

## Handout: Billy Campbell Case Study

**Part 1: Maltreatment History.** Billy is currently 12 years old but by age 4, he had endured years of physical abuse, including having cigarettes put out on his body, beatings, being slashed across his chest with a knife and witnessed his father's violence toward his mother. Both of Billy's birthparents were heavily involved with drugs and had many drug parties at their home. Billy and his sister were removed from his birth family when he was age 4 after an incident of abuse by his father, who had locked him in a closet for over a day. Billy eventually had a violent reaction, banging his head on the door, screaming, and hurting himself. He was taken to the hospital, but first his father threatened Billy that if Billy told anyone what he had done to him, he would kill Billy and himself. Billy's father did indeed commit suicide while Billy was in the hospital. He was placed in foster care from the hospital since his mother was still abusing substances. When Billy was 8, he told a social worker, "I look at that picture of my dad in my Lifebook and I wonder, why did you kill yourself? And I can never come up with a reason, but I wonder was it because of me?"

**Part 2:** Billy had several moves in foster care and became separated from his sister. Billy told a social worker, "I feel sorta' like I'm a tennis ball or a ping pong ball, going back and forth, bouncing from house to house – that's what I feel like." He continued to see his mother up until her parental rights were terminated when he was age 9. He was placed for adoption with a couple who had no other children, and his adoptive mother became concerned about what she considered his odd behaviors. For example, he only wanted to eat white food and was extremely afraid of policemen. Billy had severe nightmares and dreamed of being beaten, locked in a closet, and being cut. He reported having a nightmare of being in a party setting, being stabbed by his father, and rushed onto a bus with his mother to get to a hospital. The social worker eventually confirmed that what happened wasn't a dream - it happened when he was younger. He expressed anger that "his mother didn't do more to protect him and didn't care enough about him to fight for him."

After being in his adoptive home for several years, Billy still had trouble trusting others and would resist affection from his adoptive parents. He demonstrated externalizing behavior – rages, aggression, destruction of property, and hyperactivity. In addition, he demonstrated serious risk-taking behaviors, such as riding his bike off the roof of his house.