

**The Center for Trauma Free Living  
64 Gleneida Avenue  
Carmel, NY 10512  
845-225-6704**

**Case Name:** Kassenoff

**Date:** December 27, 2022

**Treatment Summary/Update**

The positive forward momentum detailed in the last report did not continue for the planned Christmas visits. They were, in fact, a disaster. On Christmas Eve day the three girls were scheduled to have a sandwich visit at this agency with their mother. For the first time they were brought to this office by their father. It became evident as soon as they came out of the car that this was going to be a challenging visit. It is this writer's clinical observation that it was simply too difficult for the kids to leave their father and go with their mother. I strongly recommend that situations where the two younger children have to directly transition from their father to their mother be avoided at this point.

Charlie was clearly struggling the most on the 24th. The two younger girls became defiant, unpleasant, and hugely disrespectful. They were on their phones saying they were calling their AFC or their father. They would not go on the planned visit to a local bowling alley with a restaurant and an arcade. They then would not go, when their mother agreed to their request, to the diner across the street they have been to many times. They used their phones to record this writer and their mother throughout the time. The phone became weaponized and was a huge deterrent/distraction.

The girls did not present in any way as afraid or fearful. There were moments when they were running about and laughing and smiling and feeding off each other's negative energy. They did not even say they were scared. Both Charlie and JoJo used the word "uncomfortable" over and over again and repeatedly said they didn't have to do what they didn't want to do and they would not/could not be "forced" to do something they were uncomfortable with. Charlie ran down the street and hid by the lake. It is important to note it was about 5 degrees when this chaos ensued. Ally and Jo Jo then barricaded themselves in the diner bathroom disrupting other patron's meals and Christmas Eve celebrations. It became so out of control that the police were called. This writer had Mr. Kassenoff pick up Charlie since she was speaking to him on the phone throughout anyway and then had Ms. Kassenoff leave the diner and Ally and JoJo when Mr. Kassenoff was able to go in and get the other two girls.

It was initially very difficult for Mr. Kassenoff to simply say to the girls that they needed to go on this visit. When he has said this, in the past, the children listened to him. This time he could not/would not initially say that and the kids responded in kind. He was asked to come back and take their phones as the girls were not respecting the rules and the fact that an exception had been made to allow them to bring their phones under the guidelines that they used them to share apps,pictures, etc. with their mother. Mr. Kassenoff then began to negotiate conditions under which the children would participate in the visit - where, when, if they could have phones. It is critical going forward that Mr. Kassenoff simply gives the message that the adults/the courts have made a decision/ plan and the children must adhere to that plan because when he does that the children respond positively and listen. ,

During the girls' extreme acting out both younger girls screamed comments about not having a Christmas visit as they are Jewish. This fits into comments Ally has shared with this writer about feeling a great deal of pressure for choosing to have unsupervised visits with her mom. She stated that the small Christmas tree she had asked for from her mother for her own room was not allowed in the house and has remained on the front porch since she received it per her father's directives. Ally stated that she was made to throw out the leftovers she had brought home from a previous dinner with her mom as the meal was not Kosher. Ally shared that "no one" was talking to her in her home because of her decision/wish to see her mother. Ally was visibly quite upset when recounting these facts. Ally showed this writer a small area on her head where she is pulling out her own hair from stress. She spoke about her fear of her father being made aware that she shared any of this information.

This writer continues to have no information from Mr. Kassenoff about whether the girls are participating in therapy, how often they are in therapy, and he has not shared a release of information for this writer to speak to any therapist. It continues to be this writer's strongest clinical recommendation that these young girls be in regularly scheduled and in person therapy. After the visit could not/did not occur on the 24th this writer clinically recommended to Mr. Kassenoff (for the second time) that Charlie be psychiatrically evaluated as her behavior/words/actions were so concerning. This did not happen.

The Christmas Day visit is reported to have only occurred with Ally. Once again the two younger girls were unable to leave directly from their father to spend time with their mother. Police were again involved and still the girls would not comply and their father was unable to have them listen to his directives if he did provide them with a clear message that they needed to go on this court ordered visit.

The local diner has seemingly become weaponized/involved in this situation in a very strange manner. Mr. Kassenoff reports that the staff are “very close” to the girls and are aware of the “whole story” from the time that the girls and their nanny have spent there. He reported having “statements” from employees about their feelings/observations/comments about Ms. Kassenoff. I have clinically recommended that the diner not be a part of the visitation process in any way going forward including having it be the place where the nanny and non visiting child remain. Many other local options were provided.

Phones will no longer be permitted during in office/sandwich visits.

It is important to note that Ally has been having successful community visits with her mother. In fact there was a successful visit between the two on the 23rd and the 25th. The only time there was an issue was on the 24th when her father transported the three girls here. Ally was visibly upset throughout and initially spent time trying to negotiate with her younger sisters and have them attend the visit. It was then like a switch flipped and the pressure to be the only child willing to attend the visit was too much. She then joined in with her younger sister’s behavior and refusal to participate and also began recording with her phone.

If there are any questions, or more information is needed, I can be reached at the above number.

Jennifer Culley, LCSW