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Sanchez case

Read the case files for individual members of the family, including client histories, concerns, and goals.

Celia Sanchez

Married to Hector for nearly forty years, Celia Sanchez has been in this country for about two decades. Devoted to her family, Celia has never worked outside the home, and does not drive. She delights in cooking for her children, taking care of the home, and taking care of the grandchildren of her oldest children. Given her desire to stay close to home and family, Mrs. Sanchez has not developed the proficiency with English that her husband has. This has been a barrier to her efforts to care for the family. For example, in the relatively few instances that she has been so ill that she required the services of a physician, she needed her son to go with her to interpret for her. Her ability to participate in parent-teacher conferences has, over the years, been very limited. And when one of her children came in contact with the juvenile justice system, she was unable to understand fully the legal implications of the choices she faced.

Recently, the son of her sister Delores came to the United States from Mexico (see Roberto's history).

The rest of Mrs. Sanchez's extended family all still lives in Mexico. She returned for a brief visit a few years ago for the funeral of her mother, but, given the expense and time involved, she rarely has contact with her siblings, nieces and nephews, and aunts and uncles, even though her extended family was quite close when she was growing up. Mrs. Sanchez has been concerned with how to stretch their money to accommodate the children's needs, as well as her needs and those of her husband. She wanted her husband to apply for food stamps, but he is adamantly opposed, and she is unwilling to go against her husband. She has secretly been obtaining commodities from her Church pantry. Since she is a parishioner at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, her visits there do not raise her husband's suspicions.

Client Concerns:

- She is worried that there is not adequate income for the food the family needs, given the two extra mouths to feed and the variability in Hector's employment, especially during the recent economic downturn.
- Mrs. Sanchez is unable to proficiently understand and communicate in English. The Sanchez family needs more information about the process of permanently adopting Celia's grandson, Joey, especially if their daughter will contest this move.
- Celia is concerned about the tension between her husband and her over the presence of her nephew, Roberto, in their household.

Goals:

- Find additional resources for food and possibly income support

- With Hector's active involvement, seek clarification of the legal issues associated with the presence of Roberto in their home and the issues involved in Joey's adoption
- Enroll in a class for persons learning English as a second language

Junior Sanchez

Junior is the oldest child, married to Lola, and the father of four children, aged two to ten. He lives close to his parents and works in the same job as his father. As the eldest boy in the family, it was always expected that Jr. would honor the family by going to college and "making something of himself." Jr. also wanted this. However, over the years, the tension between the need to bring honor to the family and the reality that money was needed to support everyone prevented him from pursuing this in a timely manner. Although he is older now, and with responsibilities of his own, Jr. is still motivated to go to college and has been taking classes as he can at the local community college. When he graduates from there, he hopes to go to the university close by.

Client concerns:

- Junior's job is unstable in the current economy; his employer has mentioned that layoffs could still come, even though the company has survived the recession.
- Junior lacks a college education, which would help to hedge against the loss of his current employment, but increasing college costs and reductions in available student aid combine to make his goals of obtaining a four-year degree difficult.

Goals:

- Learn more about college programs available in the area for Junior and the loan and grant programs that might finance his education.
- Explore employment options for Lola, Junior's wife, that would accommodate her childcare responsibilities, possibly including a home-based business

Hector Sanchez

Hector Sanchez, 58 years old, is married to Celia and is the father of Junior, Emilia, Vicki, Gloria, Alejandro and Carmen, grandfather to Joey, and uncle to Roberto Salazar. Hector is the family patriarch. He came to this country in 1979 as a young, undocumented agricultural worker. In 1986, encouraged by the passage of law allowing for a federal amnesty program, Hector applied for, and was given a green card, making him a legal, permanent resident. He then applied for the same status on behalf of his wife and the three children they had at the time. They have since had three other children, all citizens of the United States. Hector has never become a citizen, although this is something that has been a lifelong goal of his. At the present time, Hector is working as a laborer for a large construction company. Although he has held this job steadily for the last eighteen months, he is concerned. The company survived the economic

downturn that began in 2008, but income has been sporadic, and the boss has signaled that layoffs may still come. Hector's health is also not what it once was (he now has diabetes and high blood pressure), and his job is physically demanding, which may limit the number of years he can expect to work. Mr. Sanchez is deeply proud that he has never asked for help from the government. Recently, one of the social workers told Mr. Sanchez that his family is eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but Mr. Sanchez would hear none of that. He skips lunch regularly, a serious problem for someone with diabetes, so that there will be more food for the others in his family. He is also trying to explore additional employment opportunities, but, due to his health, he is often tired at the end of the day, and he has a hard time imagining how he could add additional work hours to his week.

Client Concerns:

- Hector is worried that his job is still unstable, due to economic conditions and changes in the construction industry. He is also very worried about what would happen to his family if he becomes disabled or dies prematurely, a real worry given his high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Even working full-time, Hector is unable to meet all of his family's needs in the way that he would like. Their house is small for the number of residents living there, and this adds to his stress.
- Roberto's presence in the house, and his undocumented status, worries Hector. He is not sure what this could mean for his family, especially since the state in which the family lives is considering legislation that would empower local law enforcement, educators, social services, and other personnel to take on immigration enforcement duties.

Goals:

Clearly review Hector's strengths and talents and help him assess whether there is any employment available that he is qualified for and that is likely to be more secure and less stressful

Discuss with Celia, his wife, his feelings about the crowded conditions of the house, with the goal of getting Celia to cooperate in finding a place where Roberto can safely stay

Assess the severity of his health concerns and discuss the importance of stress reduction and healthy nutrition with him and Celia

Begin the process of pursuing citizenship for Hector

Emilia Sanchez

As the eldest daughter, Emilia spent a great deal of her childhood helping her mother take care of the siblings and helping with the housework. Until the age of 14, she was a quiet, compliant child. At that point, however, Emilia began to change. Her mother did not know why and was

too overwhelmed by the care of the younger children to pay close attention, and her father was working a great deal. However, this is the point at which Emilia began an involvement with drugs, notably crack cocaine, which continues to the present. Emilia is the mother of Joey, described below. Following the birth of Joey, Emilia became pregnant again. After much anguish, but with great resolve, Emilia had an abortion. This has resulted in an estrangement from her family: in particular, her parents believe that she has committed a mortal sin, and in the absence of any repentance from her do not want her around their home.

Client Concerns:

- Emilia has been unable to complete treatment for addiction, despite an honest desire to stop abusing drugs.
- Because of her substance abuse history, Emilia lacks job training or work history. She did finish high school, but she has rarely worked since.
- As a Lawful Permanent Resident, Emilia's drug problems could result in her judgment as a person of 'poor moral character', which, under U.S. immigration law, could result in denial of an application for U.S. citizenship, or even her deportation. While Hector and Celia do not understand these risks well, Emilia's siblings, especially Junior and Alejandro, have a better sense of the potential repercussions if Emilia is arrested for drug offenses, but they do not know how to help their sister.
- Emilia is separated from her family due to their rejection of her following her abortion, leaving her with a limited social support system.

Goals:

- Emilia needs to find a drug treatment program that will provide the guidance and supervision required to enable her to get and remain sober.
- She wants to reestablish a relationship with her family.
- In the future, Emilia needs to secure training that would allow her to find a job that pays enough to support Joey and herself.

Vicki Sanchez

When Vicki was 11, social workers from Child Protective Services visited the Sanchez house. Their identified client was actually Emilia; her problems had been brought to their attention by the school. But during that visit, they noted that Vicki's behavior, which included repetitive motions and a failure to respond to her environment, warranted further assessment. They spoke with Vicki's school and discovered that Vicki had, in fact, been attending special classes and was considered autistic. However, Mrs. Sanchez, while aware of a diagnosis of autism, seemed unaware of its ramifications. Speaking through Jr. at the time, she told the social workers that

Vicki had been “touched,” but that she was still able to go to school and that “the other children help her.”

Client Concerns:

Housing

- Uncertainty about where Vicki will live when her parents are no longer able to take care of her

Employment

- Conflict between Vicki's parents, Hector and Celia, over her ability to work
- Lack of information about continuing educational or training services for Vicki as an adult

Social relationships

- Lack of companions of her own age and ability
- Sexual awareness

Goals:

- Develop a plan that will outline Vicki’s future and prepare for the time when her parents are no longer able to care for her.
- Move Vicki toward greater independence as much as the family agrees that she is able, involving Vicki as much as possible in these decisions.
- Find appropriate outside resources for Vicki, such as group homes, activity centers, and sheltered workshops in the community, to help her navigate adulthood and build strong relationships beyond her immediate family.

Gloria Sanchez

Gloria lives nearby with her husband, Leo. Leo and Gloria have been together for so long that everyone thinks of him as part of the family. Gloria’s sister, Carmen (see below), visits Gloria often at her house. For some time, Carmen has been concerned because Leo hits Gloria, often in her presence. When this happens, Gloria will send Carmen home. When Carmen returns the next day, she often finds Gloria bruised and cut, and Leo in the house, as if nothing has happened. Since these episodes began, Gloria has come to her parents’ house less and less and has many excuses for not coming over. Carmen has spoken with Gloria about the need to get help, but Gloria believes that her relationship with Leo will get better when she stops making him mad. She has considered divorce, but believes that the Church would not allow it, and she knows that it would be hard on her parents if she defied the Church’s teachings. She is also afraid to call the police, even when Leo becomes violent, because Leo is undocumented. In their community, local law enforcement often collaborate with the Department of Homeland Security, so Gloria is afraid that, if she called the police, Leo could end up in deportation proceedings. She wants the

violence to stop, but she does not want her husband permanently removed from the United States.

Client Concerns:

Social relationships

- Serious domestic violence in the home
- Fears that Gloria's parents would abandon her if she left Leo and flouted the church's condemnation of divorce

Employment

- Lack of a job, little education, and no training

Health

- Fear of serious injury, with the violence escalating

Goals:

- End the violence, either by getting Leo to enter a batterers' intervention program or by securing safe housing alternatives for Gloria.
- Connect Gloria to community resources, including health care and social supports.
- Address the barriers and fears Gloria encounters as she contemplates her options if she leaves the relationship.

Alejandro Sanchez

Alejandro recently graduated high school and lives at home, where he goes to the local career college, and works weekends and evenings selling cars. In high school, he was quite popular but something of a loner, primarily excelling in art. Alejandro makes money purely on commissions at his job and works very hard. He is fully bilingual in English and Spanish and is known as a resource for those in the immigrant community looking to purchase a car. He feels deeply obligated to help his parents, who have worked so hard for all of them. Alejandro has always been able to "disappear" into the family because the others were always so focused on more acute problems requiring immediate attention. However, Alejandro has a sense of unhappiness that he has decided to talk about to one of the social workers at the Center that he really likes.

Client Concerns:

Health

- Unexplained decreased level of energy and increased irritability

Employment

- Dislike for his job in car sales, despite the decent earnings
- Conflict between his interest in cooking and his father's feelings about it

Social relationships

- Feeling that he needs to hide many of his interests from his family and friends

Goals:

- Get a full physical, drawing on the insurance coverage he has through his place of business, to determine if there is any physical explanation for how he feels emotionally.
- Explore the possibility of developing a small enterprise doing artwork for local businesses.

Carmen Sanchez

As a result of rubella contracted by Celia when she was pregnant, Carmen is profoundly hearing impaired. Diagnosed early on when a heavy pan clattered to the floor and she did not respond, social workers were able to assist the family in finding resources that would allow Carmen to learn sign language. However, the School that Carmen has attended taught her American Sign Language (ASL), which no one else in her family understands fluently. Nevertheless, Carmen is very close to her mother and her father. Carmen's school prepared her well for a college curriculum, and Carmen's teachers are unanimous that she is bright and well-equipped to succeed in higher education. After a great deal of anguish about leaving, Carmen has decided to go to college some distance away. She will be the first child to leave the family's home community.

Client Concerns:

Finances

- Possible financial hardship for the family if Carmen attends college, especially if she goes out of state
- Inability to contribute to the family income if she leaves home to go to college

Education

- Lack of information about scholarships and grants
- Uncertainty about what she wants to study in college and to pursue as a career.

Goals:

- Help Carmen explore grant and scholarship programs available at the colleges and universities that interest her.
- Support Carmen's investigation of career options, using your assessment skills to determine areas of strong interest, talent, and skill.

Joey Sanchez

When Joey was born four years ago, he tested positive for crack cocaine. This prompted the social worker at the hospital to take Joey into custody. Until his first court hearing when he was three months old, Joey was in foster care. During this time, his mother, Emilia, was remanded to drug treatment, which she was unable to complete. His father was nowhere to be found. Thus, it came to be that Joey was placed in kinship care with his grandparents, where he remains. His grandparents are in the process of adopting Joey since, under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1998, there must be some disposition of Joey's case. Joey's mother (Emilia) understands that her life is too unstable for her to be a responsible parent, but she would still like to work towards regaining a parental role in Joey's life.

Client Concerns:

Joey has no concerns. He is unaware of the conflict between his grandparents and his biological mother over his adoption status.

Goals:

- Although Joey has no stated goals for himself, others have certainly voiced goals for his life. His grandparents have every intention of adopting him, while his mother would like to regain custody
- All of the adults in Joey's life want to see him have a strong start to his education.

Roberto Salazar

Roberto is a cousin to the Sanchez children and a nephew to Celia. He came to the United States across the border in Texas, and is undocumented. As a young boy, he learned enough English from conversing with English-speaking tourists that he has been able, with his uncle's help, to find day work. Likely as a result of exposure to environmental toxins and workplace injuries in his home country, Roberto has been plagued by a host of medical problems, including debilitating back pain and very poor eyesight, which may make him less likely to get work. Recently, he fell off a roof he was working on. Had he been in the country legally, he would have certainly received worker's compensation, but, as it was, he was not even paid for the day's work he had put in, and he was afraid to say anything to the boss, who was paying him in cash. The Sanchez family is worried: they are harboring an undocumented worker and do not know what will happen if the immigration authorities find out. Their landlord is very strict about non-family living in the house and tells the family he can charge extra rent if he finds such persons in

residence. He insists that this is in the rental contract, but Mrs. Sanchez does not read English, and the contract language is not comprehensible to Mr. Sanchez. At the same time, the Sanchez family cannot imagine putting Roberto out of their house; especially because he is the only family Celia has in the United States.

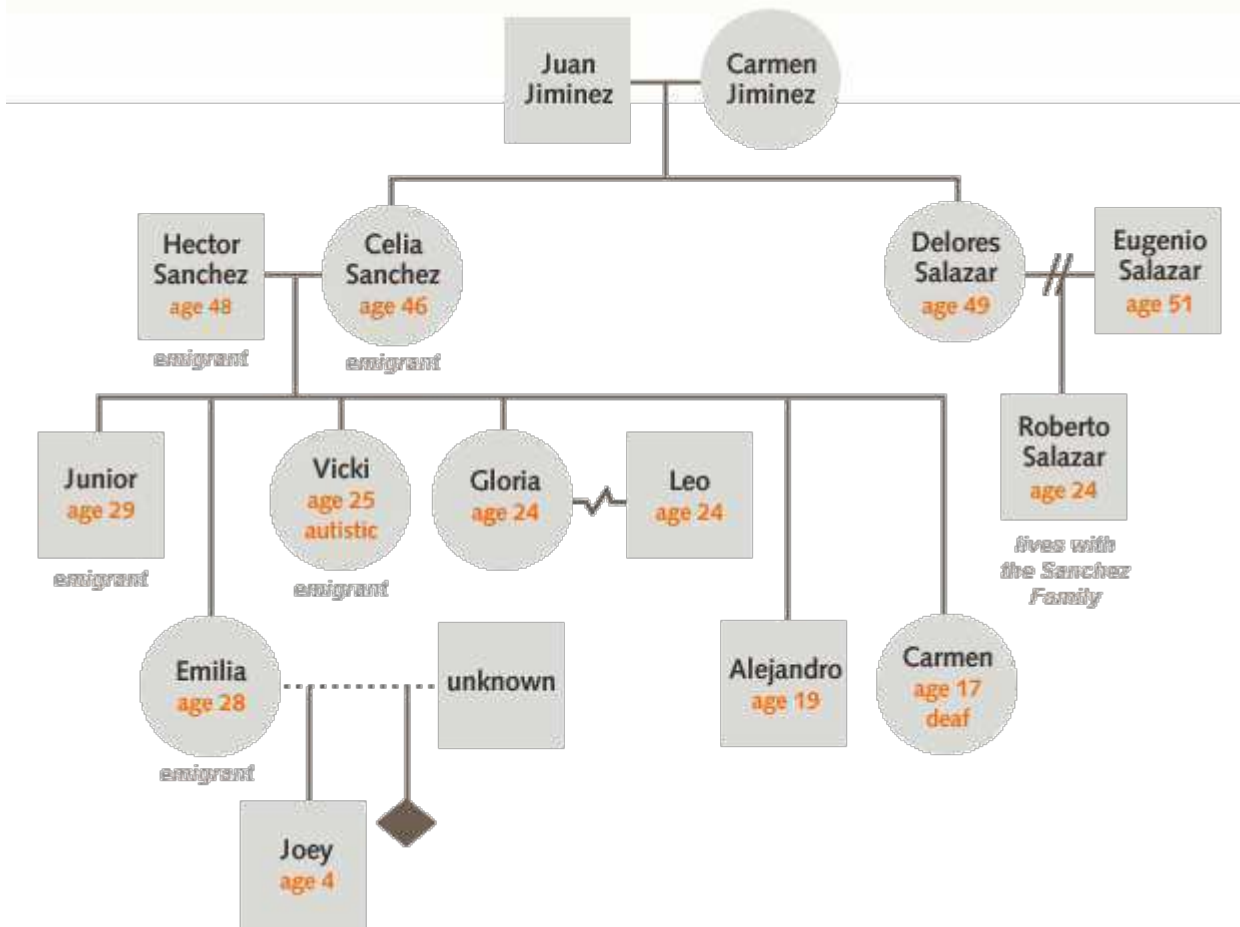
Client Concerns:

- Roberto's health makes it difficult for him to work regularly, but he is not eligible for income supports. Even when Roberto's employers refuse to pay him for work that he has completed, which happens fairly frequently, he is afraid to complain, because he thinks that his employers know that he is in the country illegally and may report him.
- Roberto is unable to receive medical care except in the event of true life-threatening emergencies, due to his status as an undocumented worker.
- Roberto knows that he is increasing the crowding in the Sanchez household and he wants to take the pressure off them by finding his own place to live, but he does not know how he can afford this, or whether he can even sign a contract as an undocumented immigrant.
- Roberto would like to legalize his status in the U.S. He does not know if this is even possible, and he does not know how to start this process

Goals:

- Find a job that produces as little strain on his health as possible.
- Explore any options to pursue legal immigration status.
- Find some help for his medical problems, through a medical service that will not ask him questions about his immigration status.
- Stay out of the way of the landlord, who is unaware of his presence in the home, or, ideally, find alternative housing.

Genogram:





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