not return to her mom's care. During this time she had 4 different foster placements until she was then placed under guardianship with her grandparent's (out of state). She was out of the child welfare system during this time, she did not have regular contact with her mom. While with her grandparents there was a voluntary case (no information about what form of abuse was available) from 4/2006 until 11/2006 and that was closed due to the participants being non-compliant. The grandparents later died and Darla was sent to live with an uncle. She remained with her uncle from the age of 9 to 12 and then was returned to live with her mom. No information was available as to why she did not remain with her uncle and she no longer has any contact with her uncle.

Besides the history mentioned, there are 19 closed referrals for Darla. It is not clear from the referrals whether the abuse occurred or not.

Mother's Current Circumstance

When interviewed the mother indicated that she smokes marijuana every day and had experimented with methamphetamines. She denied smoking either around Darla. She did not have a medical marijuana card. She reported suffering from a degenerative disc disease, fractured back and manic depression and other conditions requiring her to take at least 10 different medications on a daily basis. The mother had multiple scars on both her hands and arms and admitted that she "chews" on herself. She admitted to doing this when stressed and has attempted suicide on two occasions. Due to the mother's health issues she does not work and receives social security. With respect to her daughter's disclosure of molest, she did not appear to believe her daughter because she's "changed her story so many times".

For Darla's most recent probation hearing, the mother and Darla did not appear. The court ordered a warrant be issued for Darla. It was later determined that the mother was driving Darla to court and got into two accidents on the way to court and was subsequently arrested for Driving Under the Influence.