

THE SMITH FAMILY

1.
 - 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.
2.
 - 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.
3.
 - 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.
4.
 - Mary agrees with the school's recommendation and Scott's pediatrician has agreed to facilitate a more comprehensive assessment.
 - Mary believes that Dan is in denial about Scott's condition.
 - 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.
 - She fears that Scott will be expelled from school and carry that failure for the rest of his life.
5.
 - Dan agrees that his son has problems but also believes that Scott is being unfairly targeted because of his race.
 - 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.
 - He fears a rush to medicate Scott and that Scott will be labeled.
 - He opposes medication for Scott until all other options have been tried.
 - He has also read articles stating that ADHD is overdiagnosed, particularly in children of color.
6.
 - The parents have agreed to family therapy as an interim measure while other options are discussed.

- 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.