

**Case Study #5: Sharon Delay**

**Group Leader Information**

Reason for referral to APS: Possible sexual abuse

Referral made by: Group home staff person

Psycho-social Factors Affecting Capacity:

Sharon is a 22 year old developmentally disabled woman. She is moderately mentally retarded, reads with difficulty, but is verbal and cooperative. She lives in a group home with five other residents. Sharon's parents are deceased. She has a boyfriend, Jake. She admits that she has been out with Jake and had sex with him. Sharon has a basic understanding of what it means to have sex. She knew that she was going to have sex with Jake, and wanted to do so. She also understands the consequences of sexual intercourse—that she could get pregnant or contract a sexually transmitted disease. She says that she is on the pill, and Jake used a condom. She likes Jake a lot, but does not want to have sex with him again if it means that he will go to jail.

Physical Factors Affecting Capacity:

Sharon is slightly overweight. She is being treated for hypothyroidism, allergies and high blood pressure. She was recently taken to the hospital for a rape emergency examination after a group home staff person reported that she had had sex with Jake. The hospital examination showed no evidence of physical trauma.

Environmental Factors Affecting Capacity:

Sharon's sister, Jane, was appointed as Sharon's conservator to manage her financial affairs, upon the advice of an attorney. Jane says that Sharon is unable to have consensual sex because she is "too stupid to know what she is doing." Police arrested Jake for sexual assault. Jane wants Jake to be charged with rape of a vulnerable adult.

Prognosis:

Jake will go to jail. Sharon will not be allowed to have another sexual relationship.