

### **Third Case Example: Mark, who was raised like a dog**

Mark, a six-years-old boy, is in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. Mark is a bony little child in a loose diaper sitting in a cage. Mark's crib had iron bars and a plywood panel wired to the top of it. It looked like a dog cage. The boy rocked back and forth, whimpering a primitive self-soothing lullaby. He was filthy with his own feces, there was food all over his face and his diaper was heavy, soaked with urine. He was being treated for severe pneumonia, but he resisted all procedures and had to be held down to draw blood. He tore out his IVs, he yelled and screamed at staff and he threw his food. The closest this hospital had to a psychiatric unit was the PICU (where the ratio of staff to patients was very high), so Mark had been transferred. There, they had jury-rigged his crib/cage arrangement. And once placed in the cage, the boy began to throw feces and anything else he could get his hands on.

According to his records, Mark's mother was a 15 year-old girl who left him with her own mother permanently when he was two months old. Mark's grandmother, by all accounts, was a kindhearted, nurturing woman who adored her grandchild. Unfortunately, she was also morbidly obese and had related health problems that made her very ill. When Mark was 11 months old, she was hospitalized and died several weeks later.

During her illness her boyfriend, Bob, babysat for Mark. Baby Mark's behavior became difficult, surely a result of losing both his mother and his grandmother in such a short time. Bob still grieving himself, didn't know what to do with a crying, tantrum young child, and being in his late sixties, he wasn't physically or mentally prepared for such a challenge. Bob was not malicious. He made a living as a dog breeder and he began keeping Mark in a dog cage. He made sure the baby was fed and changed, but he rarely spoke to him, played with him or did any of the other normal things parents do to nurture their children. Mark lived in that cage for five years, spending most of his days with only dogs as his companions.

What would you do if you were a counselor for Mark?

1. What they have missed during "sensitive periods" of development, early childhood? Identify critical deficiencies that the child might have missed.

Assess the child across the SPECS of normal development.

SPECS—Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, and Sexual Development

2. What would be core symptoms and issues? Refer to Behavioral impact of maltreatment, textbook, and lecture materials.
3. What questions do you have in order to develop interventions—care and counseling plan? Describe the first interview or meeting.
4. Based on those deficiencies, describe your care plan. What would you do to help the child? How would you intervene the issues? How long do you think it will take for any progress to be made? As time goes, how the symptoms and issues will progress?