

CPS Caseworker: Angela Rodriguez

Setting: Phone call with CPS worker, who is talking with you while in between court hearings that she is attending today

I have been with the agency for five years and have been Jessica's caseworker from the beginning. For a long time, I thought Helen would never kick Wayne out. But now he's been gone for two months and Helen is standing firm on that decision. Helen has joined a group for co-dependents and she's learning how to live on her own.

From where I sit, Wayne being gone changes everything about the case. CPS no longer has justification to terminate this mother's rights if she is willing to provide a safe place for her daughter. Now that Wayne is out for good, Helen can do that. Therefore, we can't terminate and we can't have Candice adopt her. I am changing my permanency planning recommendation from TPR and adoption to reunification.

I support this reunification. Helen wants her daughter back. They have started having visits in her home. I know it will take Jessica some time to feel safe there, but Wayne is gone for good so really she is safe. I know that Jessica and her mother still have fights. I think it's normal for teenagers and parents to disagree and sometimes get loud about it.

This child brings a lot of negative attention to herself. This lesbian thing honestly seems more like a phase to me. I don't have a problem with gay people; I have gay and lesbian friends. This feels more like a teenage, experimental phase. You'd be surprised how many teens experiment with their sexuality like this.

I think Jessica will benefit from the therapy that's finally started. Dr. Felix knows what the issues are and that we need to reunify this family. They have only met a few times so I haven't checked in yet but I bet it's going well. Dr. Felix is really good.

Candice has done a good job, but she's very young to be parenting a 15-year-old. They're still in the honeymoon phase. Wait and see what will happen when Jessica starts to really rebel. Plus, she encourages behavior that's only going to make things harder for her in the end. Candice should be discouraging this type of behavior.