**Discussion**

First Student Study Team (SST) Meeting

Johnny Wilson is a six-year-old repeating kindergarten. His teacher says that he just sits, and that she can not motivate him or get him to do any work; beyond writing his name, he does not do anything. Johnny is not a behavior problem. The teacher asks a special education teacher whether she thinks Johnny has mental retardation or a speech impairment. The special education teacher thinks this is an interesting case and initiates the first student study team (SST) meeting. Johnny's mother does not attend the first meeting, but attends following meetings.

Special ed. teacher: Johnny's current teacher brought this to my attention, and it sounds like a really interesting case to me. I think there's more going on here than is obvious at first glance. I wanted to hear from the rest of you what you know about Johnny.

Johnny's teacher last year: He came into kindergarten lively, noisy, bouncy. He was very interested in everything that was going on. As the year went on, he got quieter. Then, at the end of the year, he started to say things like, "I don't know what to do. I don't know how to do this." But with encouragement, he completed his tasks. He would never take work home.

Johnny's current general ed. teacher: He came into kindergarten with no reaction to anything. Nothing interested him. He wouldn't even try.

School nurse: I've already checked his hearing and vision, weighed him, and measured him. He's a little overweight, but relatively healthy. A lot of dental work has been done but, mostly, it looks like health issues have been taken care of. I stopped for a home visit, and I noticed a teenage cousin around and other people coming in and out. His home is very chaotic.

School psychologist: I've done a little investigating too. The family lives in a motel. They move a lot. The mother is pregnant. Johnny has at least three younger siblings, and there is no father around.

Second Meeting

Those present at the SST meeting have decided to go ahead and ask the mother's permission to complete paperwork for a referral for special education. They meet again about three weeks later. During that three weeks, the special education teacher has started to pull Johnny out of class for a small group learning lab and individual computer work. The teacher has, during that time, persuaded Johnny to use the computer.

By the time the SST meets again, they have the paperwork signed, and the psychologist had conducted some preliminary tests. The mother is present at the meeting, but seems defensive. The others present say relatively little, listening and trying to put Johnny's mother at ease. When the mother leaves after this second meeting, Johnny's teacher indicates she wants to say something.

Mother: Johnny's a naughty boy, but I don't put up with it. He'll do his work; you just have to take away his recess or something. That's how I get him to do his homework—put him in the bathroom with the door closed or give him a smack. But I'm fine with you doing an assessment. Sure, why not? And yes, I'd like help finding a better place for us to stay. Thanks.

School psychologist: [After listening to Johnny's mother.] I conducted adaptive behavior assessments, and his score was 80, 100 being average. If it's all right with you, I'd like to go ahead with a full assessment to find out more about Johnny's behavior.

School nurse: [After listening to Johnny's mother.] You remember me from the home visits. I have some contacts in the neighborhood and might be able to work with you to find more permanent living arrangements for you and your family.

Johnny's current general ed. teacher: [After Johnny's mother leaves the meeting.] Johnny has never turned in a single piece of homework all year. So if Mom was standing over him forcing him to do it, it was never turned in.

Johnny's teacher last year: [After Johnny's mother leaves the meeting.] Toward the end of last year, I used to kid Johnny about being so clumsy, given the bruises I'd see on him now and then. But I'm beginning to wonder now if some of the bruises I saw weren't the result of clumsiness, but from, as his mom says, giving him a "smack." I'm worried about this.

Third Meeting

After another four weeks, the full multidisciplinary report is complete. The team, including the mother, sits down and brainstorms. The team sits in a circle, and the mother is asked where she wants to sit in the circle. The mother seems less defensive this time. Johnny's family has recently moved into a rental property, a house.

Special ed. teacher: Things are going well. Johnny is pulled out of general ed. part of the morning and again part of the afternoon to participate in learning labs. He is on the computer in the morning sessions, then in a small group in the afternoon. But he won't do anything with pencil and paper. The group work he participates in is verbal, such as with rhyming words.

School psychologist. [Reading out the report.] He is at kindergarten level. Kind of where he should be academically for a kindergartner (remembering he is repeating kindergarten.) We do not feel he has mental retardation or a speech impairment, and he doesn't have autism. We feel he has some attention deficit disorder (ADD), but his primary disability is SED—severely emotionally disturbed. I also noticed Johnny is really hesitant to do anything with pencil and paper. He asked me a number of times, "Will I get in trouble if I do it wrong?" Twice when I reached over to get the paper from him, he flinched. Johnny seems really afraid of being wrong. Mrs. Wilson, why do you think that is?

Mother: I don't know. But none of my children misbehave at school. And I don't raise stupid kids. When he brought home sad faces on his papers, I told him I didn't want to see how stupid he is. I made sure he didn't bring home any more sad faces.

Johnny's teacher last year: We do put sad faces on papers. This is to say that students can do better, and we use smiley faces when they do well. It's so they know when they have done good work, and when they can improve.

Johnny's current general ed. teacher: I use smiley and sad faces too. I've noticed Johnny seems more interested, but still isn't doing any work in class. But I've been pleased to hear about his progress in the learning labs.

School nurse: In my last home visit, I was relieved to see that Johnny has some space at home to play now. I was worried about him riding his bike in the motel parking lot.

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Review the information provided in the presentation about Johnny. Then, in your posting, describe what the information tells you and why. Base your analysis on what you have learned in the course so far regarding such things as learning styles, cognitive processes, and instructional strategies, as well as on your experience. Also include in your posting what additional questions you would want to ask to gather more information.

Response Guidelines

Comment on the information other learners have focused on in their postings. Would you come to the same conclusions about the information or different ones? Why?

**\*This discussion only has to be a paragraph long\***