

# Cheryl - Part 1

Cheryl is five years old. She and her-nine-year old sister were referred to the agency for neglect when neighbors found her trying to cross the street, unsupervised at 10 p.m., on a Saturday evening. The subsequent investigation found that she had been severely, chronically abused, and occasionally neglected.

Her mother was addicted to heroin and used other drugs and alcohol as well. Her mother often locked Cheryl up in the closet for punishment, beat her and left her alone with her nine-year-old sister when she went out partying. The family has no visible means of support. Neighbors think the mother prostitutes herself to earn drug and rent money.

Cheryl and her sister were immediately placed in her aunt’s (Ms. Robertson) care. At the temporary custody hearing, the mother arrived high, and the agency was granted temporary custody of both girls. A referral was made to the Child Welfare Case Management Provider (CWCMP). The children have remained in Ms. Robertson’s home.

Ms. Robertson was not surprised that the agency became involved. She stated that she had been worried about the girls for some time, and that she had kept them overnight on several occasions, when the older sister would call her for help. Ms. Robertson had not reported the situation, hoping to avoid outside intervention.

Ms. Robertson is a single mother with five children. She scrapes by on her salary as a nurse’s aide and child support she receives from her ex-husband. She stated that she loves both girls immensely and is prepared to care for them for “as long as it takes”.

## Discussion Exercise

**For the purpose of this exercise, you will discuss only Cheryl—not her sister:**

*You are the new case manager for the family. Cheryl and her sister have been in the aunt’s home for two weeks.*

*Your supervisor asked you to assess Cheryl’s developmental needs in preparation for developing the case plan.*

**Please discuss and be ready to report out on the following questions:**

1. What would you ask Ms. Robertson about Cheryl's development?
2. How would you make your own observations about Cheryl's development?
3. Where else would you gather additional information about Cheryl's development?