

CASE SUMMARY

In summary, this is the case of a 4yo Female, not yet in school, with developmental delay and persistent concern for Autism. Normal MCHAT, Significant language delays SWYC, and borderline POSI, but a broader clinical picture includes scant shared interaction, does not respond to her name, or share attention. No eye contact. No checking in with parents or provider. Her family is homeless and moving around to different hotels and they have very little in the way of resources support systems.

KEY QUESTION(s)

- 1. How to best provide nutritionally supportive recommendations for a with housing and food insecurity and a child with autism?**
- 2. Recommendations in-regards to accelerating access to autism/developmentally supportive resources for a family experiencing homelessness?**

CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

What is the cultural status of the family? Are there cultural supports and what is the cultural understanding of disability and the medical model?

Mom and dad are from Maine. Initially dad was suspicious of Autism diagnosis and medical services. Dad has since come around to wanting more services, and mom is a strong advocate for services as older siblings have received services and were very supported. Current biggest barrier to treatment is unmet basic needs of food, housing, transportation.

Why were they removed from the childcare center?

The childcare center was concerned that they would not be able to accommodate the family's needs and instead opted to not take the child without the support of existing diagnoses

Can you just diagnose global developmental delay or low-grade autism if standards are met to increase services available?

Legally yes, but it is difficult still to find services.

Are there other kids in the home?

Two older boys who go to school and are in the home

Do we know about familial supports or existing contacts and supports for the family? Have you approached the family?

Paternal grandfather is involved in child's care, father is back in the home and is 'more supportive' unsure of other supports.

Are they more consistently living in one town?

No, but they are on a waitlist for housing

Are they connected to a preschool?

They are on the waitlist for headstart but no public pre-k but they were supposed to be connected to Mckinney-Vento through the headstart

Are they accessing WIC and SNAP?

Dad makes too much to qualify.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS & RESOURCES

McKinney-Vento may be able to push CDS into accepting family and provide resources regarding schooling and daycare - [McKinney-Vento Education in Maine | Department of Education](#)

Priscila Bitencourt is the McKinney-Vento liaison for Portland 207-874-8100. 253 Cumberland Ave Portland.

Diagnosis could be beneficial in qualifying for food and care.

- Diagnose global developmental delay or low-grade autism if standards are met to increase services available.
- Consider a consultation with a psychiatric provider for a more formal diagnosis.
- Dr. Dalzell can help with diagnosis.

Maine Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) could provide an assessment and offer further resources [Maine Early Childhood Consultation Partnership \(ECCP\) | Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Consider helping the family to reconnect with Help Me Grow. <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/child-development>.

Could connect parents to [Autism Society of Maine - Autism Spectrum Disorders, Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder \(asmonline.org\)](#)

Just in case the family decides to look into getting a TCM (I know it has been overwhelming in the past.

Providers for their region:

[Providers Region 1 ID TCM | Department of Health and Human Services \(maine.gov\)](#)

The family may benefit from a Family Support Navigator from Maine Parent Federation as well - [Maternal and Child Health Family Support Navigator Program - Maine Parent Federation \(mpf.org\)](#) and or Kids Legal <https://kidslegal.org/>

Possibility of child/family be referred to a dietician if there is perhaps a sensory issue? A dietician can help them work through challenges like working with dietary preferences/sensory issues combined with food insecurity - Perhaps a medical model OT referral?

Since they are on a HeadStart waitlist, getting them into pre-K could expedite care. Get on the waitlist for public pre-school.

- Consider connection to Disability Rights Maine (<https://www.drme.org/>) to push the schools and referrals made to providing appropriate services to the family. That might help connect them to OT and help find more appropriate sensory foods.

Connecting family to housing resources: [Rental Assistance \(mainehousing.org\)](#)

Free and low cost phone services might be available to them: [Free and Low Cost Phone Services | Pine Tree Legal Assistance \(ptla.org\)](#)

You may always reach out for a consult through the MPBHP access line 1-833-672-4711.