Case Study: Jasmine and Jade

Jasmine (age 16) and Jade (age 11) were separated from their mother due to poor housing conditions about six years ago. For the past six years, the girls have lived with their maternal grandmother on two separate occasions and currently live with their maternal aunt (who is their foster mother) for 4 years.

Six years ago the girls’ mother, Sandra told them that they were being evicted from the apartment where they had been living with her and she told them that would have to go live with her mother, the girls’ grandmother. At their grandmother’s house the girls slept on the pullout couch in the living room and had no place to keep their personal belongings. After living with her for two years, their grandmother told Sandra that they had to leave because there wasn’t enough space at her house.

First they stayed with Sandra’s friends, then, they moved into a homeless shelter. Sandra was having a hard time and would sometimes leave the girls with friends but eventually she would return to the shelter with them. The shelter workers suspected that Sandra was using drugs and alcohol and became concerned. The shelter staff called the Children’s Services to interfere.

The Children’s Services decided that it would be best for Jasmine and Jade to be removed from Sandra’s, at which time the maternal grandmother once again took the girls in. The girls went back to their old school and were excited to see their friends again. Two years later, however, the grandmother became very ill and suddenly passed away.

Upon their grandmother’s death, Jasmine and Jade moved to their maternal aunt’s home. Aunt Maria became their kinship foster mother. In their new home, the girls shared a room, enrolled at a new school and began making friends.

Currently, Jasmine is a freshman but wants to drop out of high school and enroll at a vocational school to be able to get a job and support herself. She wants to move out of her aunt’s house when she turns 18, which is upsetting to her aunt who wants the girls to attend college. Jade, who is the quieter of the two sisters is very studious and doing well on 6th grade.

The girls have not had any contact with their mother Sandra since they were removed from her care. Although Sandra sometimes contacts certain family members for money and other help, there has been no attempt to arrange a meeting for Sandra and the girls. Neither girl is aware of their father’s whereabouts.