

**IN THE INTEREST OF:**

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF  
THE STATE OF FLORIDA IN AND  
FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

**Child (ren)'s Name/DOB**

**JUVENILE DIVISION**

**Jones, Stefan  
D.O.B.: 04/26/97  
Jones, Keyshawn  
D.O.B.: 01/28/00  
Jones, Catera  
D.O.B.: 03/27/01**

**DATE OF HEARING: 02/28/2013  
CASE NUMBER: 13-15080/007  
GAL PROGRAM APPOINTED:  
02/01/13  
GUARDIAN: Yani Sanchez & Travis  
Harmon**

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**GUARDIAN AD LITEM STATUS REPORT**

The GAL program was appointed to this case on 02/01/13. The GAL supervisor conducted an unannounced home visit on 02/10/13. Since this date, the GAL supervisor assigned the case to a GAL staff advocate, who also conducted an announced home visit on 02/23/13. On 02/01/13, the children were placed in the custody of the maternal grandmother in the same home they all shared with the mother. The mother was allowed to remain in the home until Monday, 02/04/13, at which time she was to enter a residential substance abuse treatment facility. However, during both unannounced visits on 02/10/13 and 02/23/13, the mother was still residing in the home. During the 02/10/13 visit, GAL supervisor detected the smell of alcohol on the mother. It was recently reported that the mother entered Agape residential treatment facility on 02/25/13.

This status report is being submitted in efforts for the court and respective parties to gain a clear understanding of what each child's wishes are as to placement, along with the GAL's recommendations.

**Home Environment**

The home environment can be described as chaotic, at best. The children reside in a small cramped one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment in an unsafe neighborhood in Florida City. Catera shares the bedroom with the mother and grandmother while Stefan and Keyshawn sleep on two small couches located in the front room. The apartment was cluttered and emanated a strong overwhelming odor. Dirty clothes were strewn throughout the apartment on the floor and in high piles on the bed. The apartment was hot with the only fresh air coming from the open front door. There was plenty of food in the home and during the visit of 02/10/13 the grandmother was cooking beef stew for dinner and on the visit of 02/23/13, Keyshawn and Catera were eating pancakes and bacon for breakfast. Stefan was not present at the time as he was attending a counseling session at Alliance as part of his delinquency probation. GAL staff advocate returned to the residence a few hours later and was able to meet with Stefan at that time. Overall, the living space is small and cramped with not enough room and personal space for two adults and three growing children, which may contribute to the many confrontations within the home.

**Stefan**

The GAL supervisor tried to meet Stefan on 2/10/13 during the initial home visit; however, was informed by the maternal grandmother that he was out with friends. On 02/21/13, the GAL supervisor and GAL were finally able to meet with Stefan before the court proceeding. Stefan appeared guarded, angry, and made little eye contact. His demeanor changed a bit after witnessing his sister, Catera approach the GAL supervisor with a hug. He expressed to the GAL supervisor that he wanted to go back to Illinois because Miami would only get him into trouble. He feels that no one cares or listens to what he

has to say. He also made it a point to say that he did not wish to live with his maternal grandmother as all she was interested in was his SSI money. The GAL supervisor explained that other relatives could be explored for placement but that it would take some time as it is out of state. When asked if he was safe he dismissed the question by stating he would not go into foster care because he would kill himself. When asked if he was taking his medication, he stated he does not take them because he believes he does not need medication. It should be noted that during the unannounced visit at the home, the mother indicated Stefan is prescribed Fluoxetine 10mg (Depression), Divaloprex 500mg (Bipolar disorder), Abilify 5mg (Bipolar/Schizophrenia), Perphenazine 2 mgs (psychosis), and Quetiapine 50mg (Schizophrenia and Major Depressive Disorder). Additionally, Stefan had been Baker Acted on at least nine occasions.

On 2/21/13 Stefan gave the GAL supervisor the following relatives for possible placement information: Iretha Smith and Teresa Wright. The GAL supervisor called these individuals twice on 2/22/13 and left messages. On 2/25/13, Mrs. Iretha Smith called and stated she would like to assist by taking custody of the children while the mother completes her services. She currently resides with her cousin and is raising her 3 grandchildren. She is planning on moving into her own place next month so that she can have room for Stefan, Catera, and Keyshawn. She understands that the children have behavioral issues but believes she can work with them. It should be noted that she has a 2009 retail theft felony charge for which she stated she completed probation.

On 2/23/12, GAL visited all three children following the Judge's order to inquire as to the children's wishes for placement. Once again, Stefan told the GAL that he did not feel safe in Miami. On two occasions he and his brother have been jumped walking home. He wishes to be placed with family. He stated he loves his mother very much but feels that he and his siblings should be with family who can support them while his mother gets the help she needs. Stefan also mentioned that he is attending counseling sessions at Alliance as part of his probation from his delinquency case which was transferred to Miami after the family moved from Illinois. His last class is 3/02/13. His probation officer is Roxy Allen. The GAL supervisor left her a message on 2/25/13 to inquire about his probation.

### **Keyshawn**

The GAL supervisor initially met Keyshawn on 2/10/13. He was very polite and friendly. He immediately said he did not wish to be moved into foster care. He said living with his grandmother was ok but she's always on his case about everything. He also stated he would like to move back to Illinois with the rest of his family. Keyshawn currently attends Ruth Owens Kruse Educational Center and is in a special education setting. He is currently prescribed Risperidone 1mg (Bipolar and Schizoaffective disorder) and Lamotrigine 100mg (Bipolar disorder and depression). On 2/23/13, the GAL Travis Harmon met with Keyshawn and he gave the GAL contact information for relatives in Illinois. It should be noted that the day following the GAL's visit, Keyshawn was arrested and charged with misdemeanor battery which was not actioned on 02/25/13. This is Keyshawn's seventh arrest since 09/15/12; he has four pending delinquency cases, all charges for misdemeanor battery.

### **Catera**

The GAL supervisor met Catera on 2/10/13. She appears to be a sweet, soft spoken girl who exhibits some possible cognitive delays. She does not maintain consistent eye contact and at times appears to "drift" in and out of conversation. It is very difficult to get her full attention. When asked if she was safe, she said yes but that her grandmother yells at her and her brothers. She also mentioned that her brothers are always fighting. When asked where she wants to live, she said she wants to return to Illinois. The GAL also conducted a visit on 2/23/13 and her wishes remained consistent in wanting to return to Illinois.

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

In closing, this GAL recommends this case be monitored closely with a "hands on approach". This should be a collaborative effort between the agency, therapists, providers, custodians and this GAL to ensure that all of these children are not only receiving the services they need but also for everyone to gain a clear understanding of the depth of this case. This GAL believes that despite everything the children have endured because of their mother's substance abuse history, they love their mother and want to be with her. Their main wish above anything else is for her to get help for her illness so that the family can live a clean, healthy and sober life. These children have severe emotional and psychological problems that need to be addressed in an expeditious manner. Stefan's mental health is of grave priority.

Without the right interventions, he is a harm to himself and others. It is very concerning the depth of his anger and hostility along with his continuing suicidal ideations. Keyshawn's delinquency hearings should be monitored closely along with communicating with his probation officer. Catera would benefit from a psychological evaluation to determine if she has a mental health diagnosis and or delay in cognitive functioning. Above all, the current placement of these children is not very stable and they may require a higher level of care. They not only do not wish to be there but the grandmother is also overwhelmed with their needs and overall situation. It is imperative that possible placement with relatives is also explored and all efforts are made to ensure it is done as soon as possible.

This GAL recommends:

- **The agency makes efforts to contact all of the relatives listed on this report for possible placement.**
- **Stefan and Keyshawn's delinquency cases are monitored and the agency works closely with the probation officer to ensure all requirements are being met.**
- **All three children receive comprehensive psychological evaluations and Stefan and Keyshawn receive Suitability Assessments to determine if a higher level of care is necessary.**
- **The LOCA evaluations are completed as expeditiously as possible to determine what other services each child will need and all recommendations on the LOCA are followed.**
- **The agency requests an ICPC in Illinois to start the process should any relatives be interested in taking the children.**
- **The agency and GAL assist the children with clothing vouchers.**
- **The children are taken to all necessary medical and dental appointments.**
- **If Keyshawn's delinquency charges and or probation requires him to remain in Miami, he should remain in the custody of his grandmother with services in place in the home until he completes his requirements and can go back to Illinois.**

Respectfully submitted by:

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**Name**  
**Guardian ad Litem Supervisor**

Respectfully submitted by:

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**Name**  
**Guardian ad Litem**