

The Smith Family

- Dan and Mary Smith have been divorced for two years.
- Dan is Black, Mary is Caucasian.
- The separation occurred when their son Scott was 5 years old.
- The parents live within a mile of one another and Scott has had a 2-2-5-5 schedule since their separation.

1

The Smith Family Cont.

- Scott has always been an active child but is now developmentally behind his peers and has twice been suspended for disruptive behavior at school.
- He is currently in the second grade and is struggling academically.
- With both parents' consent, Scott was tested for his eligibility for support services to address his learning disabilities and has been receiving some assistance at school.

2

The Smith Family Cont.

- School personnel are now suggesting that Scott has attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder (ADHD) and that he should receive medication.
- They are suggesting that he may not be allowed to return to his school if this does not occur.
- Mary agrees with the school's recommendation and Scott's pediatrician has agreed to facilitate a more comprehensive assessment.

3

The Smith Family Cont.

- o Mary believes that Dan is in denial about Scott's condition.
- o She reports being told by teachers that Scott needs a consistent environment and interprets this to mean that Scott should only reside with her during the week.
- o She fears that Scott will be expelled from school and carry that failure for the rest of his life.

4

The Smith Family Cont.

- o Dan agrees that his son has problems but also believes that Scott is being unfairly targeted because of his race.
- o Dan also states that he has far fewer problems controlling Scott's behavior than Mary has, and believes that her permissive parenting is part of the problem.
- o He fears a rush to medicate Scott and that Scott will be labeled.
- o He opposes medication for Scott until all other options have been tried.
- o He has also read articles stating that ADHD is overdiagnosed, particularly in children of color.

5

The Smith Family Cont.

- o The parents have agreed to family therapy as an interim measure while other options are discussed.
- o They are in dispute about the necessary qualifications for the therapist and what the therapist should be authorized to do, recommend or report to the court.

6
