

Case Management  
Sandler/Braun Case Study

Trainer Materials

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A person who knowingly or willfully makes public or discloses to any unauthorized person any confidential information contained in the central abuse hotline is subject to the penalty provisions of s. [39.205](#).

### INTAKE REPORT WITHOUT REPORTER NARRATIVE

Intake Name Braun, Melanie		Intake Number 2014-000001-01		County		Secondary County	
Date and Time Intake Received 01.10.14 02:31 AM		Program Type Child Intake - Initial		Investigative Sub-Type In-Home		Provider Name	
Background Checks Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Reason		Call Record Number		3 Hits Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Worker Safety Concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		Prior Involvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Law Enforcement Notified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Send Florida Administrative Message to Law Enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A							
Response Time 24 Hours		Name – Hotline Counselor Bosley, John			Name – Hotline Supervisor Townsend, Charles		

#### I. Family Information

Name – Family Sandler, Melanie			Telephone Number – Home						
Address – Street			Unit Designator		City		State FL	Zip Code	
Primary Language:			Interpreter Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Directions to House Current Location: Mom's residence. Next 24 hours: Unknown									
Mom Address: 209 Kettering Court, Florida City, FL 32399 Mom Phone: 555.402.4189									

#### A. Participants

Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB
Sandler, James H			CH-V-HM	Male	11.03.2003
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race		Disability	
10	Other	White		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Device Needed:					
Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB
Braun, Byron			CH-V-HM	Male	01.24.2011
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race		Disability	
2	Other	White		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Device Needed:					
Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB
Braun, Shane			CH-V-HM	Male	11.16.2013
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race		Disability	
	Other	White		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Device Needed:					
Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB



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Braun, Melanie Sandler		IN-PC-HM	Female	09.22.1976
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race	Disability	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Device Needed:				

Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB
Sandler, Michael			PC-NM	Male	12.27.1974
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race	Disability		
	Other	White	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Device Needed:					

Name		ID Number	Role	Gender	DOB
Braun, Bruce			PC-AP-HM	Male	10.17.1983
Est. Age	Ethnicity	Race	Disability		
30	Other	White	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Hearing Impaired: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		24 Access <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Device Needed:					

AP = Alleged Perpetrator  
 CH = Child In Home  
 HM = Household Member  
 NM = Non-Household Member  
 PC = Parent/Caregiver  
 RN = Report Name  
 SO = Significant Other  
 V = Victim

B. Address and Phone Information			
Name	Type	Address	Telephone Number
Sandler, James	Primary Residence	209 Kettering Court, Florida City FL 32399	555.274.8909
Braun, Byron	Primary Residence	209 Kettering Court, Florida City FL 32399	
Braun, Shane	Primary Residence	209 Kettering Court, Florida City FL 32399	
Braun, Melanie	Primary Residence	209 Kettering Court, Florida City FL 32399	555.402.4189
Braun, Bruce	Primary Residence	209 Kettering Court, Florida City FL 32399	

C. Relationships		
Subject	Relationship	Subject
Braun, Bruce	Father-Step	Sandler, James
Braun, Melanie	Mother-Birth	Sandler, James
Sandler, Michael	Father-Birth	Sandler, James
Braun, Bruce	Father-Birth	Braun, Byron
Braun, Melanie	Mother-Birth	Braun, Byron
Braun, Bruce	Father-Birth	Braun, Shane
Braun, Melanie	Mother-Birth	Braun, Shane

D. Alleged Maltreatment	
Alleged Victim	Maltreatment Code
Sandler, James	Physical Injury
Sandler, James	Family Violence Threatens Child



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Braun, Byron		Family Violence Threatens Child			
Braun, Shane		Family Violence Threatens Child			
<b>E. Location of Incident</b>					
Address – Street		Apt.	City	State	Zip Code
Telephone Number – Home		Telephone Number – Work		Telephone Number - Cell	

## II. Narratives

### A. Allegation Narrative

Bruce and child James got into a verbal and physical altercation over homework and perceived disrespect by James to Bruce. During the physical altercation, the mother intervened by jumping on Bruce's back to keep him from hurting James.

On 01/09/14, the step-father Bruce told James that he had 30 minutes to complete his homework and James began to mouth off. Bruce went toward James to physically remove and carry to James' bedroom and James went limp which resulted in Bruce trying to pick James up. When the Bruce went to pick James up, James began to hit Bruce. Bruce grabbed James' wrist to restrain him and the mother Melanie jumped on Bruce's back. James scooted away up the stairs. Bruce went upstairs and grabbed James by the shoulders and James again went limp at which time Bruce told James to "stay put" and that he will get a "0" on his homework because he would not allow him to continue with homework. Bruce left and waited for the maternal Grandmother to show up. Bruce will be residing with his mother, for the evening to allow the family to cool down.

Bruce had been drinking earlier but did not appear to be intoxicated, was not slurring, stumbling, or incoherent.

The mother, Melanie, provided a slightly different account of the events. Bruce came home from a bar and was intoxicated according to the mother. When he returned home, the mother and Bruce engaged in a conversation about James' grades. James said something disrespectful and Bruce became upset and went to discipline James. Bruce grabbed the child by the throat and slammed him against the seat of the chair and computer table. When the mother tried to stop Bruce, he pinned her against the sliding glass door and slapped her in the face. Bruce began throwing chairs in the living room at the child as the child went up the stairs to his room. Once upstairs, Bruce grabbed James by the throat again and tried to throw him onto the bunk beds. The mother again intervened and was hit again by Bruce. LE was called and responded to the scene. There are 2 other children in the home; unknown if they were present during the verbal and physical altercations.

James and Bruce have a difficult relationship. James attends elementary school and is in the 5th grade. James can be a "smart alec" and does not believe that he can do anything wrong. His siblings Byron is 3 years old and Shane is 2 months old and they both attend daycare. Both mother and Bruce are employed. James' biological father is Michael.

The mother allows James to get away with things and Bruce does not. The mother is not big on spankings and she allows Bruce to spank and discipline but it has never gotten out of control. Byron gets redirected and maybe a swat on his hand. No physical discipline with Shane.

A. Provider Detail

B. Narrative for Worker Safety Concerns

### III. Agency Response

#### A. Recommendation

System Screening Recommendation	Counselor Screening Recommendation	Counselor Screening Reason
Screen In	Screen In	
Counselor Name	Counselor Screening Date/Time	
Bosley, John	01.10.2014, 03:20 AM	

Reason for Override

System Response Priority Recommendation	Counselor Response Priority Recommendation	Date/Time Decision Made

Reason for Override

#### B. Decision

Decision	Date/Time Decision Made	Reason

Worker:

Explain

### IV. CI Unit Documentation

First Call Attempted Date/Time	Completed Call Date/Time



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

**Case Name: Braun, Melanie**  
**Worker Name: Garrett, Kelly**  
**FSFN Case ID: 100234567**

**Initial Intake Received Date: 01/10/2014**  
**Date Completed: 02/20/2014**  
**Intake/Investigation ID: 2014-000001-01**

### I. MALTREATMENT AND NATURE OF MALTREATMENT

What is the extent of the maltreatment? What surrounding circumstances accompany the alleged maltreatment?

#### Extent of Maltreatment

Bruce and child James got into a verbal and physical altercation over homework and perceived disrespect by James to Bruce. Bruce grabbed the child by the throat and slammed him against the seat of the chair and computer table. Bruce told James that he had 30 minutes to complete his homework and James began to mouth off with a disrespectful attitude, yelling at Bruce, "Ok ok ok! I'm trying!" Bruce went toward James and began yelling at him saying he was tired of James being disrespectful. Bruce's anger continued and he hit James on the top of the head, across the face and punched him in the forehead. After continued back and forth between Bruce and James, Bruce told James to go to his room, and James refused. Bruce tried to physically remove and carry James from the kitchen table to James' bedroom and James went limp. James began to hit Bruce. Bruce grabbed James' wrist to restrain him and the mother Melanie jumped on Bruce's back. Bruce pushed Melanie against the glass doors in the kitchen and slapped her across the face several times. The mother told James to go upstairs and James went upstairs. Bruce threw several kitchen chairs out of his way and went upstairs to continue his discussion with James. He grabbed James by the shoulders to put James physically in his bed and James again went limp at which time Bruce slapped James' legs and told James to "stay put" and that he will get a "0" on his homework because he would not allow him to continue with homework. The mother again tried to intervene and get Bruce out of the room and Bruce pushed Melanie out of the way on his way out. Bruce left the room, went outside to cool off and smoke a cigarette. Melanie told her 3 year old Byron to lock the door. During the physical altercation, the mother intervened by jumping on the Bruce's back to keep him from hurting James. James sustained minor scratches on his arm and throat. Melanie sustained a broken pinky finger. There are 2 other children in the home, Byron and Shane, who witnessed the incident and were fearful of Bruce's behavior. Byron was yelling at his father to "stop hurting Bubba". Byron and Shane were both crying hysterically during the incident.

#### Surrounding Circumstances

On 01/09/14, the step-father Bruce had been drinking since 12:00 and returned home at approximately 8:00pm, intoxicated. Upon arriving, Melanie told Bruce that James was still working on his homework and had been sitting at the table for 2 hours because he refused to complete his writing assignment. The mother and Bruce engaged in a conversation about James' grades. Bruce became upset and went to discipline James. Once Bruce was locked out of the house Melanie contacted Bruce's mother, Leann Beys, to come to the home to pick Bruce up. She also contacted her mother, Pam Block, who contacted the police and responded to the home. Bruce left the home and has been residing with his mother since the incident.

Law enforcement reported that the Bruce had been drinking earlier but did not appear to be intoxicated, was not slurring, stumbling, or incoherent. Melanie asserted that Bruce came home from a bar and was intoxicated. Upon CPI interviews, the Bruce could not remember details of the evening or exactly what he informed LE, but his account was similar to Melanie's and James'. James and Bruce have a difficult relationship.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

Maltreatment Findings: Verified for physical injury re: James with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible; Verified for substance misuse-alcohol re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as the caregiver responsible; Verified family violence threatens child re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible.

The family has two prior investigations, one in 2009 and one in 2012. In 2009, the investigation alleged Inadequate Supervision of James (Age 6) as he was reported to play outside without supervision. At this time, Bruce was not a participant in this family. The investigation included James, Melanie and the maternal grandmother, Pam Block. After interviewing the household members, neighbors, and relative collaterals, the information gathered indicated that James was always appropriately supervised while playing outside, either by the mother, grandmother, or a neighbor who often provided support to the family.

Then in 2012, a report was received that included Melanie, Bruce, James (Age 8) and Byron (Age 1). This report had similar reported concerns as the current investigation including physical abuse and substance abuse by Bruce. Additionally, the prior reflected challenges for Melanie and Bruce's ability to effectively manage James's behavior. During the reported incident Bruce, while frustrated, struck James across the cheek with an open hand. Bruce acknowledged a prior arrest associated with alcohol in 2007 and was reported to be drinking alcohol during this incident however, the final assessment did not include alcohol as a contributing factor and indicated that Bruce was a social drinker. Additionally, all interviewed agreed that James demonstrates disrespectful behavior, specifically toward Melanie and Bruce. However, it was learned that he also demonstrates the behavior outside of the home (maternal grandmother had to send him home after visiting due to behavior). The investigation was closed with No Indicators of Substance Misuse – Alcohol and Not Substantiated for Physical Injury and the family was referred to preventative services to address parenting skills of how to understand and parent a child with ADHD and difficult behaviors.

**Analysis**  
Based on the prior history and the information gathered via observations and interviews, Bruce's excessive consumption of alcohol, demeaning behavior and physical altercations are a contributing factor to the negative conditions in the home.





# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

**Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James' biological father; friend of parents, Ed Barth, James' teacher Mr. Madison, James' counselor, DCF Prior history

Related Impending Danger Threats	Impending Danger Threat?	
	Yes	No
<b>Based on case information specific to the Extent of Maltreatment and Circumstances Surrounding Maltreatment Assessment domains, indicate Yes, Impending Danger exists or No, Impending Danger does not exist.</b>		
Parent's/Legal Guardian's or Caregiver's intentional and willful act caused serious physical injury to the child, or the parent/legal guardian or caregiver intended to seriously injure the child.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Child has a serious illness or injury (indicative of child abuse) that is unexplained, or the Parent's/Legal Guardian's or Caregiver's explanations are inconsistent with the illness or injury.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The child's physical living conditions are hazardous and a child has already been seriously injured or will likely be seriously injured. The living conditions seriously endanger the child's physical health.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
There are reports of serious harm and the child's whereabouts cannot be determined and/or there is a reason to believe that the family is about to flee to avoid agency intervention and/or the family refuses access to the child to assess for serious harm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver is not meeting the child's essential medical needs AND the child is has already been seriously harmed or will likely be serious harmed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other. Explain:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**II. CHILD FUNCTIONING**

How does the child function on a daily basis? Include physical health, development; emotion and temperament; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-control; educational performance; peer relations; behaviors that seem to provoke parent/caregiver reaction/behavior; activities with family and others. Include a description of each child's vulnerability based on threats identified.

**James Sandler:**

James Sandler is in the fifth grade. He does well academically even though his stepfather and mother believe that he should be doing better and that he lacks focus. James' favorite subject is math and he doesn't like writing. He has a lot of homework. He is currently on a 504 plan and has a scheduled meeting for an IEP. For fun he likes to ride his bike and play video games. He has ADHD and is taking medication; he takes Concerta in the morning and Ritalin booster at lunchtime at school. On certain days, it doesn't take James anytime to complete his homework assignments and at other times they are up past 10:00pm finishing because James lacks focus or is obstinate and refuses to participate. He has severe asthma and uses a nebulizer and Xopenex.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

James was observed during several interviews to insert himself into the conversation even after being redirected. According to Bruce, James has been involved in adult conversations his entire life and has not had much, if any, discipline prior to him and Melanie getting together. Melanie described James as needy and being a momma's boy, he is the complete opposite personality of his stepfather and younger brother Byron. Bruce and James do Boy Scouts together and Bruce is the den leader. Melanie and James both state that James makes friends easily and is able to keep the friends that he does make. Bruce thinks that James is a little socially awkward and tries to help him interact with children in the neighborhood by inviting them to play ball or go ride bikes. Bruce described James as being abrasive with other children. The school noted similar interactions and observations. James doesn't understand that when he tells the girl down the street that he doesn't want to play with her because she talks too much, why she doesn't want to play with him the following day. Bruce doesn't feel that James has had consistent discipline or that consequences have been followed through with and his disrespectful behaviors continue to escalate. He throws fits if he doesn't get his way. Bruce said that James is not a bad kid, but he has been paid a disservice by not being told no and being punished for lashing out when he doesn't get his way.

James' MGM acknowledged that James can be difficult at times, but she usually gives him time to deescalate by providing him a quiet environment and time to settle down at which time she will talk with him about his behavior and reasons why he can't act the way he does at times.

James said he has a lot of friends. Said he doesn't have a hard time making or keeping friends. He described himself as "smart." He said he likes to play with his brother and help his mom watch the baby. James knows he takes medication to help him to pay attention and stay focused at school. He said he doesn't really notice a difference from when he isn't on but he said everybody says they notice a difference, that he's able to focus and finish his work. He said his mom or Bruce usually wake him in the morning for school, he gets dressed, brushes his teeth then goes downstairs for breakfast. He said mom usually makes breakfast or cereal and he takes the bus to school and back. When he gets home from school, he said usually his mom helps him with homework but he doesn't need a lot of help then he can play video games until bedtime at 9:00. He said he doesn't have any chores. James was observed interacting patiently with his siblings.

James' father, Michael Sandler, does not play an active role in James' life, only seeing him when James is being watched by the maternal grandmother

**Analysis:** James presents as an articulate boy who is described by others as a smart kid with behaviors that can be challenging, disrespectful, argumentative, and prone to tantrums.

### **Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James' biological father; CPI observations, James' teacher Mr. Madison, James' counselor, DCF Prior history

### **Byron Braun**

Byron was observed to be articulate with his mother and sibling, but shy with strangers like CPI, demonstrating age consistent stranger anxiety. He was prone to staying close to his mother during CPI visits to the home. He would spend his time in the living room watching the TV or would stand behind his mother. His mother stated that he was



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

very upset the night of the incident, he was yelling at his dad to leave his brother alone. He is described as very independent, he likes to go to the bathroom by himself and wipe himself; he doesn't like for others to come and check on him while he is in the bathroom. He likes to dress himself. His mother feels that his independence is due to him trying to keep up with his older brother. He is able to kick a large ball. He recognizes familiar things. He can and prefers to feed himself. He knows the names of things and people. Byron plays well with others and is able to speak clearly.

**Analysis:**

Byron presents as bright child, fully engaged in exploring his environment. He demonstrated gross and fine motor skills through walking, climbing and jumping as well as eating finger foods from a bowl; socialization skills as described; problem solving skills in that he figured out how to reach a book from a higher shelf by finding a stool and climbing up to get it; and appeared within normal limits re: his cognitive development.

**Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Byron's mother, Melanie Braun; biological father, Bruce Braun, MGM Pam Block, CPI observations and DCF Prior history

**Shane Braun**

Shane is 2 months old. The child appears to be within normal limits for height and weight. By report, he has doubled in weight since birth. He was observed cooing, he smiles for his mother when she feeding him. He was observed kicking his feet and moving his hands while feeding. He would look at his mother's face while she was talking to him. He puts his hands to his mouth. His mother is either breastfeeding him or supplementing with a bottle.

**Analysis:** Shane presents as developmentally within normal limits for physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. There were no obvious physical, cognitive, or other developmental concerns noted nor any information provided to indicate an issue or concern.

**Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Shane's mother, Melanie Braun; biological father, Bruce Braun, MGM Pam Block, and CPI observations.

**Related Child Functioning Impending Danger Threats:**

Based on case information specific to the Child Functioning Assessment domain, indicate Yes, Impending Danger exists or No, Impending Danger does not exist.

Impending Danger Threat?	
Yes	No

Child shows serious emotional symptoms requiring intervention and/or lacks behavioral control and/or exhibits self-destructive behavior that the Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver are unwilling or unable to manage to keep the child safe

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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### III. ADULT FUNCTIONING



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

How does the adult function on a daily basis? Overall life management. Include assessment and analysis of prior child abuse/neglect history, criminal behavior, impulse control, substance use/abuse, violence and domestic violence, mental health; include an assessment of the adult's physical health, emotion and temperament, cognitive ability; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-control; education; peer and family relations, employment, etc.

#### **Melanie Braun:**

Melanie is 39 years old. She and Bruce have been married for 3 years. She has two children with her current husband and James from a previous marriage to Michael Sandler. She is still in contact with James' biological father as he lives with Melanie's mother. Melanie and Michael divorce due to Michael's severe depression. Melanie is employed as an assistant manager at Publix, she recently returned to work from maternity leave. Melanie has a few close friends from work that she relies on and confides in. Her mother, Pam, is a very strong support system for her as well. She has worked there for the last two years, and has steady employment history. She has her Bachelor's degree in Fashion Merchandising from FSU. She has been diagnosed with dyslexia. She denied any history of substance abuse or current mental health disorder; she takes medication for her thyroid. She said that she did have 'baby blues' with Byron and took antidepressants for a bit. She denied feeling that way with Shane, and stated that at the time Byron was born, she was under a lot of stress and had recently lost her job. She stated that she was forced to grow up rather quickly because her mother had a history of depression and she sometimes had to care for her mother once she was stabilized on medication. When her parents divorced, her maternal grandmother took on an active parenting role in Melanie's life. She said that her parents divorced when she was 2 years old. She said that she was extremely close with her mother and she continues to be. Melanie stated that her mother's depression has been managed for at least 10 years with medication. She was rebuilding her relationship with her father after finding him approximately 3 years ago when he collapsed from cardiac arrest and died several weeks prior to the this investigation. Melanie noted that she finds herself sad at times now but denies depression, suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Melanie reports that she was also picked on as a child for being overweight but that her mother and grandmother were very supportive.

Bruce believes that Melanie's mother is too involved in their marriage. Melanie has been under a lot of stress and copes with stress by crying. Melanie is very concerned with others' feelings. She was very aware of her actions as a child because she didn't want to upset her mother. When she gets time to herself she often thinks about her father or some of the problems she has with Bruce and she cries. She said that sometimes she cries a lot but not in front of the children. This Christmas was hard with her father passing. She has been a little sad because she has had to go back to work so soon and doesn't like being separated from her baby. Melanie described herself as a warm, caring, non-confrontational person who is having a hard time keeping things calm between her husband and her son.

#### **Analysis:**

Melanie appears conflicted between her relationship with her son and her relationship with her husband and has a difficult time managing both relationships and helping them to work past their disagreements. She is active in her relationship and community and has recently returned to the workforce. Given her non-confrontational personality, she justifies much of Bruce's binge drinking and volatile behavior and has a tendency to avoid confrontation with Bruce.

#### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Braun; spouse Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block; ex-husband Michael Sandler; mother in law Leann Beys; friend Ed Barth; CPI observations, and prior DCF history.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

#### **Bruce Braun:**

Bruce is 30 years old. Melanie is his first marriage. He is currently employed at Florida City Concrete where he is a foreman and has been there for 3 years. Bruce is typically a quiet and reserved personality. He is a hard worker and holds himself and others to high expectations. He becomes frustrated when those others do not meet his expectations and he sometimes lashes out verbally. Bruce denied ever having any alcohol related problems at work, however his mother reports that he was fired from the Department of Treasury for showing up to work smelling like alcohol. Bruce discussed his alcohol intake as something he likes to do on occasion but not something that he has to do. He normally drinks maybe once a week, it isn't always to the point of intoxication. He said that the only time he and Melanie argue about it is if she is mad when he comes home and has been drinking. Bruce admits to drinking alcohol regularly as a teen and for years into adulthood. He stated he has a DUI in 2007 and was arrested from drunk and disorderly about the same time. Bruce has an extensive family history of alcohol abuse and violence. His father was an alcoholic and abusive towards him and his siblings. His siblings also have problems with drinking and have alcohol related arrests. He does not think he has a problem controlling his alcohol consumption and says he drinks for release only on the weekends. He said he may have a few beers during the week but denies ever drinking to intoxication during the week. He acknowledged that sometimes when he consumes too much alcohol, he will not remember parts of his night. He stated that he used to drink hard liquor but he said he was a mean drunk "like yelling at people and saying ugly things to people, being obnoxious and angry" so he stopped drinking hard liquor and only drinks beer now for the last 4 years. He said he doesn't think his personality changes when he drinks beer and that he feels he has control over how much he consumes; that he chooses to drink to excess when he is with his friends or brother. There has been a history of violence between Bruce and his brother, Steven, when they were drinking. Steven was saying degrading things to Bruce about Melanie and James, Bruce stood up for them and it resulted in a physical fight.

Bruce admitted that he will sometimes scream and yell and is impatient when he has been drinking. Bruce stated that there have been times when he has thrown things like dishes or pushed things out of his way like tables or chairs, but he denied ever throwing things at his family or another person and does not see it as an issue but rather 'a way to let off steam without hurting anybody'

The main arguments between Bruce and Melanie are about James. He usually removes himself from escalating situations with James. Bruce describes himself as a fun person, easy to get along with, with high expectations. Family and friends report that Bruce is a very nice person and caring husband and father when he is not drinking, but when he is drinking there is a significant change in his behavior and demeanor.

#### **Analysis:**

Bruce's quiet and reserved personality changes when he starts drinking. When he consumes alcohol, his personality becomes hostile, volatile, and aggressive. He is sometimes physically assaultive with his wife and stepson when he drinks. This appears to be a pervasive pattern of behavior that has recently escalated. **Observations and**

#### **Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: spouse Melanie Sandler Braun; Bruce Braun; mother in law Pam Block; Melanie's ex-husband Michael Sandler; PGM Leann Beys; friend Ed Barth; CPI observations, and prior DCF history



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

<b>Related Adult Functioning Impending Danger Threats:</b>  <b>Based on case information specific to the Adult Functioning Assessment domain, indicate Yes, Impending Danger exists or No, Impending Danger does not exist.</b>	<b>Impending Danger Threat?</b>	
	Yes	No
Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver is violent, impulsive, cannot or will not control behavior or is acting dangerously in ways that have seriously harmed the child or will likely seriously harm to the child.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### IV. PARENTING

General – What are the overall, typical, parenting practices used by the parents/legal guardians? Discipline/Behavior Management – What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parents/legal guardians, and under what circumstances?

##### **Melanie Braun:**

Melanie described being a parent as rewarding and challenging at the same time. Melanie remembers when she was a child trying not to get in trouble and she is very cautious of how her actions affect other people's feelings. With that, she thinks that is why she has a hard time holding James accountable for his negative behaviors because she doesn't want him to not like her or become upset with her. Melanie thinks that James often intentionally says things to upset her and make her cry because he knows she won't hold him accountable. She believes that sometimes James needs to be spanked but she doesn't usually do it. She feels like physical discipline should be the last resort. She allows Bruce to spank James but he doesn't do it frequently. She said that after James is spanked, his attitude changes and he is apologetic for his actions. She admits that she is not consistent with discipline.

Melanie was observed talking gently to Shane, smiling at him and engaging him in playful interaction. When she was observed interacting with Byron, Melanie was attentive, interested, and patient talking with the child, not at the child.

Her most rewarding thing about being a parent is how much she is loved. Her family describes Melanie as an active parent, involved in everything from school and homework. Melanie does most of the child rearing in the household.

**Analysis:** Melanie understands only the basics of raising a child with ADHD and manages James' diagnosis and treatment only during the weekdays for school. Melanie appears to parent who avoids confrontation and makes decisions often based on emotion. Melanie grew up in an environment where her mother suffered through the ups and downs of depression and at least one hospitalization and although her mother is stable now on medication, she was often thrown in the caregiver role of her mother. She is uncomfortable with confrontation from disciplining James, redirecting James, upsetting her mother, or her husband and abdicates discipline responsibility to others. She is a people pleaser and does not want to look like the villain in the eyes of her children, preferring to present as the rescuer. Melanie may not fully understand child development impacts on adult interactions.

##### **Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Sandler Braun; spouse Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block; ex-husband Michael Sandler; mother in law Leann Beys; friend Ed Barth; CPI observations, and prior DCF history

## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

#### **Bruce Braun:**

Bruce always wanted to be a father and considers it “the most important job in the world”. Bruce feels he is very family oriented and spends quality time with all three of his children. Bruce and James are very involved in Boy Scouts, Bruce is the den leader. When he moved in with Melanie and James, it was his first time parenting a child (James was approx. 4 yrs old then). He didn't know that all children were not like James until he started talking to more people and seeing his friends' children. He doesn't think that James was disciplined or corrected prior to him coming into their lives. He doesn't think that it is appropriate that James is involved and made aware of so much adult conversation. He admits that it frustrates him when he is speaking to Melanie about what he expects of James and if he doesn't complete certain tasks what the punishment should be and James will interrupt and tell them what he will and will not do. He thinks that the child wastes time on doing his homework and then waits until it is late at night.

His philosophy on homework is different than Melanie's; she thinks she needs to sit next to him while he does it and help him the entire time. Bruce thinks that the homework is to be done by James and if he has a question, to ask and when he is done they check it. He believes that James is a smart child. He doesn't want his children to end up like James disrespecting him and Melanie. He thinks that children need discipline and routine. He said that Melanie will let James play video games because it is easier for her. He has taken the TV out of James' room. He doesn't like that he is undermined by Melanie and her mother. He feels that he is an adult in the home and he needs to make the rules. He has worked with James for the last 2 years on having a bedtime; he thinks it is important to the child and for him and Melanie because it allows them to have time to themselves as a couple. Bruce and James' relationship is good when it is just the two of them. When they are doing Boy Scouts together, there is no conflict, but after he gets home from the grandmother's house from the weekend, there is always attitude.

His philosophy of parenting is trying to teach them what is right and wrong, having good manners and respect and he hopes to have it sunk in by the time they turn 18 years old. He thinks it is rewarding when children say thank you and he feels that your children are a reflection on the parent's parenting. He is having difficulty learning how to manage so many different attitudes. He has only spanked James about 6 times and never Byron given his age; he uses time out with the James and Byron. He feels that Melanie doesn't help him or follow through with the discipline that they decide and it makes it harder in the long run for James to learn what is acceptable and not.

Bruce is thrilled to be a parent and considers it a dream come true. He recognizes the awesome responsibility of being a parent and is afraid to 'mess up.' He understands his protective role and hopes to give his children the love and attention he never received from his own father. He believes that they are lucky because they have grandparents that are available and able to watch the children.

Family and friends describe Bruce as a wonderful, patient and involved father with Byron and Shane. They recognize the challenges between Bruce and James, but overall, see their relationship growing. Bruce's drinking does inhibit the positive growth of Bruce's and James' relationship with Bruce's behavior often undoing the very lessons he is trying to teach.

**Analysis:** Bruce is a caring parent and informed stepparent who is trying to make a lasting and positive bond with his stepson James, but he has a difference of opinion about how children should behave than James' mother, Melanie and he thinks James is rebellious and argumentative to spite Bruce.



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

**Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: spouse Melanie Braun; Bruce Braun; mother in law Pam Block; Melanie's ex-husband Michael Sandler; PGM Leann Beys; friend Ed Barth; CPI observations, and prior DCF history

**Related Parenting Impending Danger Threats:**

Based on case information specific to the Parenting General and Parent Discipline Assessment domains, indicate Yes, Impending Danger exists or No, Impending Danger does not exist.

**Impending Danger Threat?**  
Yes      No

Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver is not meeting child's basic and essential needs for food, clothing, and/or supervision AND the child is/has already been seriously harmed or will likely be seriously harmed.

    

Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver is threatening to seriously harm the child and/or parent/legal guardian or caregiver is fearful he/she will seriously harm the child.

    

Parent/Legal Guardian or Caregiver views child and/or acts toward the child in extremely negative ways AND such behavior has or will result in serious harm to the child.

    

**V. PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN PROTECTIVE CAPACITIES ANALYSIS**

*If there are more than five Parent/Legal Guardians to assess, complete Appendix A – Parent/Legal Guardian Protective Capacities Analysis*

	Capacity Categories and Types																		
	Behavioral					Cognitive					Emotional								
	Controls Impulses	Takes Action	Sets aside own needs for child	Demonstrates adequate skills	History of Protecting	Adaptive as a Parent/Legal Guardian	Is self-aware	Is intellectually able	Recognizes threats	Recognizes child's needs	Understands protective role	Plans and articulates plans for protection	Meets own emotional needs	Is resilient	Is tolerant	Is stable	Expresses love, empathy, sensitivity to the child	Is positively attached with child	Is aligned and supports the child
Adults																			
Melanie Braun	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bruce Braun	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

**Parent/Legal Guardian Protective Capacity Determination Summary:**

Yes      No

Protective capacities are sufficient to manage identified threats of danger in relation to child's vulnerability?

    

**VI. CHILD SAFETY DETERMINATION AND SUMMARY**

*If there are more than five children to assess, complete Appendix B – Child Safety Determination and Summary*





## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

Child	Safety Determination
<b>James Sandler</b>	<p>Safe – No impending danger safety threats that meet the safety threshold.</p> <p>Safe – Impending danger threats are being effectively controlled and managed by a parent/legal guardian in the home.</p> <p>✗ Unsafe</p>
<b>Byron Braun</b>	<p>Safe – No impending danger safety threats that meet the safety threshold.</p> <p>Safe – Impending danger threats are being effectively controlled and managed by a parent/legal guardian in the home.</p> <p>✗ Unsafe</p>
<b>Shane Braun</b>	<p>Safe – No impending danger safety threats that meet the safety threshold.</p> <p>Safe – Impending danger threats are being effectively controlled and managed by a parent/legal guardian in the home.</p> <p>✗ Unsafe</p>
	<p>Safe – No impending danger safety threats that meet the safety threshold.</p> <p>Safe – Impending danger threats are being effectively controlled and managed by a parent/legal guardian in the home.</p> <p>Unsafe</p>

**Child Safety Analysis Summary:**

When the reported incident occurred, Bruce had been excessively drinking for over 8 hours and violently lashed out at James and Melanie because James disrespected him. Bruce's alcohol consumption exacerbates the danger in the home to the children because it inhibits Bruce's willingness or ability to control his impulses and his physical and verbal aggressiveness has escalated with James and Melanie. Within the last year, there have been at least three incidents of alcohol related violence in the home which are increasing in severity. There are also reports of physical violence and aggressiveness by Bruce towards others outside of the home when he has been drinking. Bruce has encountered alcohol related problems in his life since his teen years. His alcohol related outburst are becoming more frequent and more violent. There are concerns that he is drinking so much that he cannot remember his actions the next day. All the children were present during this recent incident and while Bruce has not acted aggressively towards Byron or Shane his actions could very likely result in substantial injury to these very young children.

### VII. IN-HOME SAFETY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

	Yes	No
The Parent/Legal Guardians are willing for an in-home safety plan to be developed and implemented and have demonstrated that they will cooperate with all identified safety service providers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The home environment is calm and consistent enough for an in-home safety plan to be implemented and for safety service providers to be in the home safely.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety services are available at a sufficient level and to the degree necessary in order to manage the way in which impending danger is manifested in the home.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An in-home safety plan and the use of in-home safety services can sufficiently manage impending danger without the results of scheduled professional evaluations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Parent/Legal Guardians have a physical location in which to implement an in-home safety plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment

If “Yes” to all of SECTION VII. above – Child(ren) will remain in the home with an In-Home Safety Plan

**In-Home Safety Plan**

The child(ren) is/are determined “unsafe,” but through in-home safety analysis above, an in-home Impending Danger Safety Plan is executed which allows a child to remain in the home with the use of in-home safety management and services in order to manage the way in which impending danger is manifested in the home while treatment and safety management services can be determined and initiated.

- ❖ A safety plan must be implemented, monitored, and actively managed by the Agency.
- ❖ The case will be opened for safety management and case management services

If “No” to any of SECTION VII. above – Out of Home Safety Plan is the only protective intervention possible for one or more children. Out of Home Safety options should be evaluated from least intrusive (e.g. family-designated arrangements as a task or condition of the Out of Home Safety Plan) to most intrusive (e.g. agency removal and placement).

Given family dynamics and circumstances, also evaluate and determine if In-Home Safety Plan needs judicial oversight to facilitate court accountability. Refer to administrative code and operating manual for guidance.

**Out-of-Home Safety Plan**

- ❖ An impending danger safety plan must be implemented, monitored, and actively managed by the Agency.
- ❖ The case will be open for safety management, case management, and reunification services

**If an Out-of-home Safety Plan is necessary, summarize reason for out of home safety actions and conditions for return. Conditions for return should be related to reasons for removal and behaviorally based. These are parent/legal guardian actions and behaviors that must be demonstrated to sufficiently address the impending danger and allow for the child to safely return home with an In Home Safety Plan and continued safety and case plan services and management.**

Sent: 2014-01-10 11:20:14  
MNE-HDR: Y12345678  
TEST-IND-HDR: N  
ATTN-HDR: DCF/FAH/ 2014-000001  
CONT-NBR-HDR: 1111  
MKE: FQI  
ORI: FL111111F  
FN: BRUCE  
LN: BRAUN  
RAC: W  
SEX: M  
DOB: 19831017 PUR-  
CCH: Q

Received: 2014-01-10 11:21:10 DEV-NBR-  
HDR:  
MNE-HDR: Y12345678  
ATTN-HDR: DCF/FAH/2014-000001 CONT-NBR-  
HDR: 1111  
DTE-HDR: 20140110  
TIME-HDR: 1121  
MSG-NBR-HDR: 00002  
MKE: FC  
FC FL111111F00000008 QDCF/FAH/2014-000001

-FLORIDA CCH RESPONSE--  
ATN/DCF/FAH/2014-000001  
FC.DLE/00000008.PUR/Q.ATN/DCF/FAH/2014-000001  
SID NUMBER: 32134547 PURPOSE CODE:Q PAGE: 1  
BECAUSE ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS MAY BE MADE AT ANY TIME,  
A NEW COPY SHOULD BE REQUESTED WHEN NEEDED FOR FUTURE  
USE

- FLORIDA CRIMINAL HISTORY -

NAME	STATE ID NO.	FBI NO.	DATEREQUESTED
BRAUN, BRUCE	FL-32134547		01/10/2014
SEX RACE BIRTH DATE HEIGHT WEIGHT EYES HAIR BIRTH PLACE SKIN DOC NO.			
M W 10/17/1983 5'11" 185 BRO BRO			

AKA	DOB	SOC	SCR/MRK/TAT
BRAWN, BRUCE	10/27/1983		
BRAUN, BRAD	10/17/1984		

--CONTINUED--

SID NUMBER: 32134547 PURPOSE CODE:Q PAGE: 2

ARREST- 1 01/03/2005 OBTS NO.-0012345678  
ARREST AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
(FL1110000)  
AGENCY CASE-OFFENSE DATE-01/03/2005  
CHARGE 001-BATTERY-  
STATUTE/ORDINANCE- LEVEL-FELONY, 3<sup>RD</sup> DEGREE  
JUDICIAL-  
AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COURT (FL0000001J)  
CHARGE 001 – COURT SEQ COURT NO. -000000XX123122121X00001  
SUPPLEMENTAL ARREST DATA-  
STATUS-LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 1<sup>ST</sup> DEGREE  
PROSC DATA-BATTERY-  
STATUTE/ORDINANCE-FL784.03(1) LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 1<sup>ST</sup> DEG  
STATUTE DESCRIPTN-BATTERY-  
PROS-ACTION-DATE-03/12/2005 ACTION-FILED  
DISP DATE- 08/04/2005 DISP-NOLLE PROCESSED

-----  
ARREST- 2 01/12/2007 OBTS NO.-0000123456  
ARREST AGENCY-ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
(FL02220000)  
AGENCY CASE-OFFENSE DATE- 01/12/2007  
CHARGE 001-RACING HWY-  
STATUTE/ORDINANCE-316.191 LEVEL-  
MISDEMEANOR, 1<sup>ST</sup> DEG  
JUDICIAL-  
AGENCY-ORANGE COUNTY COURT (FL0222Y00J)  
CHARGE 001 – COURT SEQ COURT NO. -000000XX123442121X00001  
SUPPLEMENTAL ARREST DATA-  
STATUS-LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 1<sup>ST</sup> DEGREE  
PROSC DATA-RACING HWY-  
STATUTE/ORDINANCE-FL316.191 (2) LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 1<sup>ST</sup> DEG  
STATUTE DESCRIPTN-RACING HWY-  
PROS-ACTION-DATE-11/20/2007 ACTION-FILED  
DISP DATE- 11/27/2007 DISP-NOLLE PROCESSED

-----  
ARREST- 3 04/22/2007 OBTS NO.-00667788  
ARREST AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
(FL1110000)

--CONTINUED--

SID NUMBER: 32134547 PURPOSE CODE:Q PAGE: 3

AGENCY CASE-OFFENSE DATE- 04/22/2007

CHARGE 001-DISORDERLY INTOX-

STATUTE/ORDINANCE- 856.011(1) LEVEL-

MISDEMEANOR 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG

JUDICIAL-

AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COURT (FL0000001J)

CHARGE 001 – COURT SEQ COURT NO. -000000XX123333121X00001

SUPPLEMENTAL ARREST DATA-

STATUS-LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup>DEGREE

PROSC DATA-DISORDERLY INTOX-

STATUTE/ORDINANCE-FL856.011(3) LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG

STATUTE DESCRIPTN-DISORDERLY INTOX-

PROS-ACTION-DATE-05/13/2007 ACTION-FILED

DISP DATE- 10/28/2007 DISP-DROPPED/ABANDONED

-----  
ARREST- 4 05/06/2007 OBTS NO.-00667788

ARREST AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT

(FL1110000)

AGENCY CASE-OFFENSE DATE- 05/06/2007

CHARGE 001-DISORDERLY INTOX-

STATUTE/ORDINANCE- 856.011(1) LEVEL-

MISDEMEANOR 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG

JUDICIAL-

AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COURT (FL0000001J)

CHARGE 001 – COURT SEQ COURT NO. -000000XX123333121X00001

SUPPLEMENTAL ARREST DATA-

STATUS-LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup>DEGREE

PROSC DATA-DISORDERLY INTOX-

STATUTE/ORDINANCE-FL856.011(3) LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG

STATUTE DESCRIPTN-DISORDERLY INTOX-

PROS-ACTION-DATE-06/10/2007 ACTION-FILED

DISP DATE- 02/11/2008 DISP-CONVICTED-FINE

-----  
ARREST- 5 06/13/2007 OBTS NO.-00667788

ARREST AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT

(FL1110000)

AGENCY CASE-OFFENSE DATE- 06/13/2007

CHARGE 001-DISORDERLY INTOX-

STATUTE/ORDINANCE- 856.011(1) LEVEL-

MISDEMEANOR 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG

JUDICIAL-

AGENCY-MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COURT (FL0000001J)

CHARGE 001 – COURT SEQ COURT NO. -000000XX123333121X00001

--CONTINUED--

SID NUMBER: 32134547 PURPOSE CODE:Q PAGE: 4

SUPPLEMENTAL ARREST DATA-  
STATUS-LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup> DEGREE  
PROSC DATA-DISORDERLY INTOX-  
STATUTE/ORDINANCE-FL856.011(3) LEVEL-MISDEMEANOR, 2<sup>ND</sup> DEG  
STATUTE DESCRIPTN-DISORDERLY INTOX-  
PROS-ACTION-DATE-07/02/2007 ACTION-FILED  
DISP DATE- 04/10/2008 DISP-CONVICTED-PROB/JAIL  
SENTENCING DATE  
SENTENCING AGENCY  
SENTENCE 001 DAYS JAIL; 038 MONTHS PROBATION; FINE

THIS RECORD CONTAINS FLORIDA INFORMATION ONLY. WHEN  
EXPLANATION OF A CHARGE  
OR DISPOSITION IS NEEDED, COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THE  
AGENCY THAT CONTRIBUTED THE RECORD INFORMATION. THIS  
RECORD MAY ONLY BE USED FOR THE PURPOSES DEFINED BY  
FLORIDA STATUTE.  
THIS CONTAINS FLORIDA RECORD ONLY.  
UNKNOWN AS TO NATIONAL RECORD STATUS.  
END OF RECORD

--END--

**JIS SYSTEMS CHECKED**

APPRISS: Booking System

DHSMV: DAVID

Department of Corrections

Department of Juvenile Justice System

**JIS SYSTEMS NOT CHECKED**



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Child Safety Plan

Case Name: Braun, Melanie Intake/Investigation ID: 2014-000001

Worker Name: Garrett, Kelly Effective Date: 02/20/2014

Safety Plan Purpose: Impending Danger

Child Name	Date of Birth	Age
James Sandler	11/03/2003	10
Byron Braun	01/24/2011	3
Shane Braun	11/16/2013	2 months
<i>If there are more than five children, please list all remaining children in this row:</i>		

### I. DANGER THREAT(S) DESCRIPTION

Specific Threats to Child Safety – Describe safety concerns that would pose present or impending danger

When the reported incident occurred, Bruce had been excessively drinking for over 8 hours and violently lashed out at James and Melanie because James disrespected him. Bruce's alcohol consumption exacerbates the danger in the home to the children because it inhibits Bruce's willingness or ability to control his impulses and his physical and verbal aggressiveness has escalated with James and Melanie. There are also reports of physical violence and aggressiveness by Bruce towards others outside of the home when he has been drinking. Bruce has encountered alcohol related problems in his life since his teen years. His alcohol related outbursts are becoming more frequent and more violent. There are concerns that he is drinking so much that he cannot remember his actions the next day. All the children were present during this recent incident and while Bruce has not acted aggressively towards Byron or Shane his actions could very likely result in substantial injury to these very young





# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Child Safety Plan

children.

### II. SAFETY PLAN

Actions to Keep Child Safe	Who is Responsible for the Action?	Resources or People Who Will Help	Freq. of Intervention	Who is Responsible for Monitoring
Ed Barth will call Bruce every weekday at 6pm while Bruce is on his way home from work to ensure Bruce is not stressed and has no plans of drinking. If during this call, Ed determines that Bruce is or will likely be drinking that evening, then he will contact Pam so that she can make arrangements to either stay the night in the home or take the children to her house.	Ed Barth	Pam Block	Every Week Day	Child Welfare Professional



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Child Safety Plan

<p>Pam Block will greet Bruce at the home every week day to ensure that Bruce came home without drinking, that there is no alcohol in the home and she will help Melanie and Bruce with the nightly activities including homework.</p>	<p>Pam Block</p>		<p>Every Weekday</p>	<p>Child Welfare Professional</p>
<p>If during Pam's weeknight visits she observes Bruce to become agitated, frustrated or aggressive during evening parenting activities, such as homework or family time, she will take the children, and Melanie is welcome to go also if she chooses, to her home until she has confirmed that Bruce has calmed down. Allowing them to stay overnight if needed. She will also contact the Child Welfare Professional to notify him/her that this has</p>	<p>Pam Block</p>		<p>Every Weekday</p>	<p>Child Welfare Professional</p>



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Child Safety Plan

<p>Every Friday at 6pm through Sunday at 6pm, the children will stay with paternal grandmother, Leann Beys. If when Leanne returns the children to the home on Sunday evening, Bruce has been drinking, then she will take the children to the Pam Block's home to stay the night or Pam will come to the home to stay with the family. Leann, Bruce and Melanie will make arrangements for any contact between the Melanie and Bruce and the children.</p>	<p>Leann Beys</p>	<p>Pam Block</p>	<p>Friday 6pm-Sunday 6pm</p>	<p>Child Welfare Professional</p>
---	-------------------	------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------------

### III. TERMINATION

Termination Date:

Reason Plan is No Longer Required: **Select a Reason**

Other Reason Plan is No Longer Required:

### IV. SIGNATURES

Caregiver:

Date:

Caregiver:

Date:

Other:

Date:



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Child Safety Plan

---

Other:

Date:

---

Other:

Date:

---

Worker:

Date:

---

Supervisor:

Date:

---



**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY (IS)**  
**Child In-Home Investigation**  
**(without Reporter Information)**

---

Case Name: Sandler, Melanie	Intake Number: 2012-000000-01	Investigation Sub-Type: In-Home	County:
Date/Time Intake Received: 02.28.2012 11:35 AM		Date/Time Screening Decision:	Protective Investigator: Duncan, Sabrina
Date/Time Investigation Closed: xx/xx/2012		Protective Investigator Supervisor: Townsend, Charles	

---

**I. Allegation Narrative(s):**

Initial:

There are allegations of Physical Injury. Last night, (02.27.12) James was getting beat up by his step-father Bruce Braun. Step-father Bruce cornered James and struck him. It is unknown if James sustained injuries. It is unknown if mother Melanie was present. There is history of similar issues. DCF has been involved in the past.

Step-father Bruce is an alcoholic; he drinks every weekend to intoxication. Step-father may be intoxicated when he strikes James and is caring for his own child Byron.

Step-father broke the mother Melanie's arm in the past. No other details are known.

When it comes to disciplining James, the mother allows the step-father Bruce to do what he wants to do. Mother Melanie is Bipolar. All the mother does is yell at James for discipline. No other information was obtained regarding dynamics of the family.

Supplemental - 02

On February 27, 2012, the stepfather cornered child James and hit him. It is not known if James was injured or bruised. In the past, the stepfather scratched James on his arm when disciplining. There is a past report of DV between the stepfather Bruce and mother Melanie.

The mother Melanie is Bipolar. She stays at home and cares for the kids. She yells at the kids as discipline.

The stepfather Bruce works at a call center. He yells and screams at the kids.

James' father Michael Sandler is unemployed. He talks to James and uses time out as discipline.



**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY (IS)**  
**Child In-Home Investigation**  
**(with Reporter Information)**

**II. Victim(s)**

Name	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Disabilities
Sandler, James	11.03.2003	8	Male	White	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Maltreatment	Findings	Incident Date	Caregiver Responsible	Fatality	
Physical Injury	Not Substantiated	02.27.2012		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Intervention Services are Needed:	Placement Outside the Home is Required:	Judicial Action Required:			
No	No	No			

Name	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Disabilities
Sandler, James	11.03.2003	8	Male	White	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Maltreatment	Findings	Incident Date	Caregiver Responsible	Fatality	
Substance Misuse - Alcohol	No Indicator	02.27.2012		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Intervention Services are Needed:	Placement Outside the Home is Required:	Judicial Action Required:			
No	No	No			

Name	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Disabilities
Braun, Byron	01.24.2011	1	Male	White	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Maltreatment	Findings	Incident Date	Caregiver Responsible	Fatality	
Substance Misuse - Alcohol	No Indicator	02.27.2012		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Intervention Services are Needed:	Placement Outside the Home is Required:	Judicial Action Required:			
No	No	No			

**III. Other Participant(s)**

Name	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Roles
Braun, Melanie	09.22.1976		Female	White	Parent in Home
Name Braun, Bruce	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Roles
	10.17.1983		Male	White	Parent in Home
Name	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Roles

**IV. Implications for Child Safety**

**A. Signs of Present Danger Implications**

There are no present danger threats at this time. While visiting family, it appears that the step father Bruce and child James became engaged in a yelling match. After numerous corrections and redirection from the mother Melanie and stepfather Bruce, Bruce took James outside to talk with him about his behavior. James became argumentative and told Bruce that he didn't have to listen to him and that he would do what he wanted to do then turned to leave and go back inside. Bruce reached for James to continue talking to him and James yelled that he hated Bruce. Bruce and James acknowledged that Bruce struck James on the cheek with an open hand. They both denied force or injury. James contacted his biological father Michael and reported that Bruce had just beat him up to which law enforcement was contacted. James and Bruce continued to talk and resolve their

A person who knowingly or willfully makes public or discloses to any unauthorized person any confidential information contained in the Florida Safe Families Network is subject to the penalty provisions of s. [39.202](#).



## CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY (IS) Child In-Home Investigation (with Reporter Information)

frustrations. Police responded and James told them that it was his fault because of the things he was yelling at Bruce. There were no marks, redness or injuries noted by anyone at that time and none manifested afterward. All denied any previous similar incidents and cited this as the first time "to get James' attention" because he was yelling and would not listen. Bruce admits to being a social drinker and denies issues with control. He acknowledged that he was drinking that night, but denied that alcohol was a factor in the altercation. All who were interviewed denied excessive alcohol consumption or issues of drinking; all denied any violence or out of control behavior from Bruce regardless of drinking. There does not appear to be any danger to the child at this time. The home was observed to be appropriate and free of obvious environmental or health hazards. The mother Melanie and father/stepfather Bruce are providing for the care of the children

### **B. Child Vulnerability Implications**

Child James attends Florida City Elementary school daily and is an honor student. He is verbal and articulate. The child appears well cared for and there were no signs of physical or emotional abuse. He is diagnosed with ADHD for which he takes two medications to manage it: Concerta and Ritalin. He is involved in BoyScouts and has strong familial support with his grandparents and biological father

Child Byron is a one year old and is a vulnerable child by age.

There is a potential connection or logical relation between the child James' challenging behaviors, his vulnerabilities stemming from his behavioral diagnosis and Bruce and Melanie's reaction to those behaviors as he ages. The parents seem to be having some challenges managing James' negative attention seeking behaviors and would benefit from home-based parenting education and skill building specific for James' age and children with challenging behavior.

### **C. Protective Capacities Implications**

There is one prior report regarding the mother Melanie and maternal grandmother Pam Block with whom the mother and James resided during Melanie's divorce from James' father Michael in 2009. Bruce was not involved with the family at that time and therefore this is his first involved DCF report. There is a support system in place. Both Melanie and Bruce get help from family and friends and James' father is a support for him. Melanie and Bruce were observed interacting with the children James and Byron and they did so in a constructive manner, with patience. All interviewed describe Melanie and Bruce as positive role models and involved parents. James' biological father, while worried about this incident between James and Bruce, stated he has never been concerned with Melanie's and Bruce's parenting or ability to problem solve, recognize threats or control their impulses. Bruce is described as a social drinker by all with no out of control behaviors noted or described. The mother and father Bruce have the ability to protect the children and are doing so.

### **D. Criminal History Summary Implications for Child Safety**

The criminal history associated with this family does not present as concerning related to the children's safety. Melanie has no criminal history and Bruce has an arrest in 2007 for disorderly conduct in public. While that arrest has indications of poor impulse control, it has not been indicated to be a regularly recurring pattern of behavior based on no other arrests and on interviews conducted during the course of this investigation.

### **E. Prior Reports and Services Records Implications for Child Safety**

The prior DCF history included one report in 2009 regarding the mother Melanie and maternal grandmother Pam Block as the alleged perpetrators with allegations of Environmental Neglect and Inadequate Supervision. At that time, the home was found to be somewhat cluttered with toys, but not dangerous. As then, there was no indication of environmental hazard or dangerous living conditions during the course of this investigation. Similarly, at the time of the 2009 report, evidence supported that the mother and grandmother were vigilant with James' supervision when he was outside riding his bike or playing and always ensured that either an adult or a responsible person was outside with the child to ensure his safety. Similarly, information collected during this investigation supports positive, involved parenting and adequate supervision. This is the first investigation involving stepfather Bruce Braun.

## **V. Overall Safety Assessment**

The overall risk is low to the children at this time. While visiting family, it appears that the step father Bruce and child James became engaged in a yelling match. After numerous corrections and redirection from the mother Melanie and stepfather Bruce, Bruce took James outside to talk with him about his behavior. James became argumentative and told Bruce that he didn't have to listen to him and that he would do what he wanted to do then turned to leave and go back inside. Bruce reached for James to continue talking to him and James yelled that he hated Bruce. Bruce and James acknowledged that Bruce struck James on the cheek with an open hand. They both

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## CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY (IS) Child In-Home Investigation (with Reporter Information)

denied force or injury. James contacted his biological father Michael and reported that Bruce had just beat him up to which law enforcement was contacted. James and Bruce continued to talk and resolve their frustrations. Police responded and James told them that it was his fault because of the things he was yelling at Bruce. There were no marks, redness or injuries noted by anyone at that time and none manifested afterward. All denied any previous similar incidents and cited this as the first time "to get James' attention" because he was yelling and would not listen.

Bruce admits to being a social drinker and denies issues with intake control. He acknowledged that he was drinking that night, but denied that alcohol was a factor in the altercation. All who were interviewed denied excessive alcohol consumption or issues of drinking; all denied any violence or out of control negative behavior from Bruce regardless of drinking.

There does not appear to be any danger to the child at this time. The home was observed to be appropriate and free of obvious environmental or health hazards. The mother Melanie and father/stepfather Bruce are providing for the care of the children

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### VI. Summary/Findings Implications

Investigation complete.

The case is being closed with a maltreatment finding of Not Substantiated for allegations of Physical Injury. Given the ongoing parenting challenges associated with this blended family and this escalation to Bruce striking the child James in a high risk area despite there being low force and no injuries, it is recommended that the family consider home-based parenting and skill building preventative services particularly focused on James' age range and understanding how to parent a child with ADHD or difficult behaviors.

There is a logical connection between the child James' challenging behaviors, his vulnerabilities stemming from is behavioral diagnosis and Bruce and Melanie's reaction to those behaviors as he ages. The parents seem to be having some challenges managing James' negative attention seeking behaviors

This case is being closed with a maltreatment finding of No Indicators for allegations of Substance Misuse-Alcohol. Although the parents acknowledge that they are social drinkers, Melanie and Bruce, witnesses, and all interviewed deny any out of control behaviors or excessive drinking to the point of intoxication, disorder or violence on that date or any other occasion. It is not possible, given information collected, to determine if alcohol, even in limited amounts, exacerbated or contributed to the Bruce's actions. All interviewed denied any prior incident of physical violence/discipline, including the child James.

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### VII. Recommended Disposition

Given the ongoing parenting challenges associated with this blended family and this escalation to striking the child despite there being low force and no injuries, it is recommendation that the family consider home-based parenting and skill building preventative services particularly focused on James' age range and understanding how to parent a child with ADHD or difficult behaviors.

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### VIII. Signatures

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## Sandler/Braun

### Case Notes – Safety Plan Monitoring

02.20.2014, 03:35 PM

Worker Creating Note: Magnum, Thomas

Category: Child Investigation

Notification to Community Based Care (CBC) agency that investigation is closing today and CBC will have primary assignment.

#### Resources:

- Michael Sandler, biological father of ACV James, Phone: 555.202.3521 or 555.228.1910
- Pam Block, maternal grandmother (MGM), Phone: 555.504.8628
- Duffy Sandler, James' paternal grandfather (PGF) (brain surgery), Phone: 555.123.4567
- Ilene Sandler, James' paternal grandmother (PGM), Phone: 555.123.4567
- Stephen Braun, paternal uncle of ACV Byron and Shane; Bruce's brother, Phone: 555.123.4567
- PGM Leann Beys, Bruce's mother. Phone: 555.123.4567
- Family Friend, Ed Barth, Phone: 555.123.4567
- Neighbors at 206 Kettering, Megan and Tony
- FIS John Bosley (past evaluator)
- ABC Parenting home-based parent educator Janie Smith (past provider), Phone: 555.555.5555
- James' Teacher: James Madison, Florida City Elementary School
- DCF Investigator Kelly Garrett

02.21.2014, 09:45

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Contact

PGM, Leann Beys

CM introduced self to Mrs. Beys and responsibility for monitoring Safety Plan, also working with family on treatment and other services needed. Asked her understanding of current Safety Plan. She stated she takes the children on the weekends, from Friday evening to Sunday evening and she is to contact Pam Block if the father has been drinking to take the children to her or have her go to their house. CM asked how it is working- Mrs. Beys thinks it is good that people are drawing the line with him about his drinking. She says his father was an alcoholic and was abusive towards Bruce and his siblings and that Bruce had said that he didn't want to turn out like his father. She said that James can be provocative with his behavior and it would be good to get some help with that. She felt Melanie was a good mother overall but not effective with discipline, especially with James.

CM asked if anyone else was a provider in Safety Plan and Mrs. Beys said only Ms. Block. CM said that it was her understanding that Bruce's friend, Ed Barth was to check on the home situation with Mrs. Block; CM will let Mrs. Beys know about Mr. Barth's role once he is contacted. Mrs. Beys has phone number for Ed Barth and sees him often. CM gave CM phone number and asked to be called if Mrs. Beys had any concerns. Told her CM would be checking periodically.

02.21.2014, 10:05

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Contact

MGM, Pam Block

CM introduced self to Mrs. Block and responsibility for monitoring Safety Plan, also working with family on treatment and other services needed. Asked her understanding of current Safety Plan. She stated—1) She is to go to the home when Bruce gets off work to make sure he is not drinking 2) she is supposed to help with the nightly routine with the children, including home work 3) she will take the children if Bruce gets too aggressive. Asked if there was anything else in plan; what was supposed to happen if anyone thought Bruce was drinking. She said Ed Barth will contact her if he checks in and says Bruce will be drinking, and Ms. Beys will contact her if she drops of the children and suspects he has been drinking. She said she talks to Melanie every day anyway and always asks her how things are going.

CM asked how plan was working. Mrs. Block said she knows her daughter is depressed that she had to go back to work and leave the baby, plus all of this additional stress of the Department's involvement. She knows that Bruce is upset about the Department's involvement and she worries that Melanie might minimize problems to appease Bruce. She wants her daughter to get help for herself, as well as her family. CM asked what do you think would be good for her daughter. She thought maybe some counseling would help. CM stated she will look into that for the mother.

CM gave CM phone number and asked to be called if Mrs. Block had any concerns. Told her CM would be checking periodically

02.21.2014, 11:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Contact

Ed Barth, Family Friend

CM introduced self to Mr. Barth and responsibility for monitoring Safety Plan, also working with family on treatment and other services needed. Asked his understanding of current Safety Plan. He stated— Bruce needs to not drink because it makes him aggressive and violent, so he

is supposed to call Bruce every day on the way home from work to see if he is thinking about drinking. CM sked if there was anything else in Safety Plan. Mr. Barth stated that he is supposed to call Mrs. Block so that she could go to the home. CM asked how the Safety Plan is going so far. Mr. Barth stated that he has had no issues getting in contact with Mr. Braun, and Mr. Braun has indicated some frustrations but has stated he would not drink. He has not heard of any issues arising in the home so far.

CM asked Mr. Barth if he had any concerns about the current Safety Plan. Mr. Barth said he worried what would happen if Bruce started drinking after he said he was not planning to. He thinks the stress of the current situation will “drive him to drinking.”

02.21.2014, 01:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Contact

Melanie Braun

CM introduced self to Ms. Braun and responsibility for monitoring Safety Plan, also working with family on treatment and other services needed. Asked her understanding of current Safety Plan. She stated that her husband’s friend is supposed to call him every day to see if he is feeling like drinking, and his mother gets the children on weekends.

CM asked if there was anything else in Safety Plan; what was supposed to happen if Bruce was drinking or violent. Melanie stated that her mother is supposed to come over every day and help with the children, and she will take the children if he begins to get violent or aggressive.

CM asked Melanie if she had any concerns about the current Safety Plan. She said that it’s hard on her, her husband and the kids. She said that James and her husband love each other, they just don’t know how to “deal with each other” sometimes. She asked if there might be some help with afterschool program for James, one that would include helping him get his homework done. She stated this would take some of the stress off of the family. CM stated that was great idea and would get back with her.

CM asked if Melanie had any worries about Bruce possibly drinking and getting aggressive. She stated that because of the phone calls from Ed and her mother and his mother watching the children, she thinks that they are being monitored well enough for another incident to not happen.

CM asked when would be a good time to come meet Melanie, Bruce and kids and talk about CM’s role and what happens next. Agreed that first family meeting would be on Monday, 2/24 at 4:14.

**NOTES FOR CASE MANAGEMENT**  
**Family Engagement Standards for Exploration**  
**Sandler/Braun Notes**

02.24.2014, 04:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Announced HV

Address: 209 Kettinger Ct Florida City, FL

Goal: Introduction and prep for Family Team Meeting

Explained CM role: safety management, family assessment, co-construct case plan, on-going case plan monitoring and modification. Provided information about what the family could expect from CM to include announced and unannounced visits to the home; service provider contact; collateral interviews; ongoing communication as to what family feels is working or not working; service provider referrals and assessment of progress.

CM met with family in living room; Byron was watching T.V. and Shane was in a walker. James was in his room playing video games. CM explained that CM agency uses family team meetings to develop and monitor case plans and that CM will discuss more about that w/family. Melanie said both grandmothers are their family's primary source of support.

Melanie stated that James is very disrespectful and knows how to push Bruce's buttons. Bruce was helping James with homework and was going slow, making smart comments, Bruce blew up, went after James and ended up chasing him upstairs. This is what made police and child Protection come. Bruce agreed that he had probably had too much to drink that day and might have been short-tempered.

Melanie stated that the report in 2012 happened when James became argumentative and told Bruce that he didn't have to listen to him and that he would do what he wanted to do then turned to leave and go back inside. Bruce reached for James to continue talking to him and James yelled that he hated Bruce. Bruce then struck James on the cheek with an open hand. During discussion on this date, neither parent believes alcohol was an issue or contributing factor on that occasion.

Parents acknowledged that while Bruce does not "usually" strike James in the face, he does regularly use physical discipline and does spank him on the buttocks w/ an open hand or a belt. Parents agree that the mother experiences discomfort with any discord in the family; she is described as a rescuer and pleaser; she is uncomfortable redirecting James or Byron and often allows their tantrums. Both are seeing the younger sibling Byron emulating James' behavior and the mother not correcting, intervening or redirecting.

Parents feel that James is routinely disrespectful, mainly with his mother Melanie and Step Father Bruce. James' negative attention seeking behavior, outbursts and attitude transfers

outside the home (grandmother had to send him home after visiting due to behavior, grandparents cut visit short due to disruptive behavior).

The parents felt parenting services provided in 2012 was somewhat helpful, pointed out the value of providing positive reinforcement for good behavior. Melanie felt the provider did not know enough about parenting a child with ADHD and did not appreciate how hard it can be. The provider was not able to change James' behavior.

Bruce said alcohol probably had a little to do with it the most recent report. "I had a bad day at work and was under a lot of stress and maybe had too much to drink. I know I was wrong and I brought all this on the family." Melanie observed to be silent and looking down when Bruce said "one time event."

CM told mother that Florida City Elementary school had list of volunteer afterschool tutors that would come to the home up to four times a week to help James after school with homework. She will call school and work out details.

Bruce said safety plan could be quite a burden on the grandmothers and he hates to drag his friend into it too; will be happy when no longer necessary. CM said that family can choose to let James have overnights with his MG. Bruce okay with Ed Barth and agreed to allow him to check in with Bruce every day at 6 PM to see how things are going.

Discussed next steps re: working with parents on their goals for the family and case plan. Parents agreed that both grandmothers should be invited the family meeting to develop case plan. Family signed updated safety plan that CM brought; CM left a copy for family.

CM met with James privately; explained that CM role was to help the family. Said that his stepfather's behavior towards him was a problem that would be worked on; that while parents are responsible for establishing rules and expectations; that kind of violence was not okay. CM asked James how the current safety plan was working; did he feel safe. James said he thought that his stepfather was mad at him but that he hadn't said anything about it to James. He feels safe at home with grandmother around. CM said that CM wanted to have future talks with him to help figure out what would make things better for his family. CM asked Bruce if he would be willing to help CM with that. James agreed. Explained that CM wanted to work with James on how to protect himself in the future should his stepfather be drinking and getting violent. Told James that CM hoped we could build a good relationship and that he would feel free to be truthful with CM.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

**Case Name:** Braun, Melanie      **FSFN Case ID:** 1001234567      **Date of Most Recent Safety Plan:**  
**Worker Name:** Reid, Spencer      **Approval Date:**

#### I. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Child Name	Date of Birth	Primary Goal	Concurrent Goal	Current Placement
Sandler, James	11.03.2003	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother
Braun, Byron	01.24.2011	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother
Braun, Shane	11.16.2013	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother

#### Parent/ Legal Guardian(s)/ Other Adult Household Members in Caregiving Role:

Name	Date of Birth
Braun, Melanie	09.22.1976
Braun, Bruce	10.17.1983

#### Family Support Network

Name	Role
Block, Pam	Maternal Grandmother of James, Byron, and Shane
Beys, Leann	Paternal Grandmother of Byron and Shane
Sandler, Michael	Biological Father of James

#### II. MALTREATMENT AND NATURE OF MALTREATMENT

What is the extent of the maltreatment? What surrounding circumstances accompany the alleged maltreatment?

##### Extent of Maltreatment

Bruce and child James got into a verbal and physical altercation over homework and perceived disrespect by James to Bruce. Bruce grabbed the child by the throat and slammed him against the seat of the chair and computer table. Bruce told James that he had 30 minutes to complete his homework and James began to mouth off with a disrespectful attitude, yelling at Bruce, "Ok ok ok! I'm trying!" Bruce went toward James and began yelling at him saying he was tired of James being disrespectful. Bruce's anger continued and he hit James on the top of the head, across the face and punched him in the forehead. After continued back and forth between Bruce and James, Bruce told James to go to his room, and James refused. Bruce tried to physically remove and carry James from the kitchen table to James' bedroom and James went limp. James began to hit Bruce. Bruce grabbed James' wrist to restrain him and the mother Melanie jumped on Bruce's back. Bruce pushed Melanie against the glass doors in the kitchen and slapped her across the face several



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

times. The mother told James to go upstairs and James went upstairs. Bruce threw several kitchen chairs out of his way and went upstairs to continue his discussion with James. He grabbed James by the shoulders to put James physically in his bed and James again went limp at which time Bruce slapped James' legs and told James to "stay put" and that he will get a "0" on his homework because he would not allow him to continue with homework. The mother again tried to intervene and get Bruce out of the room and Bruce pushed Melanie out of the way on his way out. Bruce left the room, went outside to cool off and smoke a cigarette. Melanie told her 3 year old Byron to lock the door. During the physical altercation, the mother intervened by jumping on the Bruce's back to keep him from hurting James. James sustained minor scratches on his arm and throat. Melanie sustained a broken pinky finger. There are 2 other children in the home, Byron and Shane, who witnessed the incident and were fearful of Bruce's behavior. Byron was yelling at his father to "stop hurting Bubba". Byron and Shane were both crying hysterically during the incident.

### **Surrounding Circumstances**

On 01/09/14, the stepfather Bruce had been drinking since 12:00 and returned home at approximately 8:00pm, intoxicated. Upon arriving, Melanie told Bruce that James was still working on his homework and had been sitting at the table for 2 hours because he refused to complete his writing assignment. The mother and Bruce engaged in a conversation about James' grades. Bruce became upset and went to discipline James. Once Bruce was locked out of the house Melanie contacted Bruce's mother, Leann Beys, to come to the home to pick Bruce up. She also contacted her mother, Pam Block, who contacted the police and responded to the home. Bruce left the home and has been residing with his mother since the incident.

Law enforcement reported that the Bruce had been drinking earlier but did not appear to be intoxicated, was not slurring, stumbling, or incoherent. Melanie asserted that Bruce came home from a bar and was intoxicated. Upon CPI interviews, the Bruce could not remember details of the evening or exactly what he informed LE, but his account was similar to Melanie's and James'. James and Bruce have a difficult relationship.

Maltreatment Findings: Verified for physical injury re: James with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible; Verified for substance misuse-alcohol re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as the caregiver responsible; Verified family violence threatens child re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible.

The family has two prior investigations, one in 2009 and one in 2012. In 2009, the investigation alleged Inadequate Supervision of James (Age 6) as he was reported to play outside without supervision. At this time, Bruce was not a participant in this family. The investigation included James, Melanie and the maternal grandmother, Pam Block. After interviewing the household members, neighbors, and relative collaterals, the information gathered indicated that James was always appropriately supervised while playing outside,



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

either by the mother, grandmother, or a neighbor who often provided support to the family.

Then in 2012, a report was received that included Melanie, Bruce, James (Age 8) and Byron (Age 1). This report had similar reported concerns as the current investigation including physical abuse and substance abuse by Bruce. Additionally, the prior reflected challenges for Melanie and Bruce's ability to effectively manage James's behavior. During the reported incident Bruce, while frustrated, struck James across the cheek with an open hand. Bruce acknowledged a prior arrest associated with alcohol in 2007 and was reported to be drinking alcohol during this incident however, the final assessment did not include alcohol as a contributing factor and indicated that Bruce was a social drinker. Additionally, all interviewed agreed that James demonstrates disrespectful behavior, specifically toward Melanie and Bruce. However, it was learned that he also demonstrates the behavior outside of the home (maternal grandmother had to send him home after visiting due to behavior). The investigation was closed with No Indicators of Substance Misuse – Alcohol and Not Substantiated for Physical Injury and the family was referred to preventative services to address parenting skills of how to understand and parent a child with ADHD and difficult behaviors.

#### **Analysis:**

Based on the prior history and the information gathered via observations and interviews, Bruce's excessive consumption of alcohol, demeaning behavior and physical altercations are a contributing factor to the negative conditions in the home.

#### **Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James' biological father; friend of parents, Ed Barth, James' teacher Mr. Madison, James' counselor, DCF Prior history.

#### **Additional Ongoing Information**

No additional information ascertained regarding maltreatment and circumstances surrounding the maltreatment.





## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### III. CHILD FUNCTIONING

How does the child function on a daily basis? Include physical health, development; emotion and temperament; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-control; educational performance; peer relations; behaviors that seem to provoke parent/caregiver reaction/behavior; activities with family and others. Include a description of each child's vulnerability based on threats identified.

##### **SANDLER, JAMES**

James, 10, presents as an articulate boy who is described by others as a smart kid with behaviors that can be challenging and disrespectful. He does well academically even though his stepfather and mother believe that he should be doing better and doesn't apply himself. James' favorite subject is math and he doesn't like writing. He has a lot of homework. He is currently on a 504 plan and has a scheduled meeting for an IEP. For fun he likes to ride his bike and play video games.

James is diagnosed with ADHD and takes Concerta in the morning and a Ritalin booster at school during lunchtime. His mother takes him to see a child psychiatrist to manage the ADHD. Before the medication James had difficulty staying on task at school and would randomly get up from his seat and walk around and just "be all over the place". Since the medication James has been able to stay on task at school. James' medication is said to 'wear off' by the time he returns home from school which affects his ability to focus. On certain days, it doesn't take James anytime to complete his homework assignments and at other times they are up past 10:00pm finishing because James lacks focus or is obstinate and refuses to participate. James does not take medication on the weekends and it is unclear as to whether this is recommended by his treatment professional or not. James has severe asthma and uses a nebulizer and Xopenex.

According to his mother and step-father when James is not behaving he can be disrespectful, argumentative, rude, and lazy. He often has difficulty complying with instructions from them and he often yells at his step-father and mother. This has led to a lot of conflict in the home. When James' meets his mother and step-father's expectations things are calmer between them. James and his step-father participate in activities together including Boy Scouts, playing ball, and going to the movies.

James is aware of his father's mental health issues and rarely sees or speaks with him. James doesn't like when his step-father drinks because he gets mean. He acknowledges that this makes him angry and leads to fighting between his step-father and him which his mother sometimes gets involved in.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### **Analysis:**

When James' medication for his ADHD 'wear off' after he returns home or when he is not given his ADHD medications on the weekends this contributes to his negative behaviors leading to additional conflict in the home. James has some insight about the effect of his stepfather's drinking on his behavior, and also how it makes him angry and leads to fights.

#### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James' teacher Mr. Madison, James' counselor, DCF Prior history

#### **BRAUN, BYRON**

Byron is 3 years old and demonstrates age consistent stranger anxiety. He is prone to staying close to his mother during home-visits. He is described as very independent, he likes to go to the bathroom by himself and wipe himself; he doesn't like for others to come and check on him while he is in the bathroom. He likes to dress himself. He is able to kick a large ball. He recognizes familiar things. He can and prefers to feed himself. He knows the names of things and people. Byron plays well with others and is able to speak clearly. According to Melanie, Byron has started emulating his older brother, James's behavior, and has been having increased tantrums. Byron was observed yelling at his mother when she asked him to do something and he began to tantrum. Melanie is concerned about this behavior and believes Byron is beginning to talk back, yell, and tantrum "just like James".

#### **Analysis:**

Byron presents as bright child, fully engaged in exploring his environment. He demonstrated gross and fine motor and appeared within normal limits regarding his cognitive development. Recently he has begun to exhibit an increase in negative behaviors, including tantrums, yelling, and screaming which has been difficult for Melanie to handle.

#### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

#### **BRAUN, SHANE**

Shane is 2 months old. The child appears to be within normal limits for height and weight. By report, he has doubled in weight since birth. He was observed cooing, he smiles for his mother when she feeding him. He was observed kicking his feet and moving his hands while feeding. He would look at his parents' faces while they talked to him. He is breastfed and supplementing with a bottle of breastmilk.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### **Analysis:**

Shane presents as developmentally within normal limits for physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. He appears bonded to both parents.

#### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

#### **IV. ADULT FUNCTIONING**

How does the adult function on a daily basis? Overall life management. Include assessment and analysis of prior child abuse/neglect history, criminal behavior, impulse control, substance use/abuse, violence and domestic violence, mental health; include an assessment of the adult's physical health, emotion and temperament, cognitive ability; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-control; education; peer and family relations, employment, etc.

#### **BRAUN, MELANIE**

Melanie is 39 years old. She has two children with her current husband, and James from a previous marriage to Michael Sandler. Melanie and Michael divorced due to Michael's severe depression. Melanie has a few close friends from work that she relies on and confides in. Her mother, Pam, is a very strong support system for her as well.

Melanie is happy in her relationship with Bruce though is not happy about the increase in conflict and fighting between them regarding James's behavior. She often feels caught in the middle between James and Bruce. She does sometimes wish Bruce would drink less, but does not want to discuss this with Bruce as she is concerned this will lead to more conflict between them. Since the safety plan was put in place Melanie is finding Bruce's absence difficult and a stressor in terms of caring for the three children by herself.

Melanie is employed as an assistant manager at Publix where she has worked for the last two years, and has a steady employment history. She has a history of post-partum depression but denies current symptoms. Melanie noted that she finds herself sad at times now but denies depression, suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Melanie copes with stress by crying. She said that sometimes she cries a lot but not in front of the children. Melanie's parents divorced when she was four years old.

Melanie has experienced adverse childhood trauma as a result of being in a caregiver role early and often due to her mother's unmanaged mental health when she was growing up. She was very aware of her actions as a child and she tried hard to behave like the "perfect child" to avoid upsetting her mother. Melanie's relationship with her mother has improved



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

greatly now that her mother is stable on medications. Melanie's father left the family when she was young, but maintained inconsistent contact with her until she was 16. After that she lost track of him until four years ago when she found him on Facebook. Her father, who suffered from alcoholism, died recently and she has been experiencing sadness, but is not despondent.

#### **Analysis:**

Melanie appears conflicted between her relationship with her son and her relationship with her husband and has a difficult time managing both relationships and helping them to work past their disagreements. Melanie is very concerned with others' feelings. Given her non-confrontational personality, she enables and justifies much of Bruce's binge drinking and volatile behavior as well as James and Byron's negative attention seeking behavior and tantrums. She has a tendency to avoid confrontation with Bruce, James and Byron.

#### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys

#### **BRAUN, BRUCE**

Bruce is thirty years old and employed full time. He is currently employed at Florida City Concrete where he is a foreman and has been there for three years. He is a hard worker and holds himself and others to high expectations. He becomes frustrated when those others do not meet his expectations causing him to sometimes lash out verbally. Bruce denied ever having any alcohol related problems at work, however his mother reports that he was fired from the Department of Treasury for showing up to work smelling like alcohol.

Bruce is typically a quiet and reserved personality. Bruce describes his alcohol intake as something he likes to do on occasion, but not something he has control over. He reports not drinking little during the week, but sometimes binge drinking on the weekend. He does not see this as an issue as he normally does not binge drink around the children. Bruce admits to drinking alcohol regularly as a teen and for years into adulthood.

Bruce admitted that he will sometimes screams, yells, and is impatient when he has been drinking. There have been times when he has thrown things like dishes or pushed things out of his way like tables or chairs, but he denied ever throwing things at his family or another person. He has blacked out after drinking, but this has not happened often. Bruce completed a substance abuse evaluation during the last DCF investigation. The evaluator, based on Bruce's self-report, did not have any treatment recommendations.

Bruce is happy in his marriage although they have been having more disagreements and arguments, mostly around James and how to manage his attitude and behavior. He handles personal stress by trying to get rid of it. He believes in having a plan of action. He



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

leaves his work stress at work; he tries not to bring it home. He is quiet when he is stressed out and he will keep to himself. He usually tries to remove himself from escalating situations with James. Bruce describes himself as a fun person, easy to get along with, with high expectations.

### **Analysis:**

Bruce is typically a quiet and reserved personality, but Bruce's personality can become hostile, volatile, and aggressive changes after consuming alcohol. Bruce's alcohol consumption has become a problem, creating behavior and personality changes and posing a danger threat to his children.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Braun; Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys

## **V. PARENTING**

General – What are the overall, typical, parenting practices used by the parents/legal guardians? Discipline/Behavior Management – What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parents/legal guardians, and under what circumstances?

### **BRAUN, MELANIE**

Melanie does not agree with spanking, but believes sometimes the only way to get across to James is to spank him. She does not spank the other children, but both she and Bruce have spanked James. After the spankings, James behavior will temporarily improve, but he will return back to the same behavior a short time later. She stated that spanking is the exception to the rule. Generally, she tries to talk with James, will give him a consequence or remove a privilege. She said that after much arguing back and forth, James usually becomes apologetic for his behavior, but will return to the same behavior a short time later.

Melanie thinks it might look like James is a target child but given the age discrepancy of their kids, James is the only child in their family of an age where “attitude” and “talking back” behaviors are triggers for both Melanie and Bruce.

Bruce and collaterals described Melanie as an amazing mother, nurturing and involved. Bruce sees as her biggest fault that she doesn't teach James or Byron or hold them accountable for their behavior when they do something wrong or are deliberately hurtful or antagonistic with her or Bruce. He works and she stays home with the children so he expects her to be able to control things and she doesn't know how to. Melanie describes herself as a “people pleaser” and does not want to look like the villain in the eyes of her children. She engages in arguments with them, persuading them, trying to get them not to be mad at her. She sometimes gives in so she they won't be mad at her. When Bruce is home Melanie will often depend on him to enforce discipline with the boys.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

Melanie recognized that James was having trouble focusing in school and took him to see a child psychiatrist. After James was diagnosed with ADHD Melanie has ensured James takes his medication on school days. Melanie was not able to identify how James's diagnosis with ADHD may be affecting his behavior at home, but is open to discussing this with the psychiatrist. Since James' father is diagnosed with bi-polar disorder she wants to stay on top of James' mental health.

Melanie found the parenting classes offered during the prior DCF investigation helpful, but could not state how she changed her parenting behaviors after the classes. During that intervention the parenting evaluator stated Melanie had unrealistic expectations as to what should motivate her son to please his parents. Efforts were made by the provider to help parents learn the value of positive reinforcement for desired behaviors, but details are not clear as to how much progress was made.

### **Analysis:**

Melanie understands the basics of raising a child with ADHD, but only manages James' diagnosis and treatment during the weekdays for school and has no insight about how his diagnosis may affect his interactions at home. Melanie appears to be parent who avoids confrontation and makes decisions often based on emotion. She is uncomfortable with confrontation from disciplining her children and relinquishes discipline responsibility to others.

### **Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys

### **Braun, Bruce:**

Bruce has always wanted to be a father and considers this job the most important in the world. He sees himself as family oriented, and spends quality time with all three kids through daily activities and community groups including Boy Scouts.

Bruce described his and James' relationship day in and day out as "normal" – nothing really out of the ordinary. He only gets really frustrated when James gets mouthy and disrespectful. He does not think James is a bad kid but he believes that James lacks structure and accountability. He knows that James is diagnosed with ADHD, but believes this is a "big money maker" and kids just need parents to be firm. He does not believe it is good for children to be taking medications for ADHD. Bruce does not become frustrated or irritable with either Byron or Shane's behaviors. Melanie described him as patient and engaged in teaching Byron and caring for Shane.

Bruce is the main disciplinarian in the home. Melanie is usually ok with the discipline and



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

often asks him to handle it. His philosophy on discipline is that sometimes spanking is necessary with James, but it is used as the exception, not the 'go to' approach to deal with James' behavior. He stated that there is no physical discipline necessary for the other kids given their ages. He said that generally they try to talk with James first, will give him a consequence or remove a privilege. He thinks that James is old enough to reason and should not be arguing or talking back. He believes James needs to be accountable for his behavior and that the consequences he or Melanie impose should be maintained, despite the hardship on the parents. Bruce does not believe that his consumption of alcohol has had any effect on the relationship with any of the children.

**Analysis:**

Bruce is a caring and engaged father, but does become frustrated and sometimes acts aggressively towards James when he does not behave. Bruce does not have insight or understanding on how James' diagnosis of ADHD may influence his behavior. Bruce does not acknowledge that his consumption of alcohol has had a negative impact on his relationship with the children.

**Observations and Interviews:**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

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### VI. REASONS FOR ONGOING INVOLVEMENT

**Danger Statement (Develop in collaboration with the family)**



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

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#### **VII. FAMILY CHANGE STRATEGY**

**Family Goal:** Describe how the family will be functioning when all children are safe and the family is able to independently meet the needs of their children. (Developed in collaboration with the family.)

**Ideas:** Describe ideas parent/legal guardian, worker, child or other network members have for moving toward the Family Goal.





## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

**Potential Barriers:** Describe things that could get in the way of change from the family's perspective and/or the family team's perspective.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### VIII. CHILD NEED INDICATORS

Children	Child Needs									
	Emotional/ Trauma	Behavioral (e.g. risk taking behavior, runaway, etc)	Development	Education	Physical Health/ Disability	Family Relationships	Peer/ Adult Relationships	Cultural Identity	Substance Awareness	Life Skills Development
Sandler, James										
Braun, Byron										
Braun, Shane										

#### IX. PRIORITY NEEDS

	Rating	Parent Meeting Needs?
Sandler, James		
Sandler, James		
Sandler, James		

If the parent is meeting the need, describe their actions. If the parent needs support or assistance to meet the needs of the child, the need will be addressed in the Case Plan.



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### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### X. PROTECTIVE CAPACITIES

Adults	Capacity Categories and Types																		
	Behavioral						Cognitive					Emotional							
	Controls Impulses	Takes Action	Sets aside own needs for child	Demonstrates adequate skills	Adaptive as a Parent/Legal Guardian	History of Protecting	Is self aware	Is intellectually able	Recognizes threats	Recognizes child's needs	Understands protective role	Plans and articulates plans for protection	Meets own emotional needs	Is resilient	Is tolerant	Is stable	Expresses love, empathy, sensitivity to the child	Is positively attached with child	Is aligned and supports the child
Braun, Melanie Sandler																			
Braun, Brian																			

#### XI. PRIORITY NEEDS

BRAUN, MELANIE SANDLER	Rating	Include in Case Plan?
Is self-aware		
Recognizes threats		
Meets own emotional needs		

BRAUN, BRUCE	Rating	Include in Case Plan?
Controls impulses		
Recognizes threats		
Recognizes child's needs		
Sets aside own needs for child		
Is self-aware		

If a diminished protective capacity will not be addressed in the Case Plan, describe the assessment process to reach this conclusion.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### **XII. MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE**

Adult	Motivation
Braun, Melanie Sandler	
Braun, Bruce	

#### **XIII. IN-HOME SAFETY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING (removal home)**

	Yes No
The Parent/Legal Guardians are willing for an in-home safety plan to be developed and implemented and have demonstrated that they will cooperate with all identified safety service providers.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The home environment is calm and consistent enough for an in-home safety plan to be implemented and for safety service providers to be in the home safely.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Safety services are available at a sufficient level and to the degree necessary in order to manage the way in which impending danger is manifested in the home.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
An in-home safety plan and the use of in-home safety services can sufficiently manage impending danger without the results of scheduled professional evaluations.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The Parent/Legal Guardians have a physical location in which to implement an in-home safety plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

**In-Home Safety Plan is determined. Summarize the conditions that have changed since last safety analysis to support reunification with an In-Home Safety Plan.**



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

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#### XIV. CURRENT SAFETY PLAN ASSESSMENT FOR SUFFICIENCY

- Safety plan is sufficient, no need for changes to the plan at this time.
- Safety plan is not sufficient, not controlling for child safety or no longer applicable; change in safety plan is needed.
- Safety plan is no longer needed.

Based on the determination selected above, describe the assessment process to reach this conclusion.

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**IN THE INTEREST OF:**

**CASE NO.:**

Sandler, James DOB 11.03.2003

Braun, Byron DOB 01.24.2011

Braun, Shane DOB 11.16.2013

MINOR CHILD(REN)

## NON-JUDICIAL IN-HOME CASE PLAN

### RECOMMENDED PERMANENCY GOAL(S)

Primary Goal: Maintain and Strengthen

### FAMILY GOAL:

Bruce and Melanie will be able to co-parent and consistently discipline their children. Bruce will find other outlets for his stress and will learn appropriate ways to approach the children's negative behaviors. Bruce and Melanie will agree on appropriate forms of discipline. Bruce will recognize that his alcohol use has been problematic at times and will seek assistance with enhancing his coping mechanisms.

### PARTIES TO CASE PLAN

<b>Mother</b>	<b>Braun, Melanie</b>
<b>Address</b>	209 Ketterling Ct, Florida City FL
<b>Phone Number</b>	
<b>Alternate Phone Number</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	

<b>Father</b>	<b>Braun, Bruce</b>
<b>Father of</b>	Braun, Byron and Braun, Shane
<b>Address</b>	209 Ketterling Ct, Florida City FL
<b>Phone Number</b>	(850)264-5567
<b>Alternate Phone Number</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	

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<b>Case Manager</b>	<b>Reid, Spencer</b>
<b>Phone Number</b>	(850)989-8877
<b>Address</b>	1516 Welber Lane, Florida City FL
<b>Email Address</b>	

<b>Case Manager Supervisor</b>	<b>Sharon Lee</b>
<b>Phone Number</b>	(850)987-0088
<b>Address</b>	1516 Welber Lane, Florida City FL
<b>Email Address</b>	

<b>II. DANGER STATEMENT</b>
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Case Plan Worksheet ID:

Bruce drinks excessive amounts of alcohol causing him to not remember his actions the next day. When Bruce drinks this much his personality changes, he gets loud, agitated and violent with Melanie and James. These violent outbursts and actions negatively impact his parenting skills specifically during family activities including homework time.

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<b>III. OUTCOMES</b>
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**SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

**OUTCOME #1:** Bruce will recognize how his alcohol use and aggressiveness negatively impact his family. Bruce will control these urges and seek healthy means to cope with his frustrations.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** Bruce

- **Outcome will be achieved when:** Outcome will be achieved when Bruce recognizes how his alcohol use and aggressiveness negatively impact his family and refrains from excessive alcohol consumption. He will recognize what triggers his alcohol use and will develop a lapse/relapse prevention plan that will include protecting his family. He will develop positive coping mechanisms for his frustrations.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
Bruce Braun	1. Will complete an intake assessment for substance abuse treatment and follow recommendations for treatment.	3-21-14	Father and CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14	Yes	1 time
	2. Will participate in treatment and develop insight into the severity of problem and impact on family; and behavior will demonstrate that	5-30-14	Father and CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14	Yes	Based on intake



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	drinking is under control. 3. Will develop with the treatment provider alternative coping mechanisms for his stress. 4. Will develop aftercare plan including relapse prevention.	5-30-14	Father and CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14	Yes	To be determined
		9-30-14	Father and CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14	Yes	To be determined
<b>Provider Name</b>	<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>		<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>		
Just Say No, Inc.							
<b>Service Category</b>			<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>		
Substance Abuse Treatment							

**OUTCOME #2:** Bruce will demonstrate knowledge of the children’s individual needs. Bruce will recognize his role in meeting these needs by engaging with the children in supportive and protective ways.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** Bruce

**Outcome will be achieved when:** The outcome will be achieved when the father is able to control his emotions and express himself by verbally communicating his expectations and feedback to the children in a calm manner.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

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Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
Bruce Braun	1. Will actively participate in parenting skills development.	8-30-14	Family & CMO	In-home	3-14-14		To be Determined
<b>Provider Name</b>		<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>		<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>	
Exceptional Parenting, Inc.							
<b>Service Category</b>				<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>	
Parenting							

**OUTCOME #3:** Melanie will demonstrate recognition of when Bruce’s alcohol use and aggressive behavior negatively impacts their children she will take immediate action to protect the children when needed.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** Melanie

**Outcome will be achieved when:** The outcome will be achieved when Melanie understands the impacts Bruce’s drinking has on the family. She is able to understand and recognize Bruce’s triggers. She had developed and implemented a plan to keep the children safe in the event of a relapse.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

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<b>Who</b>	<b>Actions/Tasks</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Responsible Party for Cost</b>	<b>Location of Delivery of Services</b>	<b>Date of Referral</b>	<b>Service Referral Request Needed?</b>	<b>Frequency of Service</b>
Melanie Braun	1. Will participate in family sessions offered by substance abuse treatment provider and develop understanding of Bruce's drinking and strategies for coping. 2. Will substance abuse support meetings for family members.	8-30-14  Ongoing	Family & CMO	Just Say No, Inc. of Florida City FL  Just Say No, Inc. of Florida City FL	3-14-14  3-14-14	Yes  Yes	To be determined  Monthly
<b>Provider Name</b>		<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>		<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>	
Just Say No, Inc.							
<b>Service Category</b>				<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>	
Substance Abuse Treatment							

**OUTCOME #4:** Melanie will recognize and meet her own emotional needs by gaining confidence in her interactions with family members as evidenced by holding others accountable for their behavior.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** Melanie

**Outcome will be achieved when:** The outcome will be achieved when Melanie can remain firm when communicating expectations to her children. She will learn how to cope with others being mad or displeased with her (including the kids) and not take it personally.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

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Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
Melanie Braun	1. Will actively participate in individual counseling to focus on her self-esteem and depressive feelings.	8-30-14	Melanie & CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14		To be determined
Provider Name	FSFN Provider	Provider Address		Provider Phone Number	Provider Email		
FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City							
Service Category			Service Type		Task Complete		
Therapy			Individual Counseling				

**OUTCOME #5:** Both parents will be in agreement with, and consistently use, acceptable parenting methods to manage James’ behavior.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** Bruce and Melanie Braun

**Outcome will be achieved when:** The outcome will be achieved when the parents are both able to follow through with acceptable discipline and behavior management methods with James. The parents will be able to communicate and remain consistent with consequences.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

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Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
Bruce Braun, Melanie Braun	1. Family will actively participate in parenting skills development.	9-30-14	Family & CMO	In-home		Yes	To be determined
<b>Provider Name</b>		<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>		<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>	
Exceptional Parenting, Inc.							
<b>Service Category</b>				<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>	
Parenting							

Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
Bruce Braun, Melanie Braun	2. Bruce and Melanie will meet with James' current psychiatrist about the pros and cons of medication for ADHD and other appropriate treatment options.	5-30-14	Family & CMO	Exceptional Psychiatry	3-14-14		Monthly
	3. Bruce and Melanie will attend James' IEP meeting and discuss home management with the school ADHD professional.	7-30-14		Florida City School			
<b>Provider Name</b>		<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>		<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>	
Exceptional Psychiatry							
<b>Service Category</b>				<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>	
Therapy							

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**OUTCOME #6:** James will establish and maintain a healthy relationship with his mother, Melanie, and step-father Bruce evidenced by daily interactions that are relaxed, calm, and unreserved. When conflicts do occur a resolution will be reached without physical violence or excessive verbal aggression.

**Outcome applies to the following participants:** James, Bruce, and Melanie Braun

**Outcome will be achieved when:** The outcome will be achieved when James and the parents are able to communicate their expectations in a calm manner. James will follow instructions he is given even if he does not agree with them.

**Estimated Cost to Parent(s) (if applicable):**

Who	Actions/Tasks	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Party for Cost	Location of Delivery of Services	Date of Referral	Service Referral Request Needed?	Frequency of Service
James, Bruce, and Melanie Braun	1. Family will participate in family counseling to improve communication skills and to resolve conflict.	9-30-14	Family & CMO	FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City	3-14-14	Yes	To be determined
<b>Provider Name</b>		<b>FSFN Provider</b>	<b>Provider Address</b>	<b>Provider Phone Number</b>	<b>Provider Email</b>		
FL Behavioral Health Ctr. of FL City							
<b>Service Category</b>			<b>Service Type</b>		<b>Task Complete</b>		
Family Counseling			Family Counseling				

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**ATTACHMENTS TO CASE PLAN:**

<b>Medical/ Mental Health</b>	
Medical records	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Mental Health records	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Immunization records	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Dental Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
<b>Education</b>	
Report cards	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Individual Education Plan (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Other school records	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Day Care Attendance Records (if applicable for Rilya Wilson Act)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
<b>Independent Living</b>	
Pre-independent Living Assessment (applicable based on age at time of JR)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Independent Life Skills Assessment (applicable based on age at time of JR)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
<b>Master Trust (if applicable)</b>	
Notice of Fee Assessment and Rights of Foster Child Regarding Government Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
Quarterly Accounting Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
<b>Other</b>	
Rights and Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attached
<b>Optional Attachments (select and attach to Case Plan)</b>	



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Safety Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached
Responsibilities of the Department and Contract Providers	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached

**RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND NOTICE OF CHANGE OF RESIDENCE AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

- (1) The Mother and/ or Father will provide the Department/Case Manager with her or his address and telephone contact number and will notify the Case Manager of any changes of her or his address or telephone number within 3 days of any change.
- (2) The Mother and/ or Father will immediately notify the Department/Case Manager of any change in household composition (people who are living in or regularly found to be present) in her or his home and any change in marital status.
- (3) The Mother and/or Father will effectively advocate for their children with the child welfare system, the court, and community agencies, including schools, child care, health and mental health providers, and employers. The Department/Case Manager and agency staff will support them in doing so and will not retaliate against them as a result of this advocacy.
- (4) The Mother and/or Father will participate fully in the child(ren)'s medical, psychological, dental and other treatment care, if needed or recommended. Department/Case Manager and agency staff will support and assist with facilitating this participation. Parents, the Department/Case Manager and agency staff will share information with each other about the child's safety, health and well-being.
- (5) The Mother and/or Father will support their child(ren)'s school success by participating in school activities and meetings, including IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings, assisting with school assignments, supporting tutoring programs, meeting with teachers and working with an educational surrogate if one has been appointed and encouraging the child's participation in extra-curricular activities. Agency staff will assist with facilitating this participation and will be kept informed of the child's progress and needs.
- (6) The Mother and/or Father will contact the Department/Case Manager concerning any plans for out-of-state travel while the case is open for non-judicial protective supervision.

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Signing the case plan constitutes an acknowledgement that the case plan has been developed by the parties and that they are in agreement as to the terms and conditions contained in the case plan.

Signing the case plan does not constitute an admission to any allegation of abuse, abandonment, or neglect and does not constitute consent to a finding of dependency or termination of parental rights. The refusal to sign the case plan does not prevent the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Community-Based Care Agency (CBC) from accepting the case plan if the case plan is otherwise acceptable to meet the agreed upon needs of the family.

IF THE PARENT(S) DO NOT ACHIEVE ADEQUATE PROGRESS WITH THE OUTCOME(S) OF THE CASE PLAN, IT MAY RESULT IN THE INCREASED INTRUSIVE INTERVENTIONS, COURT INVOLVEMENT AND POSSIBLY A TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS TO START WORKING ON THEIR OUTCOMES AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

**SIGNATURES**

<hr/> <b>Mother:</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>Father (Name) (repeat for each father)</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>Case Manager</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>Case Manager Supervisor</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>Other</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

<b>Case Name:</b> Braun, Melanie	<b>FSFN Case ID:</b> 1001234567	<b>Date of Most Recent Safety Plan:</b>
<b>Worker Name:</b> Reid, Spencer	<b>Approval Date:</b>	

#### I. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Child Name	Date of Birth	Primary Goal	Concurrent Goal	Current Placement
Sandler, James	11.03.2005	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother
Braun, Byron	01.24.2013	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother
Braun, Shane	11.16.2015	Maintain and Strengthen		Residing with parent/mother

#### Parent/ Legal Guardian(s)/ Other Adult Household Members in Caregiving Role:

Name	Date of Birth
Braun, Melanie	09.22.1976
Braun, Bruce	10.17.1985

#### Family Support Network

Name	Role
Block, Pam	Maternal Grandmother of James, Byron, and Shane
Beys, Leann	Paternal Grandmother of Byron and Shane
Sandler, Michael	Biological Father of James

#### II. MALTREATMENT AND NATURE OF MALTREATMENT

What is the extent of the maltreatment? What surrounding circumstances accompany the alleged maltreatment?

##### Extent of Maltreatment

Bruce and child James got into a verbal and physical altercation over homework and perceived disrespect by James to Bruce. Bruce grabbed the child by the throat and slammed him against the seat of the chair and computer table. Bruce told James that he had 30 minutes to complete his homework and James began to mouth off with a disrespectful attitude, yelling at Bruce, "Ok ok ok! I'm trying!" Bruce went toward James and began yelling at him saying he was tired of James being disrespectful. Bruce's anger continued and he hit James on the top of the head, across the face and punched him in the forehead. After continued back and forth between Bruce and James, Bruce told James to go to his room, and James refused. Bruce tried to physically remove and carry James from the kitchen table to James' bedroom and James went limp. James began to hit Bruce. Bruce grabbed James' wrist to restrain him and the mother Melanie jumped on Bruce's back. Bruce pushed Melanie against the glass doors in the kitchen and slapped her across the face several



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

times. The mother told James to go upstairs and James went upstairs. Bruce threw several kitchen chairs out of his way and went upstairs to continue his discussion with James. He grabbed James by the shoulders to put James physically in his bed and James again went limp at which time Bruce slapped James' legs and told James to "stay put" and that he will get a "0" on his homework because he would not allow him to continue with homework. The mother again tried to intervene and get Bruce out of the room and Bruce pushed Melanie out of the way on his way out. Bruce left the room, went outside to cool off and smoke a cigarette. Melanie told her 3 yr old Byron to lock the door. During the physical altercation, the mother intervened by jumping on the Bruce's back to keep him from hurting James. James sustained minor scratches on his arm and throat. Melanie sustained a broken pinky finger. There are 2 other children in the home, Byron and Shane, who witnessed the incident and were fearful of Bruce's behavior. Byron was yelling at his father to "stop hurting Bubba". Byron and Shane were both crying hysterically during the incident.

#### **Surrounding Circumstances**

On 01/09/14, the stepfather Bruce had been drinking since 12:00 and returned home at approximately 8:00pm, intoxicated. Upon arriving, Melanie told Bruce that James was still working on his homework and had been sitting at the table for 2 hours because he refused to complete his writing assignment. The mother and Bruce engaged in a conversation about James' grades. Bruce became upset and went to discipline James. Once Bruce was locked out of the house Melanie contacted Bruce's mother, Leann Beys, to come to the home to pick Bruce up. She also contacted her mother, Pam Block, who contacted the police and responded to the home. Bruce left the home and has been residing with his mother since the incident.

Law enforcement reported that the Bruce had been drinking earlier but did not appear to be intoxicated, was not slurring, stumbling, or incoherent. Melanie asserted that Bruce came home from a bar and was intoxicated. Upon CPI interviews, the Bruce could not remember details of the evening or exactly what he informed LE, but his account was similar to Melanie's and James'. James and Bruce have a difficult relationship.

Maltreatment Findings: Verified for physical injury re: James with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible; Verified for substance misuse-alcohol re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as the caregiver responsible; Verified family violence threatens child re: James, Byron and Shane with Bruce Braun as caregiver responsible.

The family has two prior investigations, one in 2009 and one in 2012. In 2009, the investigation alleged Inadequate Supervision of James (Age 6) as he was reported to play outside without supervision. At this time, Bruce was not a participant in this family. The investigation included James, Melanie and the maternal grandmother, Pam Block. After interviewing the household members, neighbors, and relative collaterals, the information gathered indicated that James was always appropriately supervised while playing outside,



# FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

## Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

either by the mother, grandmother, or a neighbor who often provided support to the family.

Then in 2012, a report was received that included Melanie, Bruce, James (Age 8) and Byron (Age 1). This report had similar reported concerns as the current investigation including physical abuse and substance abuse by Bruce. Additionally, the prior reflected challenges for Melanie and Bruce’s ability to effectively manage James’s behavior. During the reported incident Bruce, while frustrated, struck James across the cheek with an open hand. Bruce acknowledged a prior arrest associated with alcohol in 2007 and was reported to be drinking alcohol during this incident however, the final assessment did not include alcohol as a contributing factor and indicated that Bruce was a social drinker. Additionally, all interviewed agreed that James demonstrates disrespectful behavior, specifically toward Melanie and Bruce. However, it was learned that he also demonstrates the behavior outside of the home (maternal grandmother had to send him home after visiting due to behavior). The investigation was closed with No Indicators of Substance Misuse – Alcohol and Not Substantiated for Physical Injury and the family was referred to preventative services to address parenting skills of how to understand and parent a child with ADHD and difficult behaviors.

**Analysis:**

Based on the prior history and the information gathered via observations and interviews, Bruce’s excessive consumption of alcohol, demeaning behavior and physical altercations are a contributing factor to the negative conditions in the home.

**Observations and Interviews**

Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James’ mother, Melanie Braun; James’ stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James’ biological father; friend of parents, Ed Barth, James’ teacher Mr. Madison, James’ counselor, DCF Prior history.

**Additional Ongoing Information**

No additional information ascertained re: maltreatment and circumstances surrounding the maltreatment.

**III. CHILD FUNCTIONING**

How does the child function on a daily basis? Include physical health, development; emotion and temperament; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

control; educational performance; peer relations; behaviors that seem to provoke parent/caregiver reaction/behavior; activities with family and others. Include a description of each child's vulnerability based on threats identified.

#### **SANDLER, JAMES**

James, 10, presents as an articulate boy who is described by others as a smart kid with behaviors that can be challenging and disrespectful. He does well academically even though his stepfather and mother believe that he should be doing better and doesn't apply himself. James' favorite subject is math and he doesn't like writing. He has a lot of homework. He is currently on a 504 plan and has a scheduled meeting for an IEP. For fun he likes to ride his bike and play video games.

James is diagnosed with ADHD and takes Concerta in the morning and a Ritalin booster at school during lunchtime. His mother takes him to see a child psychiatrist to manage the ADHD. Before the medication James had difficulty staying on task at school and would randomly get up from his seat and walk around and just "be all over the place". Since the medication James has been able to stay on task at school. James' medication is said to 'wear off' by the time he returns home from school which affects his ability to focus. On certain days, it doesn't take James anytime to complete his homework assignments and at other times they are up past 10:00pm finishing because James lacks focus or is obstinate and refuses to participate. James does not take medication on the weekends and it is unclear as to whether this is recommended by his treatment professional or not. James has severe asthma and uses a nebulizer and Xopenex.

According to his mother and step-father when James is not behaving he can be disrespectful, argumentative, rude, and lazy. He often has difficulty complying with instructions from them and he often yells at his step-father and mother. This has led to a lot of conflict in the home. When James' meets his mother and step-father's expectations things are calmer between them. James and his step-father participate in activities together including Boy Scouts, playing ball, and going to the movies.

James is aware of his father's mental health issues and rarely sees or speaks with him. James doesn't like when his step-father drinks because he gets mean. He acknowledges that this makes him angry and leads to fighting between his step-father and him which his mother sometimes gets involved in.

#### **Analysis:**

When James' medication for his ADHD 'wear off' after he returns homes or when he is not given his ADHD medications on the weekends this contributes to his negative behaviors leading to additional conflict in the home. James has some insight about the effect of his stepfather's drinking on his behavior, and also how it makes him angry and leads to fights.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James'



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys, Michael Sandler, James' teacher Mr. Madison, James' counselor, DCF Prior history

#### **BRAUN, BYRON**

Byron is 3 years old and demonstrates age consistent stranger anxiety. He is prone to staying close to his mother during home-visits. He is described as very independent, he likes to go to the bathroom by himself and wipe himself; he doesn't like for others to come and check on him while he is in the bathroom. He likes to dress himself. He is able to kick a large ball. He recognizes familiar things. He can and prefers to feed himself. He knows the names of things and people. Byron plays well with others and is able to speak clearly. According to Melanie, Byron has started emulating his older brother, James's behavior, and has been having increased tantrums. Byron was observed yelling at his mother when she asked him to do something and he began to tantrum. Melanie is concerned about this behavior and believes Byron is beginning to talk back, yell, and tantrum "just like James".

#### **Analysis:**

Byron presents as bright child, fully engaged in exploring his environment. He demonstrated gross and fine motor and appeared within normal limits regarding his cognitive development. Recently he has begun to exhibit an increase in negative behaviors, including tantrums, yelling, and screaming which has been difficult for Melanie to handle.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

#### **BRAUN, SHANE**

Shane is 2 months old. The child appears to be within normal limits for height and weight. By report, he has doubled in weight since birth. He was observed cooing, he smiles for his mother when she feeding him. He was observed kicking his feet and moving his hands while feeding. He would look at his parents' faces while they talked to him. He is breastfed and supplementing with a bottle of breastmilk.

**Analysis:** Shane presents as developmentally within normal limits for physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. He appears bonded to both parents.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

## **IV. ADULT FUNCTIONING**

How does the adult function on a daily basis? Overall life management. Include assessment



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

and analysis of prior child abuse/neglect history, criminal behavior, impulse control, substance use/abuse, violence and domestic violence, mental health; include an assessment of the adult's physical health, emotion and temperament, cognitive ability; intellectual functioning; behavior; ability to communicate; self-control; education; peer and family relations, employment, etc.

#### **BRAUN, MELANIE**

Melanie is 39 years old. She has two children with her current husband, and James from a previous marriage to Michael Sandler. Melanie and Michael divorced due to Michael's severe depression. Melanie has a few close friends from work that she relies on and confides in. Her mother, Pam, is a very strong support system for her as well.

Melanie is happy in her relationship with Bruce though is not happy about the increase in conflict and fighting between them regarding James's behavior. She often feels caught in the middle between James and Bruce. She does sometimes wish Bruce would drink less, but does not want to discuss this with Bruce as she is concerned this will lead to more conflict between them. Since the safety plan was put in place Melanie is finding Bruce's absence difficult and a stressor in terms of caring for the three children by herself.

Melanie is employed as an assistant manager at Publix where she has worked for the last two years, and has a steady employment history. She has a history of post-partum depression but denies current symptoms. Melanie noted that she finds herself sad at times now but denies depression, suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Melanie copes with stress by crying. She said that sometimes she cries a lot but not in front of the children. Melanie's parents divorced when she was four years old.

Melanie has experienced adverse childhood trauma as a result of being in a caregiver role early and often due to her mother's unmanaged mental health when she was growing up. She was very aware of her actions as a child and she tried hard to behave like the "perfect child" to avoid upsetting her mother. Melanie's relationship with her mother has improved greatly now that her mother is stable on medications. Melanie's father left the family when she was young, but maintained inconsistent contact with her until she was 16. After that she lost track of him until four years ago when she found him on Facebook. Her father, who suffered from alcoholism, died recently and she has been experiencing sadness, but is not despondent.

#### **Analysis:**

Melanie appears conflicted between her relationship with her son and her relationship with her husband and has a difficult time managing both relationships and helping them to work past their disagreements. Melanie is very concerned with others' feelings. Given her non-confrontational personality, she enables and justifies much of Bruce's





## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

binge drinking and volatile behavior as well as James and Byron's negative attention seeking behavior and tantrums. She has a tendency to avoid confrontation with Bruce, James and Byron.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys

#### **BRAUN, BRUCE**

Bruce is thirty years old and employed full time. He is currently employed at Florida City Concrete where he is a foreman and has been there for three years. He is a hard worker and holds himself and others to high expectations. He becomes frustrated when those others do not meet his expectations causing him to sometimes lash out verbally. Bruce denied ever having any alcohol related problems at work, however his mother reports that he was fired from the Department of Treasury for showing up to work smelling like alcohol.

Bruce is typically a quiet and reserved personality. Bruce describes his alcohol intake as something he likes to do on occasion, but not something he has control over. He reports not drinking little during the week, but sometimes binge drinking on the weekend. He does not see this as an issue as he normally does not binge drink around the children. Bruce admits to drinking alcohol regularly as a teen and for years into adulthood.

Bruce admitted that he will sometimes screams, yells, and is impatient when he has been drinking. There have been times when he has thrown things like dishes or pushed things out of his way like tables or chairs, but he denied ever throwing things at his family or another person. He has blacked out after drinking, but this has not happened often. Bruce completed a substance abuse evaluation during the last DCF investigation. The evaluator, based on Bruce's self-report, did not have any treatment recommendations.

Bruce is happy in his marriage although they have been having more disagreements and arguments, mostly around James and how to manage his attitude and behavior. He handles personal stress by trying to get rid of it. He believes in having a plan of action. He leaves his work stress at work; he tries not to bring it home. He is quiet when he is stressed out and he will keep to himself. He usually tries to remove himself from escalating situations with James. Bruce describes himself as a fun person, easy to get along with, with high expectations.

#### **Analysis:**

Bruce is typically a quiet and reserved personality, but Bruce's personality can become hostile, volatile, and aggressive changes after consuming alcohol. Bruce's alcohol consumption has become a problem, creating behavior and personality changes and posing a danger threat to his children.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Melanie Braun; Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### V. PARENTING

General – What are the overall, typical, parenting practices used by the parents/legal guardians? Discipline/Behavior Management – What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parents/legal guardians, and under what circumstances?

#### **BRAUN, MELANIE**

Melanie does not agree with spanking, but believes sometimes the only way to get across to James is to spank him. She does not spank the other children, but both she and Bruce have spanked James. After the spankings, James behavior will temporarily improve, but he will return back to the same behavior a short time later. She stated that spanking is the exception to the rule. Generally, she tries to talk with James, will give him a consequence or remove a privilege. She said that after much arguing back and forth, James usually becomes apologetic for his behavior, but will return to the same behavior a short time later.

Melanie thinks it might look like James is a target child but given the age discrepancy of their kids, James is the only child in their family of an age where “attitude” and “talking back” behaviors are triggers for both Melanie and Bruce.

Bruce and collaterals described Melanie as an amazing mother, nurturing and involved. Bruce sees as her biggest fault that she doesn’t teach James or Byron or hold them accountable for their behavior when they do something wrong or are deliberately hurtful or antagonistic with her or Bruce. He works and she stays home with the children so he expects her to be able to control things and she doesn’t know how to. Melanie describes herself as a “people pleaser” and does not want to look like the villain in the eyes of her children. She engages in arguments with them, persuading them, trying to get them not to be mad at her. She sometimes gives in so she they won’t be mad at her. When Bruce is home Melanie will often depend on him to enforce discipline with the boys.

Melanie recognized that James was having trouble focusing in school and took him to see a child psychiatrist. After James was diagnosed with ADHD Melanie has ensured James takes his medication on school days. Melanie was not able to identify how James’s diagnosis with ADHD may be affecting his behavior at home, but is open to discussing this with the psychiatrist. Since James’ father is diagnosed with bi-polar disorder she wants to stay on top of James’ mental health.

Melanie found the parenting classes offered during the prior DCF investigation helpful, but could not state how she changed her parenting behaviors after the classes. During that intervention the parenting evaluator stated Melanie had unrealistic expectations as to what should motivate her son to please his parents. Efforts were made by the provider to help parents learn the value of positive reinforcement for desired behaviors, but details are not clear as to how much progress was made.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

**Analysis:** Melanie understands the basics of raising a child with ADHD, but only manages James' diagnosis and treatment during the weekdays for school and has no insight about how his diagnosis may affect his interactions at home. Melanie appears to be parent who avoids confrontation and makes decisions often based on emotion. She is uncomfortable with confrontation from disciplining her children and relinquishes discipline responsibility to others.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys

#### **Bruce Braun:**

Bruce has always wanted to be a father and considers this job the most important in the world. He sees himself as family oriented, and spends quality time with all three kids through daily activities and community groups including Boy Scouts.

Bruce described his and James' relationship day in and day out as "normal" – nothing really out of the ordinary. He only gets really frustrated when James gets mouthy and disrespectful. He does not think James is a bad kid but he believes that James lacks structure and accountability. He knows that James is diagnosed with ADHD, but believes this is a "big money maker" and kids just need parents to be firm. He does not believe it is good for children to be taking medications for ADHD. Bruce does not become frustrated or irritable with either Byron or Shane's behaviors. Melanie described him as patient and engaged in teaching Byron and caring for Shane.

Bruce is the main disciplinarian in the home. Melanie is usually ok with the discipline and often asks him to handle it. His philosophy on discipline is that sometimes spanking is necessary with James, but it is used as the exception, not the 'go to' approach to deal with James' behavior. He stated that there is no physical discipline necessary for the other kids given their ages. He said that generally they try to talk with James first, will give him a consequence or remove a privilege. He thinks that James is old enough to reason and should not be arguing or talking back. He believes James needs to be accountable for his behavior and that the consequences he or Melanie impose should be maintained, despite the hardship on the parents.

Bruce does not believe that his consumption of alcohol has had any effect on the relationship with any of the children.

#### **Analysis:**

Bruce is a caring and engaged father, but does become frustrated and sometimes acts aggressively towards James when he does not behave. Bruce does not have insight or understanding on how James' diagnosis of ADHD may influence his behavior. Bruce does not acknowledge that his consumption of alcohol has had a negative impact on his



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

relationship with the children.

**Observations and Interviews:** Information was obtained from the following interviews and sources: Child, James Sandler, age 10; James' mother, Melanie Braun; James' stepfather Bruce Braun; MGM Pam Block, PGM Leann Beys.

#### VI. REASONS FOR ONGOING INVOLVEMENT

##### **Danger Statement (Develop in collaboration with the family)**

Bruce drinks excessive amounts of alcohol causing him to not remember his actions the next day. When Bruce drinks this much his personality changes, he gets loud, agitated and violent with Melanie and James. These violent outbursts and actions negatively impact his parenting skills specifically during family activities including homework time.

#### VII. FAMILY CHANGE STRATEGY

**Family Goal:** Describe how the family will be functioning when all children are safe and the family is able to independently meet the needs of their children. (Developed in collaboration with the family.)

Bruce and Melanie will be able to co-parent and consistently discipline their children. Bruce will find other outlets for his stress and will learn appropriate ways to approach the children's negative behaviors. Bruce and Melanie will agree on appropriate forms of discipline. Bruce will recognize that his alcohol use has been problematic at times and will seek assistance with enhancing his coping mechanisms.

**Ideas:** Describe ideas parent/legal guardian, worker, child or other network members have for moving toward the Family Goal.

Bruce has agreed to complete a substance abuse assessment. Both grandmothers are a support system and both agree to be more involved with the family and to provide respite care for the children. Melanie has agreed to seek counseling.

**Potential Barriers:** Describe things that could get in the way of change from the family's perspective and/or the family team's perspective.

Bruce continues to minimize the effects of his alcohol use on his family and the danger it presents to Melanie and the children.

Melanie will continue to engage in inconsistent discipline techniques.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### VIII. CHILD NEED INDICATORS

Children	Child Needs									
	Emotional/ Trauma	Behavioral (e.g. risk taking behavior, runaway, etc)	Development	Education	Physical Health/ Disability	Family Relationships	Peer/ Adult Relationships	Cultural Identity	Substance Awareness	Life Skills Development
Sandler, James	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	B	B	N/A
Braun, Byron	B	B	B	N/A	B	B	B	B	A	N/A
Braun, Shane	A	A	A	N/A	A	A	A	A	A	N/A

#### IX. PRIORITY NEEDS

	Rating	Parent Meeting Needs?
Sandler, James	C	Yes
Sandler, James	C	Yes
Sandler, James	C	Yes

If the parent is meeting the need, describe their actions. If the parent needs support or assistance to meet the needs of the child, the need will be addressed in the Case Plan.

The parents will continue to work with the psychiatrist to understand medication therapy to determine course of action related to administration of meds

The family will participate in home-based parenting skill building and home-based family and individual counseling to work with James on interpersonal skill development, behavior management, impulse control, and decreasing negative attention seeking behavior.

The needs will be further met by that case plan outcome and tasks associated.



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### X. PROTECTIVE CAPACITIES

	Capacity Categories and Types																		
	Behavioral						Cognitive						Emotional						
	Controls Impulses	Takes Action	Sets aside own needs for child	Demonstrates adequate skills	Adaptive as a Parent/Legal Guardian	History of Protecting	Is self aware	Is intellectually able	Recognizes threats	Recognizes child's needs	Understands protective role	Plans and articulates plans for protection	Meets own emotional needs	Is resilient	Is tolerant	Is stable	Expresses love, empathy, sensitivity to the child	Is positively attached with child	Is aligned and supports the child
Adults																			
Braun, Melanie	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	B	C	B	B	C	A	A	A
Braun, Bruce	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	C	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B



## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY

### Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

#### XI. PRIORITY NEEDS

<b>BRAUN, MELANIE</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Include in Case Plan?</b>
Is self-aware	C	Y
Recognizes threats	C	Y
Meets own emotional needs	C	Y

<b>BRAUN, BRUCE</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Include in Case Plan?</b>
Controls impulses	C	Y
Recognizes threats	C	Y
Recognizes child's needs	C	Y
Sets aside own needs for child	C	Y
Is self-aware	C	Y

If a diminished protective capacity will not be addressed in the Case Plan, describe the assessment process to reach this conclusion.

NA

#### XII. MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

<b>Adult</b>	<b>Motivation</b>
Braun, Melanie	Contemplation
Braun, Bruce	Pre-Contemplation

#### XIII. IN-HOME SAFETY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING (removal home)

	<b>Yes</b> <b>No</b>
The Parent/Legal Guardians are willing for an in-home safety plan to be developed and implemented and have demonstrated that they will cooperate with all identified safety service providers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The home environment is calm and consistent enough for an in-home safety plan to be implemented and for safety service providers to be in the home safely.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Safety services are available at a sufficient level and to the degree necessary in order to manage the way in which impending danger is manifested in the home.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
An in-home safety plan and the use of in-home safety services can sufficiently manage impending danger without the results of scheduled professional evaluations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The Parent/Legal Guardians have a physical location in which to implement an in-home safety plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>





## FLORIDA SAFETY DECISION MAKING METHODOLOGY Family Functioning Assessment - Ongoing

**In-Home Safety Plan is determined. Summarize the conditions that have changed since last safety analysis to support reunification with an In-Home Safety Plan.**

No conditions have changed since last safety analysis at investigation and FFA-I completion. Case plan is in development and service and treatment referrals have been initiated.

Safety plan remains in effect.

### XIV. CURRENT SAFETY PLAN ASSESSMENT FOR SUFFICIENCY

- Safety plan is sufficient, no need for changes to the plan at this time.
- Safety plan is not sufficient, not controlling for child safety or no longer applicable; change in safety plan is needed.
- Safety plan is no longer needed.

**Based on the determination selected above, describe the assessment process to reach this conclusion.**

The children are in the care of their mother and father/step-father Bruce and Melanie in the family home. The home environment is currently calm and consistent enough to implement an in home safety plan. The current safety service providers are available at the level necessary to support the family and manage the safety of the children.

## CASE NOTES – Progress Update

04.24.2014, 04:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Call with In-Home Parenting Provider

As of the date of this update, Ms. Braun and the family are engaged in home-based parenting and family counseling 1x/week and are working on reestablishing a chore chart and positive reinforcement for the behaviors they want to see and extinguishing those behaviors they don't want to reinforce in their children. Ms. Braun is participating in weekly home-based individual and family counseling to help her work on personal growth and development, improving communication skills. She has been participating in these sessions for a little over 2 months and progress is described as positive, however Ms. Braun tends to still justify her decisions and continues to oftentimes reward James and Byron's negative attention seeking behavior.

She continues to struggle with her feelings when her children are perceived as angry with her and she capitulates to their demands, arguments, yelling or tantrums. She is setting a goal to count the number of times she gives in and increase the number of times she does not. She will work on her feelings of inadequacy in individual counseling.

04.26.2014, 04:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Telephone Call with Substance Abuse Treatment Provider

POC: Dr. Drew

Phone: 555.231.4567

Mr. Braun has attended all sessions for intensive outpatient treatment (3x week for past 6 weeks). There are 21 weeks left in program. He has not yet attended AA but it is strongly recommended. He has a quiet personality; alert and listening; is beginning to ask questions and challenge group participants about discrepancies he picks up on. His progress in treatment is adequate at this time.

04.27.2014, 04:15

Worker Creating Note: Reid, Spencer

Category: Case Management

Announced HV

Address: 209 Kettinger Ct Florida City, FL

POC: Ms. Sandler, Mr. Braun, James, Byron, Shane

Visit was scheduled to discuss upcoming Progress Update, feedback from providers and to gather family perspectives.

Private interview with Mr. Braun.

Shane was in the middle of a diaper change. After changing his diaper the father put him down on the floor. He laid on his side and crawled around a little bit. Byron was playing independently with his trucks. He asked Mr. Braun for a snack and sat at the kitchen table to eat it as directed by his dad.

There have been no issues with Bruce's drinking; he has not stopped drinking completely, he informed his treatment provider that he had been drinking casually on the weekend, though not in the presence of his children or wife. Mr. Sandler states that he will begin attending AA meetings at the beginning of July as his treatment provider is insistent that he will find it helpful.

Ms. Braun and James returned to the home from the store during interview with Mr. Braun.

James' medication has been adjusted and he is administered a Ritalin booster at 6:00 PM as well as no 'days off' on weekends. The parents have noticed a significant change in his behavior and attitude, his willingness to listen, his cooperation level. Both parents feel that James had been complying well with his chores, but is beginning to "slack off" some and having an attitude. Based on information from parenting provider, they know his 'good behavior' was part of the 'honeymoon' period, but they all understand that this is a long term life style change and approach and that results are not immediate.

Mr. Braun and James's relationship is less acrimonious. If his mother gives him a consequence like taking away video games or his phone, he still yells and cries, but when he calms, he and his mom talk about how he can earn it back. He likes that he can earn things back.

Private interview with Ms. Braun.

Ms. Braun contends that she was not aware that Bruce was continuing to drink beer on week-ends, but asserts that when she is with him, he does not appear to be under the influence of alcohol. She understands that she may not see signs and symptomatology of traditional 'drunk' behavior and is committed to learning how to confront and challenge Bruce, to recognize signs and question him so that they can be confident in their plan to protect the children.

As of the date of this update, Melanie has started attending AlAnon to help her learn about family dynamics and co-dependency associated with substance abuse toward self-awareness. She stated it is eye-opening and scary to see that what they describe, is who she is and how she behaves but she is encouraged and working on self-improvement in her individual sessions.

Private interview with James.

James planning to visit relatives this summer and complete a number of Boy Scout merit badges. James stated that even if Mr. Braun isn't mean he always has something to say. James stated that they are all doing things differently and argue less. He thinks the parenting provider

is making a difference in how his parents treat him. He believes that his behavior is different too, he does not give his mother "a hard time" as much as he used to. He feels that he can trust Mr. Braun more than he used to; he has not seen him drinking in quite a while and he feels that Mr. Braun is better when he doesn't drink.