

Case study - Palvinder

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| Background | <p>Palvinder is four years old. She lives with her mum Winnie and sister Veronica who is three years old. Palvinder has never met her father as her parents separated when Veronica was born.</p> <p>Palvinder is a lively child, who enjoys boisterous play and has many friends at school. Winnie finds it difficult to control Palvinder at times and is insistent that she has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The teachers and the school advisor have met with Winnie and have explained that Palvinder's behaviour is normal for her age.</p> <p>To try to make Palvinder behave in the way that she wants, Winnie tells her that her father left because of her behaviour and if she is a good girl he may come back. Winnie has no idea where her father lives and has had no contact for three years.</p> |
| What type(s) of abuse may have taken place? | |
| What are the factors that indicate this? | |
| What actions might be taken? | |
| By whom might these actions be taken? | |
| Comment | |

Case study – Suggested response

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| | <p>because of her behaviour and if she is a good girl he may come back. Winnie has no idea where her father lives and has had no contact for three years.</p> |
| <p>What type(s) of abuse may have taken place?</p> | <p>Emotional abuse.</p> |
| <p>What are the factors that indicate this?</p> | <p>Winnie is blaming Palvinder for her father leaving. She is also promising that he will come back if the behaviour gets better. This is a promise that she can't keep as she doesn't know where he is and can't contact him.</p> |
| <p>What actions might be taken?</p> | <p>A meeting may be held with Winnie to discuss how she is trying to control Palvinder's behaviour and suggest alternative behaviour strategies.</p> <p>Referral to educational psychologist if the behaviour becomes particularly difficult.</p> <p>Referral to parenting classes for strategies to deal with difficult behaviour.</p> |
| <p>By whom might these actions be taken?</p> | <p>Class teacher. Headteacher/advisor. Referral by Headteacher.</p> |

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| Comment | <p>This demonstrates how some carers may try the 'bribe' approach to changing behaviour. Sometimes it may be sweets, toys, treats or money to encourage children to behave in the way that parents want.</p> <p>It is important for carers to know that children have developmental stages that they pass through and what they may see as 'bad' behaviour is usually normal.</p> <p>To blame a child for the father leaving is emotional abuse and will lower a child's self-esteem if they think that they have been the cause of this. Also, to promise something that will never be delivered is a form of emotional abuse.</p> |
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