

CHILDREN 1STROYAL SCOTTISH SOCIETY FOR
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDRENREPORT to Scottish Childrens Reporter
Administration, Dundee.Subject of
Report: William Tarbett d.o.b. 09.07.91Address: c/o [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
DUNDEEMother: Linda Archer K/n Robertson (28)
Father: David Tarbett (50) 7D Bonneathill Court, DundeeSiblings: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]Introduction:

The family were referred to this Agency by the Social Work Department in July, 1997. They asked for an assessment of the childrens' contact with the parents because the current quality was thought to be unsatisfactory by both the agency and the parents. This assessment has been completed and I would refer you to Page 6 of Phillip McGill, Social Worker's report for this information. Subsequently the Social Work Department referred again requesting a reassessment of the parents circumstances to consider the possibility of the children returning to the care of the parents. The assessment was specifically requested at a Childrens Hearing on [REDACTED] on the 25th September 1997. The Social Work Department decided it was only fair to include and assess the potential of rehabilitation for [REDACTED] siblings [REDACTED] and William as well. The Social Work Department requested this agency did the assessment because of Mr Tarbett's antagonism towards them in the past.

Assessment Process:

It was important to gather information about the parents current circumstances, what they understand to be the needs of the children and how they could meet these needs. Another significant area was to look at why the children came into care and the parents responsibility in this.

The information needed was discussed with Ms Robertson and she choose to go no further with the assessment. It is my impression Ms Robertson viewed it was realistically not feasible to consider the children returning to her care at this point in time.

Assessment Process: cont'd

Mr Tarbett agreed to take part in the assessment with Ian Chalmers, Senior and myself. We agreed to video record the sessions so there could be no dispute about what was discussed during the sessions. We had three sessions with Mr Tarbett. In the first session we looked at the needs of the children and why they were originally taken into care. Not surprisingly Mr Tarbett did not appear to know William very well and he claimed this was because no one tells him anything. It was Mr Tarbett's view there was no difficulties with William while he was in his care. He claims he was spoilt by [REDACTED] (half sister) whom he called Mum because she cared for him most of the time. Mr Tarbett states he cannot understand why William was taken into care and blames the Childrens Panel for removing him. Unfortunately Mr Tarbett was not even able to acknowledge there must have been concerns before a Childrens Panel was arranged. Mr Tarbett's view now is he would have no difficulty managing William because he has never had any difficulty doing this. He is clear he would just do what he told him to do.

In the second session we looked at Mr Tarbett's own background. It would seem from the information gathered in this session Mr Tarbett has a fairly naive understanding about himself and life in general. For example he viewed himself as having a good childhood although he spent a number of years in a residential school. In relation to himself as a parent he believes he has no weaknesses and is good at everything.

In the third session we tried to explore how Mr Tarbett could care for and manage his children if they were returned to his care. Unfortunately Mr Tarbett was unable to acknowledge he would have any difficulties and thought there would be nothing wrong in them returning to his care the next day. He seemed to see everything very simplistically and was not even prepared to discuss what he would do if he had any difficulties with the children. He was challenged about his ability to manage the children given there is evidence he cannot do this in contact. Mr Tarbett totally denied this and claimed he did not say anything about the childrens' behaviour because he has been told not to. He also claimed he does not want to fall out with the children when he only sees them occasionally.

Conclusion & Recommendation:

Mr Tarbett claims he would like all three children returned to his care, but it is my view that he has not done anything to facilitate this happening. Mr Tarbett did not show any understanding of his childrens' needs or a willingness to look at ways of improving his parenting. He made reference on several occasions to not responding when his children were acting out in contact saying that if he had intervened they "would have gone in the huff". Mr Tarbett believes that the behaviour exhibited in contact was normal childhood behaviour and it was only the children showing off. Even when it was pointed out to Mr Tarbett that this type of behaviour was dangerous he did not appear to have the ability to recognise this and projected the blame on to the person supervising the contact.

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Conclusion & Recommendation: cont'd

Unfortunately until Mr Tarbett can begin to understand that the children require more from him than he is offering at present little progress can be made. I would therefore recommend that the Supervision Requirement be continued with William continuing to be looked after away from home.



Yvonne Jamieson
Practitioner
CHILDREN 1st
Laurelbank Family Resource Centre
2 Dudhope Street
DUNDEE
DD1 1JU



Ian A Chalmers
Senior
CHILDREN 1st
Laurelbank Family Resource Centre
2 Dudhope Street
DUNDEE
DD1 1JU

11th March, 1998



ROYAL SCOTTISH SOCIETY FOR
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

REPORT IN TERMS OF SECTION 11
OF THE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) ACT 1995

Prepared by

Yvonne Jamieson
Practitioner
CHILDREN 1st
2 Dudhope Street
DUNDEE
DD1 1JU

in causa

David Henderson Tarbett

PURSUER

against

Linda Sim Grant Archer
and
Dundee City Council

DEFENDER

Children Concerned:

Michael Lee Tarbett
Linda Marie Tarbett
William Tarbett

Court Ref No:
A1091/97

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Report regarding the children, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and William Tarbett, 09.07.91; in relation to an application
by Mr David Tarbett (Pursuer) under Section 11 Children (Scotland) Act 1995.
This report is prepared by Yvonne Jamieson, Practitioner (Certificate
Qualification in Social Work, Northern College, Dundee); CHILDREN 1st,
2 Dudhope Street, Dundee.

Pursuer: David Henderson Tarbett, 7D Bonnethill Court, Dundee

Defender: Linda Sim Grant Archer
Living in Dundee

Children concerned:

- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
Road, Dundee
- William Tarbett, 09.07.91, c/o [REDACTED] (Foster Carers), [REDACTED],
Dundee

Ms Archer prefers to be known as Ms Robertson and will be referred to as such
throughout this report.

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This Report is prepared by Yvonne Jamieson, Social Work Practitioner (CQSW Dundee College of Education) CHILDREN 1st, Laurelbanks Family Resource Centre, 2 Dudhope Street, Dundee. I have been a practising Social Worker for 12 years and employed by CHILDREN 1st, Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children since 1986.

Introduction:

Dundee City Council, Social Work Department referred the family to this Agency in July, 1997. They asked for an assessment of the childrens contact with their parents because the current quality was felt to be unsatisfactory by both the agency and parents. This assessment has been completed. Subsequently the Social Work Department referred again requesting a reassessment of the parents circumstances to consider the possibility of the children returning to the care of the parents. The assessment was requested at a Children's Hearing on Linda Tarbett on the 25th September, 1997. The Social Work Department requested this agency did the assessment because of Mr Tarbett's antagonism towards the Social Work Department. This assessment has not been completed.

Contact:

The information needed for the contact assessment was gathered by.

1. Meeting with each parent and each child to seek their views on contact.

Mr Tarbett's views as he presented them to me were:

He liked contact because you see your bairns. He did not like it to be supervised because you cannot ask the bairns questions and talk freely. He did not like the room contact took place in and would rather be outside where they could play football or at a park, sports centre or play centre. He thought the children would be easier to control if they were outside especially if there were no Social Workers involved. He thought contact should be every day, longer than one hour and he would like to see them on a Saturday or Sunday.

Ms Robertson's views as she presented them to me were:

She liked to have contact with her children and she would like it to be more often. She did not mind contact was supervised and recognised she would probably find it difficult to manage all three children at once. She enjoyed playing games with the children and would sometimes like to take them out or have them back to her home for tea.

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William's views as he presented to me were:

He did not mind who was at contact as long as [REDACTED] were there. He liked contact because he got sweeties and he liked playing games in contact. He thought contact should be more often and he especially wanted to see [REDACTED] more often.

2. Participating and observing 4 contact sessions.

On 11th September, 1997 I attended contact at Kirkton Family Centre. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], William and Mr Tarbet were present and Maureen Petrie, Social Work Assistant was there to supervise. My observations were. The children were busy eating sweets and drinking juice when I arrived. They were chatting away and seemed to be catching up on what had happened to each other as much as anything. [REDACTED] has moved to new foster parents so she told the boys about this. The children responded well if asked about anything and are very willing to talk about what is going on in their lives. Mr Tarbett tended to respond to the children rather than the other way around. In the latter part of the contact he spent most of the time getting on to the boys who by this time seemed to be getting bored and were unsettled and misbehaving. [REDACTED] settled and played a game with Maureen and I. We tried to include Mr Tarbett but he was not interested at all. The boys occasionally showed some interest but were not able to settle to play the game.

On 23rd September, 1997 I attended contact at Kirkton Family Centre. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], William and Ms Robertson were present and Maureen Petrie, Social Work Assistant. My observations were. Ms Robertson engaged the children and asked them what they had been doing since she last saw them. She also gave the two boys a cuddle. Not surprisingly she had to ask the boys a few times what had been happening. She seemed to have a good relationship with them and was able to tell them to behave appropriately although they did not always respond. With a little persuasion the children settled down to play a game with Ms Robertson. The boys were particularly unsettled and testing out all the time. [REDACTED] was very cheeky and William tended to follow his behaviour. William also seemed to get very bored quickly and was asking about going home early in the session.

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On 9th October, 1997 I attended contact at Kirkton Family Centre. [REDACTED] Mr Tarbett, [REDACTED] (Mr Tarbett's daughter) and [REDACTED] (Lisa Tarbett's daughter) were present and Phillip McGill, Social Worker was there to supervise. William and [REDACTED] arrived after ½ hour. My observations were. [REDACTED] tried on a few occasions to tell her Dad she was staying with William but he did not really respond. With a bit of encouragement he picked up on this but by this time [REDACTED] had lost interest in telling him. [REDACTED] and her Mum arrived and from then on [REDACTED] spent most of the time playing with [REDACTED]. She did ask when her brothers would arrive and seemed keen to see them but did not really interact with them when they were there.

When the boys arrived Mr Tarbett did not pick up on the things the boys were trying to tell him.

William: Throughout the contact he tried to follow whatever [REDACTED] was doing and certainly after ½ an hour lost interest in his Dad and was wanting to go home. He did enjoy the antics his brother got up to.

[REDACTED]: Was fine in the first ½ hour. He seemed pleased his sister and [REDACTED] were there and his interaction with the latter was good. He enjoyed being able to look after her and get kisses and cuddles. He also seemed to enjoy physical contact with his Dad and his big sister [REDACTED]. After ½ an hour he seemed to get bored and continually looked for limits to be placed on him. Mr Tarbett actually took more interest and tried to stop him more than on the previous contact. However when it was clear [REDACTED] was not going to respond to him Mr Tarbett ignored the behaviour and started tidying away the games. [REDACTED] seemed to have more control over him but it took Phillip McGill to stop him. By the end of the contact [REDACTED] seemed very unsettled and was verbally abusive to all the adults.

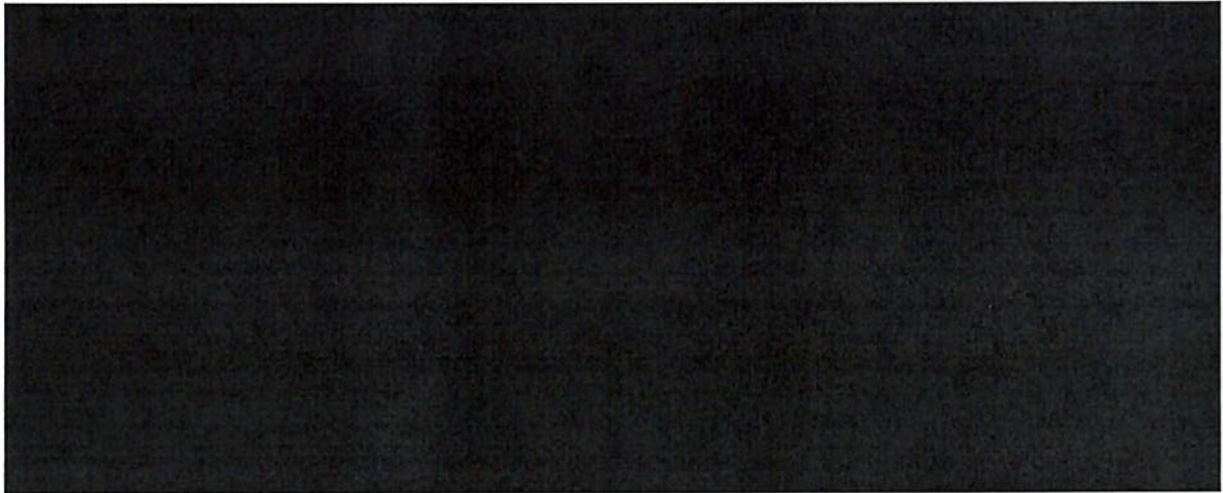
On 21st October, 1997 I attended contact at Kirkton Family Centre. Maureen Petrie was supervising the contact. [REDACTED] and Ms Robertson were present and [REDACTED] and William arrived after ½ hour. My observations were. [REDACTED] was pleased to see her Mum and their interaction was relaxed and easy.

When the boys arrived it became more difficult. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both wanted Mum's attention. William tried to copy anything his older brother was doing. An example of the behaviour is him walking along the kitchen work surfaces refusing to come down and swearing when challenged. His Mum was very good with him and spoke to him appropriately about his behaviour on several occasions. This however left [REDACTED] out and she got upset and said she was not feeling well. In many ways everyone seems to be on tenderhooks waiting to see what [REDACTED] will do next and he is aware of this. We did manage to settle them down to play a board game round the table but it was hard work trying to keep the attention of the three children. Ms Robertson is understandably only able to deal with one child's demands at a time, but despite [REDACTED] taking up most of her time she had some time to reassure [REDACTED] and give her a cuddle because she claimed to be feeling unwell.

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21st October, 1997: cont'd

As I have already commented William tends to pick up on [REDACTED] behaviour which is concerning. At one point William was saying he was going to kill himself because [REDACTED] had told us about an incident where he had tried to kill himself and was taken to Bell Street. William is far easier to control than [REDACTED] but it must be worrying for him to hear his brother talking about hurting himself and also see how his brother can be so disruptive.



William Tarbett:

William appears to be settled and happy with his current carers. Based on the information about how he settled with his current carers and the interaction I observed during contact with his parents it is my view he has little attachment to either parent. During the contact he had very little direct interaction with his parents and looked to either his siblings or other adults in the room to meet his needs.

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Mr Tarbett's Parenting Ability:

Mr Tarbett clearly expresses a desire to care for his children full time. From my observations it appears he does not however show an ability to understand how to do this adequately. Mr Tarbett is physically available for the children and has always had a presence at contact and the various meetings about the children. In contact he is also available for them if they approach him for a cuddle or physical affection. Unfortunately he is not as available for them emotionally and he does not appear to recognise the children have separate needs from his own.

He has as far as I am aware accepted no responsibility for the children being taken into care and has been unable to acknowledge he was not providing them with adequate care at that time.

Conclusion & Recommendations:

I would be very concerned for the welfare of the three children if Mr Tarbett was granted a residence order. Currently in my opinion he is unable to meet their needs and manage them in the contact he has with them for one hour per month. It is therefore difficult to perceive how he could manage and provide all their needs on a full time basis. I would also be concerned about Mr Tarbett having status as legal representative for the children. He appears unable to differentiate between his own needs and the childrens' needs. He is therefore more likely to represent what he views as best for the children based on his needs rather than the childrens' needs.



Yvonne Jamieson
Practitioner CQSW

CHILDREN 1st
Laurelbank Family Resource Centre
2 Dudhope Street
DUNDEE
DD1 1JU

10th February, 1998

Tarbett Family - Assessment on Contact:

Mother: Linda Robertson
Father: David Tarbett

Children: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
William Tarbett d.o.b. 09.07.91

Introduction:

The Social Work Department referred the family for an assessment on the childrens' contact with their parents.

In August 1997 I met with the referring Social Workers, Phillip McGill and Margaret Leslie and agreed I would assess the needs of each child in relation to contact with their siblings and each parent and determine how these can be best met.

I have gathered the information needed for this assessment by:

- 1 Meeting with each parent and each child to seek their views on contact.
- 2 Participated in four contact sessions with the parents and children.
- 3 Sought the views and gathered information from the childrens' social workers and carers.

In completing this assessment I have considered the statutory framework for contact as defined in the new Children's Act and the purpose of contact.

Current Contact Arrangements:

Contact is once a month with the three children for the mother and the father. They are together for one hour and [REDACTED] at the request of a Children's Panel gets an additional ½ hour on her own with each parent.

The contact I have observed has not met the childrens' needs and not been in my view in their best interests. It appears to be difficult to manage the three children in the room. It has been particularly difficult lately because [REDACTED] behaviour is very disruptive.

Recommendations for Contact:

The following recommendations are made on the basis that the children will not be returning to the care of their birth family and the Social Work Department plan is the children need alternative permanent care.

Given each child is different and has very different needs I will look at them individually but there is some recommendations that would apply to the three children.

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1. Sibling contact should be separate from parental contact. At the moment contact does not seem to be an enjoyable experience for the children because it is so fraught. If the children saw their parents separately from their contact with each other, both should be easier to manage.

2. The contact needs to be planned and managed by the childrens' social worker and/or supervisor of the contact. The children need the opportunity to have contact which is carefully planned around an activity they enjoy. This should involve doing different things and going different places and not always in the same room. This should avoid the contact becoming negative and boring for the children.

3. The people supervising the contact need to be seen to be in charge and control of the contact while enabling as far as is possible positive interaction between the family members.

4. Both parents need to co-operate fully with the plans for contact and work with the people supervising the contact to make it a positive experience for the children.

5. The contact currently needs to be supervised because both parents at times in the past have clearly struggled to manage the children appropriately. This may become easier if they are seeing the children individually and is something I would suggest should be reviewed after about 6 months.

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William:

My view is William's attachments are with his siblings particularly [REDACTED]. He has little interaction with either parent during contact but obviously enjoys being part of a family. I think it important for him to maintain contact with his parents because it is the only family he has until a more permanent home is secured for him. In the current contact arrangements he finds it hard to settle and after about half an hour is wanting to go home. Given his age and lack of attachment to the parents this is understandable. I would therefore suggest the contact time be reduced to approximately three quarters of an hour unless a planned activity was to take longer.

Conclusion:

It is important the contact the children experience is positive and enjoyable for them. This can only be achieved if the parents work in partnership with the Social Work Department. I have met with Ms Robertson to discuss the recommendations I have made. She was not completely happy with all the recommendations but was very willing to look at the children's needs before her own and appears to want to work with the Social Work Department so her children can get the best care possible and a positive experience in contact.

I have not met Mr Tarbett to discuss the recommendations. He has been sent two appointments and not responded to either. He had the opportunity to hear my recommendations about [REDACTED] at a recent Children's Hearing. I would have however liked the opportunity to discuss my recommendations about all the children. Unfortunately the only conclusion I can come to about this is he is unwilling to accept the recommendations and work with them.

Yvonne Jamieson

Yvonne Jamieson
Practitioner CQSW

CHILDREN 1st
Laurelbank Family Resource Centre
2 Dudhope Street
DUNDEE
DD1 1JU

12th December 1997