

Hoa's Case Study

You are a protective services caseworker and you were assigned to Hoa Nugent's case. Hoa is a 10-year-old Vietnamese girl who is currently in the 5th grade. She lives with both of her parents and an older brother who is 15 years old. After an investigation was completed, it was determined that no abuse had occurred but that the family was at-risk and in need of services to prevent any abuse from occurring in the future. Hoa's parents legally immigrated to the United States from Vietnam when she was only a few months old. Both of Hoa's parents have very high expectations of her and her brother. Hoa's father works at a local grocery store and her mother is a stay at home mom. Over the past few months, Hoa's personality has changed drastically. She no longer socializes with her peers at school. She sits by herself during lunch and does not play with anyone at recess. In class, she is constantly asking her teacher about how she did on her schoolwork and when she feels she is not doing well on her work, she cries and makes negative statements about herself such as "I am so stupid" or "I will never amount to anything if I can't figure this out". She has even started crying and crouching down if anyone around her raises their voice. The abuse report indicates the reporter denied any signs of physical abuse but was mostly worried about emotional and psychological abuse due to the personality and behavioral changes.

During the investigation, the Department of Children and Families investigator learned that Hoa's older brother takes advanced courses in high school and has a 4.2 grade point average (advance courses allow for GPA's to be higher than a 4.0). He is active in multiple academic clubs at school and his parents are extremely proud of him. The investigator also learned that Hoa had always been a straight A student until she received her first report card in 5th grade. This is when she received her first B and her parents were very unhappy. The investigator also learned that Hoa's parents strongly believe that a good education is the way to success in life. Both of Hoa's parents graduated high school but neither attended college. Hoa's parents believe their own lack of formal education is the reason they struggle financially. They currently live in a small 2-bedroom, 1 bath apartment. Hoa and her brother share a bedroom and Hoa admitted she hears her parents arguing about money frequently. When she received her first B, her parents began telling her she was going to struggle as they do if she did not pull her grades up and be successful like her brother. Hoa told the investigator that she is trying very hard to pull her grades up and make her parents proud of her again.