

Case Study Example

Jennifer arrived for a scheduled home visit with the Howard family. At that point, she had been working with them for over a year. She could tell when she walked in that the mom, Quinn, was stressed. Quinn was sweeping the floors when she first arrived and was mumbling to herself about the mess the kids had made. Jennifer noticed the house was in its typical state of moderate disarray. Jennifer asks Quinn if she is feeling stressed or if something had happened before her arrival. Quinn was curt. "No", she stated, "I'm just sick of this mess!" Jennifer validated her frustrations stating, "It's hard to be the only adult and responsible for most of the cleanup." Quinn didn't respond but came and sat next to Jennifer on the couch. Two of the children, Timmy and his younger brother, were crying and whining, trying to climb on Quinn's lap. Quinn responded, "Stop", periodically, but the children continued to try to get Quinn's attention. Jennifer is familiar with this behavior in the kids from past experiences and became worried that the children were hungry. She asks about whether they had eaten that day. Quinn says that they did, "earlier". Jennifer wondered out loud if they might be getting hungry again. Quinn ignored her, grumbling at the children to go play and to "get off" her. Jennifer attempted to follow Quinn's cue and pulled out the toys she brought for the session. Not only were the children not interested in the toys, Quinn was also not engaged. When typically, she would get down with the children and start to play, she remained on the couch, becoming distracted by her phone. Jennifer again asked Quinn about how she was feeling that day. Quinn said she was just tired. Jennifer offered to give the children their milk cups and Quinn agreed that it would be okay to do so. Quinn props the one year old on the couch with his cup and he devours it, dosing on and off throughout, and spilling the milk on his shirt. Quinn noticed the spilled milk and became enraged, tearing the shirt off the child. Jennifer comments, "oh, dear! He was so hungry and spilled while drinking his milk." Quinn doesn't respond to Jennifer. She takes his shirt off and starts to wipe the spill with it. The child got off the couch, crying from the commotion. Quinn picked him up, and roughly set him back on the couch. He got up again, his crying intensified, and Quinn shoved him back on the couch. Jennifer says, "Quinn, that is too rough!" Quinn turns around and firmly says, "Ms. Jennifer, I don't need you telling me what to do and you can leave now!" then picks up the broom and starts sweeping again.

1. How do you think Jennifer is feeling at various moments (when first getting in the home, when Quinn is rough with the child, and when Quinn tells her to leave)?
2. What would you have wanted to do or say if it were you in the session?
3. What would be your next step (once mom tells you to leave)?
4. What do you imagine Jennifer would need from supervision after this session?