

seemed spared being the direct target of their biological mother's rage. did recall one year, on St. Patrick's Day, while still living with her biological mother, she pinched her older brother as is often the custom. remembers her mother grabbing and holding her around the waist while repeatedly slapping her face as a punishment. shared that she often slept in her Dad's room because she was afraid of her biological mother. reported that her mother would frequently 'beat on us' while yelling and screaming. One most notable incident in s mind was when her biological mother became enraged and grabbed a kitchen knife and began chasing her father. was terrified witnessing this but followed her father's direction to go upstairs with her siblings. reported her biological mother then locked herself in the bathroom, refusing to come out and was threatening to kill herself.

and T.K. shared, that they could not remember receiving medical, dental or vision care while living with their biological mother.

shared her experience of her recent two hour visit with her biological mother. stated that it was 'weird' because although her biological mother was stating she "missed us" that she had "never been a bit nice to us in our entire life." stated her biological mother stated how much she "loved us" which said was "weird" because her biological mother "never did that before."

stated she is scared and frightened that her biological mother will "steal me away" and "never give me back." stated "hopefully she doesn't come back." It was reported by the parent/step-parent that following the two hour visit, remained emotionally unsettled for several days, having 'meltdowns' over trivial issues.

I have repeatedly used the term 'biological mother' throughout this report as both girls refuse to refer to their mother as their mother citing the lack of any emotional connection to their mother now or in the past. They call her by her first name when referring to her while having other disparaging names for her when they are recalling abuse or frightening incidents.

They are in agreement that they cannot recall a single instance of having fun with or feeling loved by their biological mother. T.K. stated, 'she never even baked cookies with us.'

It is alarming to presume that would be expected to resume contact with her biological mother after reportedly almost a two year absence from her life with the exception of an occasional phone call. stated she did not want ever to talk to her biological mother on the phone but was often "made to" by her parent/step-parent. The disclosures of abuse/violence that both sisters shared as victims and witnesses is incomprehensible. Neither sister was able to recall any CPS investigations/interviews as it appears none of this abuse was ever reported or noted by school personnel or other adults involved in their lives. Their disclosures, in session, were not something that could now be reported to CPS as they had been safely out of their biological mother's life for some time and reportedly their biological mother had relocated out of the country.

It is clearly not in s best interests to be expected to resume a relationship with her biological mother at this time. Her emotional and physical safety are of great concern should she do so. She is able to clearly and unequivocally indicate her fear for her safety when she is



with her biological mother. It would seem indicated that if [REDACTED]'s biological mother wishes to resume a relationship with her, that first these instances of abuse/violence as reported by both girls need to be further discussed/disclosed. Psychological evaluations, parenting assessments and reunification therapy sessions might be some indicated outcomes of those discussions. Children rarely misrepresent the level of violence and abuse in their home. They are often relieved to finally be able to tell and talk about it and understand that they are now safe. Both T.K. and [REDACTED] were able to discontinue therapy when they arrived at that point resuming briefly following their biological mother's unexpected visit. T.K. will now be allowed to determine her own relationship status with her biological mother however [REDACTED] will need further protection until a clearer picture can be established about the risks/benefits of a relationship with her biological mother.

Respectfully,

*Dawn Brennan* LCPC



March 5, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dawn Brennan, LCPC (licensed clinical professional counselor) and I have been in private practice in the state of Montana for 18 years. I have been asked by the parent/step-parent of T.K. (DOB 3/7/01) and [REDACTED] to summarize their time in therapy with me. A release of information has been provided to facilitate the sharing of this information with their mediation attorney.

T.K. began coming to therapy in February of 2018 and completed eighteen sessions. T.K. was struggling with a number of therapeutic issues but primarily was working to restore her sense of value/self-worth. T.K. focused primarily on her childhood/adolescence while still living with her biological mother. T.K. described her biological mother as uncaring, unloving and detached. T.K. could not recall a single instance of feeling loved or nurtured by her biological mother. T.K. described witnessing almost daily incidents of domestic violence/arguing between her father and biological mother that often ended with her biological mother hitting her father, throwing objects at him or smashing/breaking household items. T.K. described her biological mother's behaviors as 'crazy'.

T.K. also described incidents of violence directed at an older sibling, once seeing her biological mother throw that sibling against the refrigerator after becoming enraged at her for wearing a necklace that belonged to her mother without permission. T.K. described incidents when her biological mother would punch, hit, slap and kick her and her siblings when her biological mother would become enraged. T.K. described hearing her biological mother scream obscenities at an older sibling, calling her a "cunt", "bitch" and "whore".

T.K. stated her biological mother worked from home. She described the work as being on the computer talking with men about sex. At times, T.K. would see the computer screen which was not located in a private area of the home. T.K. described what she believed to be animated figures on screen performing sex acts on each other. She found it 'disgusting and gross.' Most disturbingly, T.K. described an incident that occurred in the backyard of their home. T.K. was with her biological mother helping with a yard/garden chore when her mother became enraged, grabbed T.K. by the neck and forced her to the ground. She then proceeded to wrap a garden hose around T.K.'s neck while trying to force the running hose down her throat. T.K. said she did not tell her father about this incident but witnessed her biological mother repeat the same abusive action with her younger brother.

T.K. has stated repeatedly and emphatically that she is looking forward to turning eighteen because it will mean she never has to see or talk to her biological mother again.

Regarding [REDACTED], I began seeing her in January of 2018 and completed twelve sessions. Primary concerns being expressed by the parent/step-parent were the lasting effects of growing up in a violent home. [REDACTED] experienced and witnessed many of the same incidents described by T.K.