



Case Study: Socially At-Risk Family

The Situation

Maria is married and has a two-year old son when she gives birth to Anna. At the time of the birth, her marriage is very rocky and she is almost sure that her husband will soon leave her. Her highest level of education is high school, so she has little chance of finding a job to support her family. She suffers from severe postpartum depression in the maternity hospital and the stress of her struggling marriage adds to her despair. In this state, she cannot imagine how she can take Anna home with her and care for her properly.

Realistic Outcome WITHOUT Firefly

The maternity hospital employees see her distress and assume she is mentally unstable. Not understanding her emotional needs, they also condemn the fact that she is considering giving up her child and decide she is an unfit mother. They are afraid she will sneak out of the hospital without signing the necessary paperwork to turn Anna over to state care. If the paperwork isn't completed, the employees will be in big trouble with their supervisors, so they pressure Maria to sign away her parental rights, which she does. Maria returns home with her depression untreated and overwhelmed with guilt for giving up Anna. Her husband can't deal with her emotions and leaves her. Maria and her son move into a dormitory and she supports them with menial jobs. The guilt for giving up Anna never leaves her, and negatively affects her relationship with son. She never remarries and starts to drink to mask her pain, eventually becoming an alcoholic.

Anna is raised in an institution. She never learns how to form secure attachments to other people and loses several IQ points each year. Anna graduates from the institution at age 18 not knowing how to live in the outside world: she can't cook her own meals, wash her own clothes, take the bus, or handle other daily tasks. Because of her attachment disorder she is indiscriminately friendly and in a matter of months she is part of a prostitution ring. She works in the ring until she dies from AIDS complications at age 30. In this period of time she also gives birth to three children, whom she abandons at the maternity hospital. The cycle continues...

Realistic Outcome WITH Firefly

The maternity hospital employees see Maria's distress. Because they have received training from Firefly, they can correctly identify and diagnose postpartum depression. A system has already been put in place between the maternity hospital and a family support center that was one of Firefly's pilot sites. The maternity hospital employees contact the family support center, which sends a Firefly-trained case worker, Olga, to the maternity hospital to visit with Maria. Olga arranges for a Firefly-trained psychologist to provide counseling for Maria throughout the worst of her depression. It is also very important to help depressed mothers develop healthy mother-child

relationships, so Olga enrolls Maria in a 14-week Mellow Parenting¹ (MP) program. Firefly introduced this valuable program to Maria's city and trained all the local facilitators. MP uses video to help mothers develop strong relationships with their babies and young children, and women also take great comfort from the peer support they receive at the group meetings. The psychologist also meets together with Maria and her husband. The marriage is saved and Maria returns to health after a few months of individual and couples therapy. Anna grows up strong and healthy and develops a secure attachment to her parents. She graduates from high school, goes to college to become a doctor, marries, and raises two healthy children. The cycle continues...

Cost Comparison of Scenarios:

WITHOUT FIREFLY SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost to raise Anna in an institution until 18 years of age: \$306,000² • Cost to raise Anna's three children in an institution until 18 years of age: \$918,000 • Cost of mental suffering endured by all family members: incalculable • Potential cost of raising Anna's grandchildren and great-grandchildren in institutions: incalculable • Economic loss of potentially productive members of society: incalculable
TOTAL COST: over \$1,224,000
WITH FIREFLY SUPPORT
<p>Firefly's three-year training program costs \$15,000 per person practitioner. A conservative estimate is that each practitioner will add one new child/family per week to his or her caseload. Assuming a 40-week work year and a 15-year practice³, that is 600 children/families served per practitioner. Thus, the training cost for each practitioner is \$25 per child/family. Service provision is \$10/hour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefly's training of three practitioners: \$75 • One three-hour home visit: \$30 • 14 weeks of Mellow Parenting program (six hours each week): \$840 • 14 weeks of couples counseling (two hours each week): \$280
TOTAL COST: \$1,225

Please view a real-life case similar to this scenario at <http://www.youtube.com/user/EveryChild#p/u> (forward the film to 4.30)

¹ This Scottish organization works throughout the world to improve parent-child relationships. Learn more at <http://mellowparenting.org/>.

² Data is from personal conversation in 2010 with a baby orphanage director in Nizhny Novgorod Region. The cost is up to double this amount in Moscow (see <http://www.newsland.ru/news/detail/id/712735/>).

³ Due to Russia's vacation schedule and trainees being several years into their careers when they participate in Firefly programs.