

Scenario #1 “Calvin”

Calvin is a 9-year-old boy who is currently living in foster care. He was removed from his mother's home several months ago. His mother, a single parent, was struggling with mental illness and was struggling to care for Calvin. When Calvin was younger, his mother would drop him off at his grandmother's home when she got overwhelmed, but now grandmother says she can't handle Calvin's challenging behaviors. A county CPS worker got involved with the family when the school called to report that Calvin had missed a week of school and they could not get ahold of his mother. When the worker went to the home she found there was no food for Calvin or his mother and she was disheveled and appeared to be hearing voices. Calvin's mother was admitted to a psychiatric hospital and Calvin was placed in foster care. The plan is for Calvin to be able to go back home when his mother becomes mentally stable and has the services she needs to support both herself and Calvin.

Overall, Calvin is doing well in foster care and has weekly visits with his mother. He has a Coordinated Services Team (CST) that includes his social worker, his mom, his foster mom, the school. He is also doing well at school with some modifications including a designated teacher he can talk to when he gets upset. There is concern that when Calvin gets back from visiting with his mother he begins to become more aggressive and difficult for his foster parents to manage for a day or two. In school, he also tends to be more disruptive in the classroom.

Calvin has diagnoses of anxiety and depression. His symptoms tend to increase if he senses his mother is distressed. He cares deeply for his mother and took care of her the best he could when she was struggling. He has also started asking a lot of questions about his father, who lives three hours away, and whom he hasn't seen in 2 years. Calvin's father is Native American and left the area and returned to the reservation when a restraining order was filed against him for domestic abuse on Calvin's mother. Calvin has expressed interest in visiting his father and in learning more about his Native American heritage. Calvin gets very upset when he is told he can't see his father. He doesn't understand why. The last time he asked, he began to get aggressive – throwing and destroying things in the foster home. Calvin's foster parents have asked you for help in managing his behavior and preventing further escalation.