

## MODULE 2 – VIGNETTE PART I

Mother's Name: **Patty**                      Father's Name: **Robert**  
Children's Names, Gender and Age: **Eddie M-7; Ruth, F-5**  
Child/Family Ethnicity: Hispanic

Family Description: Patty (40) and Robert (44) have been married for more than 20 years, having Eddie (7) and Ruth (5) long into their marriage. A complaint was anonymously called into child welfare alleging that their children were at risk of abuse or neglect due to parental alcohol and other drug abuse, and a decision was made to place them into foster care. When child welfare professionals checked out the allegations, the children were found to have been left alone overnight while both parents were out seeking and using cocaine. Patty and Robert both subsequently tested positive for cocaine and alcohol use.

### Presenting Issues:

This family had no known contact with any public system prior to the allegations of child neglect due to drug abuse. Eddie and Ruth were placed together in foster care after removal into the home of Barry and Teresa. The foster mother, Teresa, reported unusual and difficult behaviors by Eddie. She says he withdraws periodically "into a shell", becoming non-responsive to verbal or physical inquiries. During the past month he has started banging his head against the wall and picking sores on his skin with his fingernails. When Teresa or her husband, Barry, tries to physically stop him from these behaviors, he does not act out against them, but struggles mightily to continue hurting himself. He has oozing sores on his arms, legs and torso from his picking, and he has given himself bruises and bumps in several areas on his head.

Patty married at 17 years old to "get away from" an alcoholic father. Patty's mother married Patty's father when she was 16 years old. While drinking, which was most evenings, Patty's father would become physically abusive with Patty's mother and verbally abusive to Patty and her siblings. Patty began smoking marijuana occasionally and drinking 3 or 4 beers a day to "feel better." Patty admits she uses cocaine but does not believe it is a big problem in her life and doesn't think it affects her children.

## MODULE 2 – VIGNETTE PART II

Mother's Name: **Patty**                      Father's Name: **Robert**  
Children's Names, Gender and Age: **Eddie M-7; Ruth, F-5**  
Child/Family Ethnicity: Hispanic

Since the removal of her children, Patty has filed for divorce from Robert, has successfully completed a 10-day detoxification program, and is now actively participating in an outpatient treatment program and several local A.A. groups. She has done everything asked of her and appears to be succeeding very well. Robert entered a detoxification program at the same time as Patty, but he left against medical advice after 5 days – he has not returned to treatment, has not responded to child welfare efforts to involve him, and has not seen his children since their placement in foster care 9 weeks ago. Patty has visited her children regularly and just recently began seeing them once a week at the foster home with Teresa and a social worker present. Teresa has agreed to try to mentor Patty. Patty indicates that Eddie's behavior is new to her and unexplainable, and she expresses sincere worry about what is happening to him. She believes it is just a result of his removal from her and that he will be fine when returned to her care.

Treatment/Service/Support History: This family has not previously been involved in any known services. It is known that a relative made the original complaint about the care of Eddie and Ruth, but no relatives have come forward to care for the children or be involved in their care, and Patty has not asked for the involvement of any family members. Patty has appeared to completely turn her life around, beginning with a detox program and now continuing active treatment and support. She seems to have a very limited social network around her and development of those natural supports is part of the current service plan. Robert has refused to participate in recommended services and appears disinterested in further involvement with his children. Eddie's teacher (first grade) states that she has not seen any of the behaviors his foster mother is describing, but expresses concern about the sores and bruising.