

DECISION 3

Given your conversation with Susan and Mary, what is your focus for a conversation with Jason?

Rank the following options (1 = most important, 6 = least important)

Rank	Options
2	A) Mary's use of physical punishment.
6	B) The allegation that Susan and Stanley's home is not safe.
4	C) Jason's current school attendance and performance.
1	D) Mary's use of a gun to control Jason.
5	E) Jason and Mary's failure to engage in the preventive program referral and intervention.
3	F) Jason's possible alcohol/drug use.

EXPERT RATIONALE

- 1-3. **(D, A, and F):** These are most critical to address first. The seriousness of having a gun in the home, how Mary disciplines in light of the conflicts, the alleged punch in the face and drug/alcohol use by Jason all lead to a potential volatile situation. Simply asking a question and receiving a denial shouldn't result in the issue being dropped. We need to ask Jason to determine his immediate safety.
- 4-6. **(C, E, and B):** Obtaining school information and prior history on past interventions are important to the assessment and can occur later. Addressing the report that was received on Mary and Jason is the priority and not for Susan and Stanley where there is no tangible allegation and who reside in another jurisdiction.

DECISION 4

What is your primary theory of what is happening with Jason and Mary?

From the list below, indicate: Options that are highly likely, somewhat likely, and unlikely to be the core of the issue

Highly likely	Somewhat likely	Unlikely	Options
	X		A) There isn't really an issue here; Susan is stirring the pot because she wants custody of Jason.
	X		B) Jason's poor school performance and possible alcohol use are indicators that Jason has much deeper problems.
X			C) Mary means well and loves her grandson; she does not know how to effectively parent a teen.
	X		D) Mary may not be a fit parent.
		X	E) This is a classic parent-teen conflict. Allegations are not serious due to Jason's age.
X			F) Mary's threatening behavior is escalating and will likely continue and worsen if not addressed.

EXPERT RATIONALE

Highly Likely:

(F, C): There should be grave concerns about how the situation seems to be escalating. It could be due to frustration, lack of parenting, or something else that must be addressed. Mary admits her challenges in parenting Jason that have begun since he has reached his teenage years.

Somewhat Likely:

(A, B, and D): While Susan's motives may be questionable, information suggests that additional supports to Mary and Jason may be needed. The extent of Jason's school performance and possible alcohol/drug usage are areas for follow-up. Parenting issues only arose since Jason has reached his teenage years.

Some of the concerns may be parent-teen conflict but additional information is needed as a part of the assessment.

Unlikely:

(E): While parent-teen conflict may be present, Jason may still be vulnerable, and allegations shouldn't be dismissed simply due to his age.

DECISION 5

What are the more and less effective next steps?		
From the options below, which steps do you believe would have the greatest impact on the family?		
More effective	Less effective	Options
	X	A) Refer Mary and Jason to a teen/parent preventive program.
X		B) Get an alcohol/drug assessment for Jason.
X		C) Follow up with Mary about a gun in the house and her use of it when she has a conflict with Jason.
X		D) Get agreement between Mary and Jason about how they will handle conflicts.
	X	E) Follow up with Susan to assess how much of her concern is related to the custody conflict.
	X	F) Get Jason involved in activities at a community center.
	X	G) Refer Mary and Jason to a mentorship program. Recommend a male mentor.
	X	H) Explore alternate housing/custody arrangements for Jason.

EXPERT RESPONSES

Effective:

(C, B, and D): These options may be most effective as they are all related to safety or issues that contribute to a volatile situation. The combination of a gun being in the home with no discussion about the location, how it's secured, is it loaded, etc., and educating and developing strategies on conflict management are critical issues to address.

Less Effective:

(E, F, and G): Full assessment has not occurred, and it would be inappropriate to initiate services that aren't yet deemed to be warranted. Ongoing communication with Susan to understand the dynamics and possible motives is important for assessment but will not have an immediate impact.

(A, and H): Trying to address parenting, discipline, relationships may be helpful once we know if there are substance abuse issues which could be a barrier to progress in these areas. Having a temporary plan with a location where Jason could go for a “cool down” period could be helpful but it may be premature to consider custody arrangements.