

Working with parents who have had their children removed

Case study – Monica

Monica is nineteen years old and is five months pregnant with her second child. Monica's first child, Chloe, is two years old and lives with a foster family. Monica has supervised visitations with Chloe once a week.

Chloe was removed from her care when she was six months old. Monica was unable to provide Chloe with the parenting she needed due to a number of factors, including poverty, social isolation and an unsafe living situation. At the time, Monica lived with her partner who was significantly older than her and physically violent. He had many friends visit and the police were often called to their home.

Monica has been out of that relationship now for almost a year. She is living alone and although things are calmer, she is still challenged by her poverty and chronic isolation. She doesn't have a driver's license and has to catch a bus for an hour to make her weekly appointments with Chloe. She has been late a couple of times and missed another two because she was unwell. Her social worker often reminds her of the importance of being punctual to these visits.

Monica desperately wants things to be different with her second child, but she is worried that she has already been judged to be unfit. She is scared about what will happen when she has her next child alone, without support or transport.

Monica was in care until she moved in with a boyfriend at fifteen. She can't remember much about the first years of her life and has very low confidence in raising a new baby. She hopes she is saying the right things to her social worker, but suspects her lack of knowledge is very obvious.