

Case Simulation 2: Physical Abuse

Fact Pattern:

- Anna, a 6-year-old child, has been in foster care for 60 days after being removed from the home of her parents, Mark Brown (father) and Emily Brown (mother), following a report to the DCS hotline.
- A school counselor noticed multiple bruises and scratches on Annas back, arms, and legs during a routine health check at school.
- When questioned, Anna stated that her father “hits her with a belt” when she is "bad" and that it “happens a lot.”
- She also said that she told her mother, but “Mom says to be good and it won’t happen.”
- CAC conducted an interview with Anna. She gave consistent statements about the beatings.
- DCS Caseworker completed a thorough investigation including an interview of Anna and her parents during the initial contact at the child’s home, interview of teachers and her school counselor, review of the child’s medical records.
- Father denied any abuse and claimed any discipline was “normal spanking” and that bruises must have come from playground accidents or roughhousing. Mother said she never saw any severe bruising and was unaware of the seriousness of Anna’s injuries.
- Medical Records of Anna:
 - ER report documenting bruising in various stages of healing.
 - Pediatrician’s expert opinion that injuries are consistent with non-accidental trauma (patterned injuries consistent with being struck with an object).
- The School Counselor will testify to observing injuries and Anna's spontaneous disclosure.
- Father is under active investigation for Aggravated Child Abuse. No indictment yet, but criminal charges are expected.

Discuss whether the immediate risk to the child has been removed to allow the child to return home (family to reunify) safely with continued oversight; create a transition plan from custodial to non-custodial.