

Arkansas Department of Human Services

**COURT REPORT**

**COURT INFORMATION**

**Hearing Type:** Court Review

**County of Jurisdiction:** Jefferson (Pine Bluff)

**Hearing Date:** 07/26/2017

**Judge's Name:** Hon. Jon Keith

**II. CHILD(REN)**

| Name          | Date of Birth |
|---------------|---------------|
| TAMELA BOYERS | 06/29/2001    |

**III. DHS RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ☐ Return Home
- ☒ Continued Foster Care and Work with Family
- ☐ Placement with Relatives
- ☐ Proceed Toward Custody with Parental Rights Terminated
- ☐ None of the Above

**IV. FAMILY PROGRESS**

**DHS Recommendations Text:**

The Arkansas Department of Children and Family Services recommends that Tamela Boyers remain in the custody of the Department, attend counseling sessions recommended by her therapist, continue tutoring as recommended by her teachers, attend school while in session unless she is ill or has excused absences, Ernest Boyers will continue to have no contact with Tamela until approved by the court and Tamela's therapist, Esther Boyers will attend counseling and follow all recommendation of the therapist until the goals are achieved and the services are terminated.

**A. Child Welfare Background and Reasons for Intervention:**

The details of the abuse and supporting documentation were given to the court in the affidavit submitted for the Probable Cause Hearing on April 11, 2017. On April 6, 2017, during an interview, Tamela described a progression of sexual acts by her father for nearly as long as she could remember. Tamela verified that her father has also done "the same stuff" to her sister, Angelina. Mrs. Boyers knew about the sexual abuse but failed to protect Tamela. Mrs. Boyers is a victim of domestic abuse at the hands of Ernest Boyers. Tamela's sister, Angelina Franklin (DOB 07-31-1999), disclosed that Mr. Boyers had sexually abused her until the age of thirteen, and she knows he is doing the same to Tamela. There was reason to believe that Tamela was in danger of ongoing maltreatment, so the Agency requested and received an emergency order of custody.

Tamela's sister, Angelina, was also evaluated for possible maltreatment. Based on the information received during the investigation, it was determined that Angelina was not in immediate danger and will remain in the care of her father, Anthony Franklin.

**Harm Statement:** It was reported to the Child Abuse Hotline on April 6, 2017, that Ernest Boyers had been allegedly sexually abusing his biological daughter Tamela Boyers (15 years old); and that Ernest had also abused Tamela's half-sister, Angelina until she was thirteen years old. Tamela could become pregnant and be affected emotionally if the sexual abuse continues.

**B. Child(ren)'s Situation (physical, emotional, educational, psycho-social) Including Current Health and Safety Needs and Current Placement (Independent Living, if appropriate):**

A Comprehensive Health Assessment (CHA) was completed on Tamela. The results of the psychological evaluation found no underlying mental health issues. The assessment confirmed that Tamela is functioning within her age range. See the attached report from the therapist. After two months, the therapist recommended family counseling. Mrs. Boyers and Tamela attended weekly sessions for three weeks. Mrs. Boyers did not feel they were accomplishing anything, so she stopped attending. Tamela's educational progress is set out below in the section on school adjustment. Tamela has been in the care of her maternal grandmother, Shirley Owens, since April 7, 2017. Mrs. Owens was set up as a provisional resource placement. Tamela has developed a strong bond with her grandmother and has adjusted well to the home. In this placement, Tamela has been able to see her mother three times per week in Mrs. Owens' home. Mrs. Boyers appears happy with the supervised visits and has not expressed any desire to have unsupervised or extended visits with Tamela.

**C. Children's Adjustment in Placement and Progress in School:**

Tamela is adjusting well in her current placement with her maternal grandmother, Shirley Owens. Tamela reports that she enjoys spending time with her grandmother and likes being in her home. Tamela completed the school year shortly after coming into care. She is currently attending summer school. Tamela's grades are improving in Math and English. Tamela is in the 8th grade at Watson Chapel Junior High School in the Watson Chapel School District. Tamela is not in any Special Education classes.

**D. Parent's Current Living Situation (Financial, Physical, Mental, and Emotional):**

Mr. and Mrs. Boyers currently reside at 6753 E. Pine St., Pine Bluff, AR 71603. Mrs. Boyers is currently unemployed. Mr. Boyers is currently working for Tyson in Redfield, AR. Mr. and Mrs. Boyers have refused marital and individual counseling.

**Worry Statement:** Tamela, Angelina, and Shirley are worried that if Tamela returns home, she could be continuously sexually abused and suffer more anxiety and depression as well as possible pregnancy from her father, Ernest Boyers.

**Goal Statement:** Tamela will feel safe and secure while in the custody of Shirley Owens. Mrs. Owens uses positive coping skills and always reaches out to Tamela's network for help when triggered. Mrs. Owens is currently assisting Tamela by reaching out to her therapist to help her manage her depression and anxiety through attending counseling.

**E. Parent's Progress on Disposition Order/Court Order/Treatment Plan/Efforts to Correct Conditions(s):**

Mr. and Mrs. Boyers' progress is ongoing. Mr. Boyers is limited due to his no-contact order. Mr. Boyers has reported that his criminal trial continued until September 7, 2017. Mrs. Boyers attends visits with Tamela three times per week at Shirley Owens' home. Mr. and Mrs. Boyers are not participating in marital counseling. Mrs. Boyers has attended three family counseling sessions. Mrs. Boyers refused to continue the family sessions with Tamela because she "didn't feel they were accomplishing anything."

**Worry Statement:** The department is worried that if Mrs. Boyers continues to refuse to attend family counseling her relationship with Tamela may not improve and Tamela will be reluctant to disclose to her mother when she is

harm.

**Goal Statement:** Tamela will feel safe and secure when Mrs. Boyers visits her at Mrs. Owens's home. Mrs. Boyers will attend counseling sessions and demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with Tamela.

**F. Family Time (Visitation Between Child(ren) and Parents, Relatives, Siblings, etc., and Results):**

Mrs. Boyers visits with Tamela three times a week. The visits are an hour long; they are supervised and take place at Mrs. Owens's home. The visits are supervised by FSW Perko. The time of the visits may vary, but Mrs. Boyers consistently attends. Mrs. Boyers does not bring any activities for Tamela. Mrs. Boyers is regularly seen on her phone. Mrs. Boyers often asks Tamela how things are going in school, to which Tamela will always respond, "Good" or "Okay." Tamela refrains from telling Mrs. Boyers about her accomplishments in school. Visits between Tamela and Angelina occur weekly, vary in time, and take place in Mrs. Owens's home. Tamela and Angelina share a special bond and enjoy being together.

**Worry Statement:** Tamela may be worried that if her mother continues focusing more on her phone during visits, she will feel unheard and unnoticed. If Tamela's mother does not bring any engaging activities, Tamela may worry that her mother does not care to engage with her.

**Goal Statement:** Visits will continue to be supervised in the home by Mrs. Shirley. Tamela will have her mother's undivided attention when she comes to visit her at Mrs. Shirley's home. Tamela will continue to have routine visits with her mother each week, and during this time, Mrs. Boyers and Tamela will do bonding and interactive activities to strengthen their relationship.

**G. Permanency Plan:(Include Independent Living Information, if Appropriate):**

The Agency recommends that Tamela remain in the care of her grandmother, Shirley Owens, at this time. Mr. and Mrs. Boyers will show improvement and comply with the Agency's recommendations before considering an alternative plan. Mr. Boyers has failed to comply with the Agency's court order. Mrs. Boyers has attended all visits and staffing but no longer attends counseling and shows no desire to spend more time with Tamela. Tamela attends a monthly class with her Transitional Youth Services (TYS) coordinator to help improve her independent living skills. Until proof of improvement is shown, Tamela will remain in DHS custody.

**Worry Statement:** The department is worried that if Tamela returns to the care of her mother and father, she may continue being sexually abused by her father, Ernes. DCFS and Tamela are also worried that Mrs. Boyers is unable to provide a safe living environment for Tamela because she doesn't believe Tamela's allegations of sexual abuse towards Mr. Boyers.

**Goal Statement:** Tamela will be cared for by a caregiver who believes her when she tells them she has been hurt and is capable of protecting her. Tamela will be cared for by caregivers who solve their disagreements and problems by loving, caring, and treating each other respectfully.

**H. Additional Information (location of siblings, services offered, etc.):**

Tamela's overall well-being has improved over the past three months. Tamela successfully completed the 2017 summer school session. Tamela's grades are improving. Tamela volunteered in her Art teacher's classroom over the summer, teaching younger students. Tamela continues to attend individual weekly counseling sessions along with a bi-monthly youth sexual abuse survivor group. Tamela's physical health has improved, and she is no longer complaining of stomach pain. The Agency continues to provide transportation assistance to doctor's appointments when requested in advance. FSW Perko continues to conduct monthly home visits with Mr. and Mrs. Boyers.

**V. SIGNATURES**

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**Family Service Worker**

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**Date**

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**Supervisor**

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**Date**