



Community Collaborative for Youth and Families

www.thecommunitycollaborative.org

Resilience Action Planning with Youth and Families

Case Scenario

3/22/2019

Meet Zach

Zach is a 17 year old white male, who is currently in foster care. Zach is the middle child of two brothers. His older brother, Adam, is 20, and currently on active adult probation for selling marijuana, and currently under a no contact order with their mother due to a domestic violence incident. His younger brother, Chase, is 10 years old, and still resides with at home with their mother.

Zach had a calm early childhood, being raised by both parents, though they lived in the Olde Forge neighborhood and were surrounded by poverty and occasional crime. His earliest memories are of holidays and playing with his older brother in the backyard. Elementary school was uneventful for Zach, even though he attended several different schools in Stafford County, due to the family moving around. In 4th grade, Zach and the family moved to Colonial Beach, shortly after his younger brother was born. His parents were having issues and began seeing other people, though they lived in the same home. Zach recalls his parents having 'friends' over when the other parent wasn't home. It was around this time that his older brother began getting in trouble at school, and Zach began taking medication for ADHD.

After a year, the family moved to Spotsylvania County, to live closer to his grandparents. His mom and dad were back together at this time, but it didn't last very long. Zach recalls his mom's drinking and his dad's drug use beginning around this time, and his own experimentation with marijuana. He also recalls the first time he was interviewed by Child Protective Services after a fight between his parents got out of control and the Sheriff's Dept was called. He remained a good student through the end of his elementary school days and maintained in middle school, only getting suspended for minor infractions and silly behavioral issues. He recalls using marijuana occasionally with his older brother and friends. When he was 14, his parents finally divorced. He recalls his dad's drug use becoming a serious problem, and his mom turning more and more to alcohol. Zach moved in with his grandparents, as his dad left and did not maintain contact with the family for several years. His mom and his younger brother moved to Fredericksburg.

Zach got his first long term suspension during his freshman year for having marijuana at school. He spent most of the last semester of his freshman year at the alternative school. Zach moved in with his mom for a brief period over the summer but was not able to stay with her fully as she was bouncing between hotels in and around the City. He continued living with his grandparents for most of his sophomore year but was again long term suspended when he was caught selling vaping devices on school grounds. His grandparents then sent him to live with his mother that summer and he transferred to Fredericksburg City Schools.

Zach spent his entire junior year at the alternative school. He became responsible for being the primary caretaker for his younger brother at this point, as his mother worked often in the

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afternoons and evenings. He was occasionally using marijuana and consistently using tobacco products. His mother had developed a significant alcohol problem. He was exposed to emotional and physical abuse due to her addiction. At the end of his junior year, he and some friends stole a wallet, and he got charged. He also learned that his dad had been incarcerated due to his drug use and addiction.

Zach was struggling to follow rules and expectations of the newly imposed court rules and was in constant arguments with his mom. At one point his mom told him that she hoped he would get hit by a truck as he refused to listen to her and follow any rules. He responded by claiming he would rather be dead. These comments led to an evaluation and stay in Snowden for 5 days, and a visit from Child Protective Services. Services and programs were recommended, but Zach's mom did not follow through on any of them. Zach continued to struggle with his home environment, and eventually he broke his house arrest terms and was detained. He was then placed in a group home. His behavior and negative coping mechanisms led to issues at the group home. His mother's lack of involvement, and his failure to comply with the facility rules eventually lead to him being discharged and detained. At his court review, his mother informed the court that she was unwilling to bring him home as she did not feel she could manage his behavior. No other family members had any ability to care for him, and therefore he ended up being placed in foster care.