



Comprehensive Evaluation Report

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Superior Court Waterbury	Docket Number UWY FA104022991S	F.S.U Number RF20163260105
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Plaintiff: William Grohs

Attorney for Plaintiff: Michael Fasano, Sr.

vs.

Defendant: Kelly Grohs

Attorney for Defendant: Robert S Kolesnik Pc

Intervener:

Attorney for Intervener:

Children: Sophia Grohs (DOB: [REDACTED])

Attorneys/GAL for children: Mary Brigham (GAL)

Genevieve Grohs (DOB: [REDACTED])

Mary Brigham

Requested by the Honorable: ANNA FICETO

(Judge of the Superior Court)

Referral Date: 12/12/2016

Continuance Date(s): 4/20/2017

Completion Date: 6/12/2017

Submitted by: Katie O Connor

(Family Relations Counselor)

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SUPERIOR COURT
DISTRICT
WATERBURY
2017 JUN 29 A 9:44

FAMILY SERVICES UNIT
Comprehensive Evaluation Report

RF20163260105

Docket number
UWY FA104022991S

Name of case: William Grohs vs. Kelly Grohs

Counselor assigned: Katie O Connor

Client Contacts	Date	Type
William/Kelly Grohs	12/20/2016	Letter Sent Initial Conjoint
William Grohs	12/29/2016	Telephone Call To Re-scheduled conjoint for 1/10
Kelly Grohs	12/29/2016	Telephone Call To
Kelly Grohs	12/29/2016	Telephone Call From Indicating she cannot make appt tomorrow
Kelly/William Grohs	12/30/2016	First Scheduled Meeting
William/Kelly Grohs	1/10/2017	First Meeting Initial Conjoint
Kelly Grohs	1/13/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	1/26/2017	E-Mail Received 2 emails-scheduling
William/Kelly Grohs	1/26/2017	Office Visit Continued Conjoint
Bill Grohs	1/27/2017	E-Mail Received
William Grohs	2/3/2017	Office Visit Individual Appt
Bill Grohs	2/6/2017	E-Mail Received 3 emails
Bill Grohs	2/7/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	2/8/2017	E-Mail Received 2/9 Snowstorm
Kelly Grohs	2/8/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	2/10/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	2/10/2017	E-Mail Received
William Grohs	2/16/2017	Home Visit
Kelly Grohs	2/17/2017	Telephone Call To
Bill Grohs	2/17/2017	E-Mail Received
William Grohs	2/21/2017	E-Mail Received
William Grohs	2/21/2017	E-Mail Sent
Kelly Grohs	2/21/2017	E-Mail Sent
Kelly Grohs	2/21/2017	E-Mail Received
William Grohs	2/21/2017	Telephone Call From
William Grohs	2/22/2017	Telephone Call From

	Date	Type
William Grohs	2/22/2017	Telephone Call To
Kelly Grohs	2/23/2017	Office Visit
Kelly Grohs	2/24/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	2/27/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs/Bill Grohs	3/1/2017	E-Mail Sent Re: Setting up Children's appts
Kelly Grohs	3/2/2017	Office Visit
Bill Grohs	3/2/2017	E-Mail Received 3 emails received
Bill Grohs	3/5/2017	E-Mail Received
Bill Grohs	3/6/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	3/6/2017	E-Mail Received 2 emails
Kelly Grohs	3/7/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	3/8/2017	Home Visit
Kelly Grohs	3/8/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	3/10/2017	Telephone Call To
Kelly Grohs	3/13/2017	Telephone Call To
Bill Grohs	3/15/2017	E-Mail Received 7 emails
Bill Grohs	3/16/2017	E-Mail Received 2 emails
Bill Grohs	3/17/2017	E-Mail Received
Bill Grohs	3/21/2017	E-Mail Received
Bill Grohs	3/22/2017	E-Mail Received
Bill Grohs	3/23/2017	Office Visit Individual Appt
Kelly Grohs	3/23/2017	Telephone Call From
Kelly Grohs	3/23/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	3/24/2017	E-Mail Received
Sophia and Genevieve Grohs	3/24/2017	Office Visit Children's interviews
Kelly Grohs	3/24/2017	Telephone Call To
Bill Grohs	3/27/2017	E-Mail Received 2 emails received
Bill Grohs	3/29/2017	E-Mail Received 6 emails received
Kelly Grohs	3/29/2017	E-Mail Received
Kelly Grohs	3/29/2017	Telephone Call To
Bill Grohs	4/6/2017	E-Mail Received

Collateral Contacts	Date	Type
DCF	1/10/2017	E-Mail Sent Record Request
Laura Erdhardt	1/10/2017	Letter Sent
John Trumbull School	1/10/2017	Letter Sent
Judson School	1/10/2017	Letter Sent
Watertown Police	1/10/2017	Letter Sent
John Trumbull School	1/17/2017	Letter Received Evie's school records
Laura Meka	1/17/2017	Telephone Call From Principal of John Trumbull School
Watertown Police	1/19/2017	E-Mail Received Watertown Police Reports
John Trumbull School	1/19/2017	Letter Received
Laura Meka	1/19/2017	Telephone Call To VM left with principal
Kristina Atwood	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Mother's PR
Margaret Espejo	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Mother's PR
Tierney Moran	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Mother's PR
Vicki Frenzel	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Father's PR
Jamie Bruno	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Father's PR
Jennifer Levasseur	2/17/2017	Letter Sent Father's PR
Kristina Atwood	2/28/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Mary Brigham	3/1/2017	Telephone Call To Message left with GAL
SPBI	3/2/2017	Letter Sent Criminal checks
Jamie Bruno	3/3/2017	Letter Received Father's PR
Ms. Scully, Judson School	3/6/2017	Telephone Call To VM left with principal
Laura Meka	3/6/2017	Telephone Call To VM left with principal, Evie's school
Mary Brigham, GAL	3/7/2017	Telephone Call From
DCF	3/7/2017	Letter Received
SPBI	3/10/2017	Letter Received State Crim Checks
Kristin Cassidy	3/10/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's Personal Reference
Denis Cassidy	3/13/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's Personal reference
Sharon Martino	3/16/2017	Letter Received Mother's PR
Neil Sutton	3/17/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR

Collateral Contacts	Date	Type
Tom Walsh	3/17/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Nicole Mayo-Gowell	3/19/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Tierney Moran	3/22/2017	Letter Received Mother's PR
Kathy Scully	3/22/2017	Telephone Call From Principal-Judson School
Vittorian Albanese	3/22/2017	Telephone Call To School psychologist
Kim Goodman	3/24/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Jodi Paulin	3/26/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Gretchen Donnelly	3/27/2017	E-Mail Received Mother's PR
Vicki Frenzel	3/27/2017	Telephone Call To Father's fiancée
GAL Mary Brigham	3/29/2017	E-Mail Received Soberlynk Reports
Mary Brigham	4/18/2017	Telephone Call To
Laura Meka	4/18/2017	Telephone Call To Message left
Dr. Bartfeld	4/20/2017	Telephone Call To

Background Information:

This is a post judgment matter dating back to 2010. Mr. William Grohs and Ms. Kelly Grohs are the divorced parents of Sophia Grohs born on August 22, 2007 and Genevieve Grohs born on July 6, 2009. There have been multiple motions filed on this matter and there have been many detailed parenting plans entered on this case. The parents have utilized various services through the Family Services along with having a Guardian Ad Litem appointed. A Comprehensive Custody Evaluation, a Conflict Resolution Conference and an Issue Focused Evaluation have been conducted by the Family Services Office all within a two year period dating from 2010-2012. This is the second Comprehensive Custody Evaluation referred to the Family Services Office.

A brief synopsis of case history follows.

On August 2, 2010, Mr. Grohs filed for divorce.

On August 30, 2010, the parents entered an extensive temporary agreement. Included in that agreement are the following highlights *"the parties shall have joint legal custody of their minor children without prejudice. Atty Mary Brigham shall be appointed as Guardian Ad Litem for said children...Each party shall submit to a psychological and substance abuse evaluation and parent/child interactional evaluation to be conducted by Dr. Sidney Horowitz. ...The issue of custody is referred to the Family Services/Unit for review and intake...neither party shall consume any alcoholic beverages when the minor children are in his or her presence or care. Neither party shall smoke cigarettes when the children are in a motor vehicle with him or her. Neither party shall make disparaging comments about the other party in the presence of the children. Both parties may continue to reside at the marital premises at 277 Woodbury Rd., Watertown, CT"*.

On September 3, 2010, the matter was referred to the Family Services Unit for a Comprehensive Custody Evaluation. It was withdrawn and then re-referred on November 2, 2010 for the same service.

On October 18, 2010, the original temporary agreement ordered in August of 2010 was modified to allow the parties to socially and responsibly consume alcoholic beverages.

On March 15, 2011, a new parenting agreement was entered by the court following the completion of the custody evaluation. The main components of this agreement are *"The parties will share joint legal custody of the minor children. Said children's primary residence shall be with the mother. Father shall have parenting time as follows:...Every other weekend from Thursday after school (or 10:00 a.m. if there is no school and Father is not working) to Sunday at 7:00 p.m...Every other week from Thursday after school (or 10:00 a.m. if there is no school and Father is not working) to Friday after school at 5:00 p.m. if there is no school....Father shall also have parenting time every Tuesday from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m...Each non-custodial parent will have telephone access with the children once per day...If either parent is unable to care for the children for more than a five hour period, the other parent shall have the right of first refusal."*

In this agreement, there was additional language added regarding further motions filed with the court stating *"The parties agree that prior to filing a Motion to Modify the Parenting Schedule they shall contact the guardian ad litem who shall be authorized to consider and attempt to resolve any*

differences.” There was also specific language to address the issue about when and how to contact the other parent if a child needs medical attention. The parents also agreed to not speak negatively of the other parent, engage in co-parenting counseling with Howard Krieger, among other things.

On July 24, 2011, the parents’ marriage was dissolved uncontested and the parenting plan from March of 2011 was incorporated in their divorce.

On October 18, 2011, Mr. Grohs filed an Ex Parte Motion for Custody and a Motion for Modification following an incident at Ms. Grohs’ home. It was granted and Ms. Grohs’ contact with the children would be at the discretion of the GAL, Attorney Brigham.

On November 2, 2011, an agreement was entered on parenting time that specified a two week rotating schedule, alternating weekends and alternating Monday and Tuesday overnights with Wednesday and Thursday overnights. In addition, Ms. Grohs would have parenting time until 3:00 p.m. on Mr. Grohs’ Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. That was continued to January and February of 2012.

On March 1, 2012, a Conflict Resolution Conference was referred to Family Services which was unsuccessful.

On June 5, 2012, the matter was referred to Family services for Issue Focused Evaluation to determine if one incident which occurred on October 16, 2011, involving Ms. Grohs, modify the parenting plan in the divorce judgment. Upon the completion of the evaluation, Family Services determined that the incident should not be a basis for a modification of the custody agreement entered at the time of dissolution.

On August 2, 2012, a post judgment parenting plan was entered. It is a lengthy parenting plan and specific to a certain protocol being followed by both parents before any motions to modify can be filed with the court. Some specifics of this order include: *“After the one year anniversary of this order, this custody and parenting access plan as set forth above shall not be modifiable until a copy of any subsequently filed motions to modify, along with supporting evidence, shall be lodged with the Court along with a request for leave to file such motion. The trial judge shall rule on the motion for request to leave and if the motion is permitted to be calendared for a hearing. No motion of an ex parte nature shall be served in this case. Neither party shall use in any future motion to modify as a basis for said motion any events, issues or circumstances that existed during the parties ‘divorce proceedings or post-judgment issues or events that have occurred to date or which could have been raised to date.”*

In addition, language was added to this agreement for a protocol to be followed regarding any injury that may warrant the involvement of agencies stating: *“In the event either party becomes aware of an injury or condition involving the children that he/she reasonably believes may warrant the involvement of the ‘agencies’, that party shall notify Family Relations or the parenting coordinator who shall then be provided with a summary of the facts and circumstances, shall have an opportunity to meet with the children without the involvement of the reporting party, may document the condition of the children, including by interview, the taking of notes, and/or photographs/videos, may prepare documents or summaries for the benefit of the ‘agencies’, may contact or speak with the ‘agency’ workers as necessary, and shall discuss the situation with the party prior to the involvement of the ‘agencies’.....The*

parties agree that if an issue identified above arises, they shall first contact Family Relations and, if that office is unable to participate in a timely manner, then the parties shall contact the parenting coordinator."

The newest motions brought to the court were filed in 2016. On May 24, 2016, Mr. Grohs filed a Motion of Contempt and a Motion to appoint the Guardian Ad Litem stating the mother has not been following the court order. The matter went to a hearing, but eventually ended in a mistrial. On October 18, 2016, Mr. Grohs filed a Motion for Modification citing "*..there has been a substantial change in circumstances of the parties such that the minor children's best interests are not being served by the present custody and parenting plan*". It was noted a Request for Leave was not found on this file with Mr. Grohs' Motion to Modify.

On December 20, 2016, Attorney Mary Brigham was re-appointed as the Guardian Ad Litem and the matter was referred to the Family Services for a Comprehensive Custody Evaluation.

On January 23, 2017, the parties entered an agreement that Ms. Grohs would cooperate with Paymer Associates and submit to random breathalyzer tests through a device. The device she would carry with her and have to provide a test within fifteen minutes of the testing prompt. If Ms. Grohs tested with a reading of 0.02 or higher during her parenting time, the Guardian Ad Litem would immediately notify counsel and file a request with the court for an emergency status conference. Failure to take a test that is not excused by a medical doctor or refusal to take a test would define a positive test as well. This testing would continue until May 5, 2017.

On March 29, 2017, the Guardian Ad Litem filed an Emergency Request with the court stating Ms. Grohs had not complied with her breathalyzer testing by providing a late test.

On March 31, 2017, the parties entered an agreement following an emergency status conference stating Ms. Grohs would not drink any alcohol during her parenting and non-parenting time and any positive test or missed test would result in Mr. Grohs obtaining physical custody and allowing Ms. Grohs only supervised access to the children.

Ms. Grohs has two adult daughters who are not of this relationship, Emily Smith (age 23) and Kathleen Smith (age 20). She is currently not in a relationship. Mr. Grohs has no other children. He is engaged to Vicki Frenzel who resides with him along with her 13 year old son, Mark.

The parties live less than two miles from one another in the town of Watertown. Each parent lives close to one of their daughter's school. Each home is adequate with appropriate sleeping arrangements for the minor children. Mr. Grohs owns an aviation insurance business in Oxford, CT. Ms. Grohs works part time odd jobs such as catering and painting, among other things.

Currently, the parents are following a parenting schedule of alternating weeks defined as Mr. Grohs having the children in week 1 from Tuesday through Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. (or when school starts) and on Friday at 4:00 p.m. through Monday at 10:00 a.m. In week 2, Mr. Grohs has the children from Tuesday through Wednesday again and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. through Friday at 4:00 p.m. This has

been the order since 2012. The parents also have a detailed holiday and vacation agreement which they are following.

Parenting Concerns and Proposals:

Mr. Grohs' expressed he filed due to various incidents that had occurred over the course of the years while the matter has been post judgment. He cites as a primary concern to Family Services Ms. Grohs' blatant disregard for honoring the court agreement. He references the part of the agreement that indicates neither party will contact an agency without first consulting with the Family Services Office or the co-parenting therapist. The co-parenting therapist has not been involved since a year after judgment. Mr. Grohs stated that he feels Ms. Grohs violated this agreement twice, early in 2012 and then again in 2015. Both of those times, Ms. Grohs generated reports to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) insinuating that his fiancée's son had improper contact or sexually abused the children. These investigations have led to him being named a perpetrator in the DCF database and he feels it has caused him irreparable harm. Both of the investigations were closed and unsubstantiated by DCF, however Mr. Grohs claims massive investigations were launched and the children had to be interviewed multiple times. In addition, Mr. Grohs claims that Ms. Grohs coached Genevieve what to say to the doctor and DCF.

Secondly, Mr. Grohs continues to have concerns that Ms. Grohs has unaddressed issues with alcohol. He has had many people come up to him with concerns of Ms. Grohs' drinking, including her adult daughter, Kathleen, from who Ms. Grohs is estranged. Mr. Grohs stated that 5 people provided sworn statements of their observations or knowledge of Ms. Grohs' alcohol abuse. In addition, after a separate discovery motion with the court, he obtained banking statements of Ms. Grohs that showed multiple purchases of alcohol over a one year period. Mr. Grohs has always had this concern with Ms. Grohs, however at this point it has reached a point where he feels the children's safety may be jeopardized. He provided examples of Ms. Grohs' drinking having an impact on her ability to supervise and also using poor judgement driving with the children intoxicated and leaving them in the car while pumping gas as she buys cigarettes.

Another concern presented by Mr. Grohs was the children's excessive absences from school. He has alleged that Ms. Grohs is quick to keep the children home from school for a minor cold. Most of the children's absences have been while in the mother's care. Many times, he has picked a child up for his parenting time after staying home from school that day and the child is acting normal with no fever.

Mr. Grohs' proposal is that he be designated with sole legal and physical custody of the minor children because he and his fiancée, Vicki Frenzel, can provide a stable and safe home for the children. He would like Ms. Grohs to have supervised contact until she can demonstrate a lengthy period of sobriety from alcohol or any other substances.

Ms. Grohs denies she violated the court agreement and feels that any parent whose child came up to them and made a disturbing disclosure of inappropriate touching would do the same thing. She stated the entire incident was upsetting for her and feels she acted appropriately and in no way did she coach Genevieve on what to say. She took Genevieve to the doctor after she made the disclosure and did

inform the father of it. He was not available when she made the appointment for the doctor. Ms. Grohs stresses she was doing what she needed to do to make sure her child was safe. As far as the other incident in 2015, she claims she did not want a DCF report made and contacted Family Relations to try to remedy the situation. Initially, she was running the information by a friend who works for Safe Haven about a concerning video she had seen on the tablet of Genevieve. She did not want the friend to call the report into DCF, but the friend said she had to since she was a mandated reporter. She pled for her not to do so and that's when she called the Family Services Office for guidance. Since that time, Ms. Grohs claims Mr. Grohs has made a mountain of a molehill dragging her back to court on contempt charges when DCF had said all along she was acting in an appropriate manner and out of genuine concern for her child.

Ms. Grohs denies she has a drinking problem. She indicates she drinks wine on a daily basis, possibly one to two glasses a night, but it does not rise to the level of a problem. Ms. Grohs asserts that Mr. Grohs has not seen her intoxicated with the children. She believes Mr. Grohs went hunting for people to make statements against her in his pursuit to ruin her reputation in the community and diminish her role as a parent. She has even agreed to participate with Paymer's Associates with the Soberlynk device that will justify she is not an alcoholic. Her money spent at liquor stores has been for parties or for when she has had people over. This is not a reflection on her own drinking.

Ms. Grohs states the children's absences are not excessive and they are doing fine academically. She has even had a discussion with the principal at Genevieve's school in the past to inquire if the principal had any concerns. Ms. Grohs claims the principal denied there were concerns. She feels she has used good judgment when keeping the children home from school sick and again feels that Mr. Grohs is reaching for issues.

Ms. Grohs has major concerns with Mr. Grohs pursuit to win custody of the children. She stated it has always been about winning vs. losing for him. Ever since she was the one recommended to have primary custody by Family Services from the first custody evaluation, Mr. Grohs has always been looking for an avenue to take the children away from her. She emphasizes the language in the final parenting plan with the protocol on the specific process to be followed before any motions can be filed was due to his behavior.

She believes that Mr. Grohs has a history of diminishing her role as a mother. She feels he has no respect for her as the mother of her adult children. One of the examples she provides is having a relationship with her adult daughter, Kathleen. Mr. Grohs has a history of instigating problems between her and her two adult daughters. If she is estranged from a daughter, he makes it his mission to be closer to them to spite her. She stated that he has gotten her daughter to lie about her and has only caused more turmoil in the family system. Many examples of this were addressed during the pendente lite process.

Another concern she has is that he has allowed the children to call his fiancée, Vicki, "mom". She has raised this as a concern and feels that Mr. Grohs does not respect her wishes on that. She understands

the children have a positive relationship with Ms. Frenzel, but she does not feel like they should be calling her mom.

She also brought up a lack of communication between her and Mr. Grohs because he does not communicate with her. Some of the concerns he had brought up in the current evaluation process were the first time she heard the concerns. They had agreed to do co-parenting in the past, but Ms. Grohs stated it does not work for them.

Finally, Ms. Grohs feels that Mr. Grohs is attempting to alienate her from the children. Not only by having her adult daughter, Kathleen, over to say negative things about her to the children, but also his own negative commentary about her to the children. She feels he puts the children in the middle of the conflict instead of addressing it with her.

Ms. Grohs is not seeking any changes to the parenting plan. She feels the plan in place is the most appropriate and does not think there is a need for any changes.

Mr. Grohs denies all of Ms. Grohs' claims. His pursuit for custody is not about winning, but giving the children a safe and stable home. He does not like having the court involved and this is one of the reasons he did not come back to court in 2012 after mother violated their agreement. He knows the pain and grief the court can cause on the children. As far as any alienation claims Ms. Grohs makes, he reported he sees Kathleen once a week and there is no discussion of Ms. Grohs in front of the children. He believes the girls should have a relationship with their older sibling and since Kathleen and Ms. Grohs are estranged this is the only way that can happen. He reports he played a major part in both Emily and Kathleen's lives and he maintains a healthy relationship with Kathleen at this time.

The children call his fiancée, Vicki, "Vicki momma". He did speak with children about not calling her mom and they now go by this name. The children have an excellent relationship with Vicki and he feels Ms. Grohs has taken steps to try to ruin that relationship.

He says the lack of communication falls on Ms. Grohs. He provides an example of when Ms. Grohs signed Sophia up for swimming without telling him and swimming was a major time commitment on both parties. He also was not in objection in continuing with co-parenting with Laura Erhardt and it was Ms. Grohs that ended the co-parenting sessions.

Pertinent information was gathered from the following sources: Department of Children and Families (DCF), Dr. Bartfeld, Judson School, Ms. Scully (principal of Judson School), John Trumbull School, Vittoria Albanese, school psychologist of Judson School, Watertown Police, Laura Boyle and the Guardian Ad Litem, Attorney Mary Brigham. The parents also provided personal references in which Family Services did receive letters from personal references for both parents.

Collateral Information:

It appears that 7 reports have been made to DCF, however since this matter has been in post judgment, there have been 3 reports. For that reason, the undersigned requested records from DCF during post judgment.

In September of 2012, Ms. Grohs took Genevieve to the pediatrician based on concerns of what Genevieve disclosed to her the previous day. Dr. Bartfeld made the report to DCF. Genevieve claimed that Mark, Mr. Grohs' fiancée's son, had put his finger in her vagina. The Child Abuse Interdisciplinary Team and Dr. Bartfeld were involved. Mr. Grohs signed a safety plan that he would not allow the minor children any contact with Ms. Frenzel's son. There were no findings of abuse or neglect on all parties that were involved. Mr. Grohs was reported to be upset that Ms. Grohs did not tell him the information right away and instead went to the pediatrician before consulting with him. He indicated this was a violation of their custody agreement. DCF records indicate that the children were referred to counseling and a forensic examination of Genevieve was not recommended.

In October of 2014, a report was received from Watertown High after Ms. Grohs' daughter, Kathleen, disclosed drinking by her mother. Ms. Grohs did not cooperate with the DCF investigation, reporting an estranged relationship with Kathleen. Ms. Grohs stated Kathleen was recently in trouble for taking her car without permission and was arrested and had threatened. Sophia and Genevieve, however, were interviewed by DCF per permission of the father at the father's home. In their interviews, the children disclosed that Ms. Grohs drank alcohol, however DCF closed and unsubstantiated the allegations.

In October of 2015, a report was made to DCF by Ms. Grohs after Ms. Grohs had seen a video of Genevieve exposing her genital area. In her report to DCF, Ms. Grohs reported that she was concerned due to past allegations of sexual abuse with Genevieve. She also informed DCF she had informed the father about the video, but he "played it off". The report was accepted for an investigation, however no disclosure of abuse or neglect was made by the children. The allegations against the father and the mother were not substantiated.

Extensive medical records were obtained from Dr. Bartfeld's office pertaining to both of the children. He is the pediatrician for the children. It is noted on their medical records that neither child is vaccinated per the parents' request. It was also noted in their medical records that both children have been seen for their well child visits and sick visits and it appears both parents are present or have equally participated in the children's medical appointments. It is striking that in the medical records, there is a significant increase of weight noted with Genevieve. In less than a two year period, the medical records indicated she had gained almost 34 pounds. Sophia is also at a heavier weight for her age. Both children are in the obese range.

This writer spoke with Dr. Ephraim Bartfeld during the evaluation process. He is very aware of the parental conflict and has urged that the parents put aside their differences for the benefit of their children. He stated it is apparent that neither has respect for the other as a parent. There have been issues with the father being resentful of the mother making the appointments because the financial burden falls on him. Mr. Grohs believes Ms. Grohs makes unnecessary medical appointments for the children. Per Dr. Bartfeld, Mr. Grohs finds the mother to be manipulative in that respect. However, Dr. Bartfeld reported no concerns of the parents not meeting the needs of the children. He did not find that any of the appointments rose to the level of being unnecessary. Dr. Bartfeld stressed that the parents need to learn to be sympathetic of the other one's concerns and resolve their conflict.

He also has had to speak with the parents about their choice to not vaccinate the children. They have the right to that choice even though it is not a medical recommendation.

Police reports were received from the Watertown Police Department from August of 2010 through October of 2016.

In August of 2010, Ms. Grohs was charged with Breach of Peace. The police report indicated Ms. Grohs was visibly upset and crying upon their arrival. The allegations were that Emily called her names and ripped a necklace off her neck. Ms. Grohs indicated Mr. Grohs is using her children against her. Emily said her mother is drinking a lot and acting differently and pushed her because she was trying to remove the car seat. Emily Smith and Ms. Grohs were charged with Disorderly Conduct. The charges were later nolle.

Five days later after this incident, Mr. Grohs called the Watertown Police about a violation of a protective order as Ms. Grohs was in the home. Police advised Mr. Grohs that she was allowed in the home because the protective order was a partial protective order.

In March of 2011, Watertown Police were called by Mr. Grohs. The call had to do with divorce proceedings and he inquired if he could change locks to the doors and have Ms. Grohs leave the home. Mr. Grohs was advised it was a civil matter and he could not make those changes without a court order.

In August of 2011, the police were called due to the parents' dispute over the vehicle and exchanging it.

That same month the police were involved again due to Kathleen and Emily Smith still residing in the father's home. They were supposed to be out of the home 30 days after the divorce, however Mr. Grohs made arrangements for the children to go elsewhere because they refused to go back to Ms. Grohs' home.

In September of 2011, Kathleen Smith and Mr. Grohs went to the Watertown Police department because Kathleen did not want to return to her mother's home.

In October of 2011, the police were contacted because Emily Smith was removing personal items from the home and Mr. Grohs requested police presence.

In September of 2012, the Watertown Police were contacted due to the sexual abuse allegations involving Genevieve and Mr. Grohs' fiancée's son, Mark. Ms. Grohs contacted the police to follow up on the matter because she was worried that Mr. Grohs was violating the service agreement with DCF in that the children were having contact with Mark. The police found no violation of the service agreement.

In May of 2016, Mr. Grohs contacted the police because he had the minor children in his care, but didn't want to return them to Ms. Grohs' care because he believed Ms. Grohs was intoxicated. The police advised him of the options he could take.

In October of 2016, Kathleen Smith contacted the police to report Ms. Grohs was intoxicated in her car at the gas station with the minor children. The police located Ms. Grohs shortly after they went to her home. She was in her bathrobe and she did not appear intoxicated.

Neither party has a criminal history with the State Police.

This writer spoke with Kathy Scully, principal of Sophia's school. She has known Sophia since she was in kindergarten. She is aware of the conflict between the parents. When asked if she has been made aware of allegations of Ms. Grohs abusing alcohol, Ms. Scully did remember hearing those concerns, but stated she has had no direct observation of Ms. Grohs being under the influence of alcohol. She stated both parents are involved in Sophia's education. They both attend parent teacher conferences and she has no concerns of Sophia's emotional well-being regarding the new court involvement. She reported there are no educational, attendance, or hygiene issues with Sophia. School records show Sophia in the fourth grade at Judson School. As of January 19, 2017, she had four unexcused absences and 5 excused absences. She appears to be meeting all of the grade goals and expectations academically.

On March 22, 2017, Ms. Vittoria Albanese, school psychologist of Judson School, was contacted by this writer after an issue arose with Sophia in the school. Sophia had reported to another student that she watched sex videos. After speaking with Sophia, she initially denied it, but admitted that she has seen sex videos about two years ago. It occurred with another child in her mother's neighborhood, at the neighbor's home. When asked if the parents knew, she indicated they did not know. Sophia reported being blocked from any adult inappropriate material at her father's home, but her mother does not have the internet locked. Both of the parents were reasonably shocked and did not know how this happened when the school approached it. Ms. Grohs came down to the school that day. The father called at a later time and requested to meet with school staff as well. The school did not feel this issue rose to the level of contacting DCF as the parents were not aware and it did not appear to be an ongoing issue. When speaking with Ms. Albanese, she reported she was under the impression that Mr. Grohs was inferring that mother did not supervise the children as well as he did. Prior to this incident, Ms. Albanese has not been made aware of any concerns with Sophia. She appears to be a well-adjusted child.

Genevieve is in the second grade at John Trumbull School. Reports were received from John Trumbull School on January 17, 2017. It was noted that Genevieve had 4 excused absences at that time and 2 unexcused absences. Records show that she is progressing or meeting the educational goals. Multiple attempts were made to speak with the principal, Ms. Meka, to no avail.

This writer spoke with Ms. Laura Boyle, who had worked at Safe Haven at the time Ms. Grohs had contacted DCF for the 2015 investigation. Ms. Boyle describes Ms. Grohs as an acquaintance of hers and she did recall the day Ms. Grohs contacted her about the inappropriate content she found on the tablet. She reported Ms. Grohs was in distress and when she told Ms. Grohs she would have to report her concerns to DCF, she was very upset. Ms. Grohs was adamant about not calling DCF because of her court order. She stated that Ms. Grohs did bring up the previous concerns involving the father's fiancée's son and did not know if the current behavior Genevieve had on her tablet was normal. Ms. Boyle did not feel it was normal and stated it could be that Genevieve had been exposed to something inappropriate,

hence her need to contact the authorities. She did feel that Ms. Grohs was contacting her as a friend and advised her to call DCF as well. Ms. Grohs did mention to her that she would be in contempt of court if she contacted DCF.

Personal references for the parents gave them high praise as parents.

Vicki Frenzel, Mr. Grohs' fiancée, who was also his personal reference, was spoken to by this writer during the evaluation process. She indicated she supports Mr. Grohs during his custodial disputes and attends every hearing with him. She has been with Mr. Grohs for six years and has not had any direct conversations with Ms. Grohs regarding the children. Ever since Ms. Grohs made the allegations against her son and the way she has treated her in the past, she does not want to have any contact with Ms. Grohs. Ms. Frenzel reported that in the past, Ms. Grohs has asked her to go out for a cup of coffee, but she does not feel comfortable doing so.

She reported being very close to the children and she treats them like her own. She reported they call her "Vicki momma" and in the past Genevieve has called her "mommy". Ms. Frenzel stated she can only respect Ms. Grohs as a parent when she is under investigation. In the past, Ms. Grohs did not bathe the children or have them brush their teeth. She is aware of the damage she did to her two older daughters, Emily and Kathleen Smith.

She indicated that Sophia and Genevieve do not know any differently and they love their mother. Half the time, the children present like slobs based on how their mother dresses them. They are aware their mother drinks and that it makes her happy. Ms. Frenzel stated it is well known that Ms. Grohs is a "boozer". Her perspective of Ms. Grohs is she is deceiving and manipulative. She believes all of the allegations that she has made against her son were a way to get her out of the picture.

Family Assessment:

Mr. Grohs was born in Hartford, Connecticut and was raised in Burlington, Connecticut. His father passed away when he was 17 years old and his mother died when he was 19 years old. He described them as loving parents and having a normal childhood. He has one older brother and does not have a very close relationship with him. He attended schools in the Region 10 and graduated from Lewis Mills High School. He furthered his education at the University of New Haven and received a bachelor's degree in 1984. Mr. Grohs has had his own business since 1988 as a property casualty broker at the Oxford Airport. This entails insuring airports, planes and parts among other things. He has no history of substance abuse and mental health. He denied any previous criminal history.

Mr. Grohs had been in serious relationships prior to his marriage to Ms. Grohs. Mr. Grohs also had a previous marriage to Tracy Tribuzio which ended in a divorce after one year. He described the cause of the breakdown of that marriage was Ms. Tribuzio no longer wanting to be married. The divorce was amicable.

Mr. Grohs has been in a relationship with his fiancée, Vicki Frenzel, since 2011. He described this relationship as solid. They have been living together since 2011 and the girls have a positive relationship

with Vicki. Vicki has a son, Mark from another relationship that also resides with them. Mark sees his father every other weekend and one night during the week.

Ms. Grohs was born in Waterbury, Connecticut and grew up in Watertown, Connecticut. She is one of eight children and her parents have been married for 50 years. Most of her siblings live reasonably close and have a positive relationship with one another. Her parents always provided for all of her and her siblings needs and stated she had a wonderful childhood. Ms. Grohs graduated from Watertown High School in 1989. She went on to working full-time in different jobs ranging from office management to owning her own lighting business. Her last full-time job was working for Mr. Grohs at his aviation company.

Ms. Grohs' marriage to Mr. Grohs is her only marriage, however she has two other children from different relationships. Her oldest daughter, Emily, did not have a relationship with her father. He lived in Minnesota and was never involved. Ms. Grohs had his rights terminated in the Probate Court in 2003.

Her second oldest daughter, Kathleen, was from her relationship with Christopher Bien who Ms. Grohs describes as "not a nice person". He fought her on custody despite not being consistent with his visitation. She reported domestic violence with Mr. Bien that included dragging her down the stairs, but she never reported it to the police. He also contacted DCF on her in the past claiming she was suicidal and filed an ex parte application for custody. Both Emily and Kathleen were removed from her care at that time for a short period. She was able to regain custody of both children after this action. In fact, Mr. Bien voluntarily gave Kathleen back to her. Ms. Grohs stated that Mr. Grohs was more of a father to Emily and Kathleen than anyone else.

The parents have been following a close to shared plan since 2012. They each participate in school conferences and doctors' appointments. They also are involved in the children's extracurricular activities. Living close to one another has made it easy for both parents to be equally involved in the school and medical appointments. Mr. Grohs, while fully employed, has reported he has flexibility with his job that he can be available at any time for the children.

Ms. Grohs feels that Mr. Grohs is a very patient and loving father. She knows he is a very good father to their children. Mr. Grohs indicated that Ms. Grohs is a very good cook and keeps a clean house.

Both Sophia and Genevieve were observed in each of their parents' homes.

At the father's home, Sophia was engaged and comfortable in her father's home, playing her clarinet and showing this writer her swimming trophies. Genevieve, on the other hand, was hiding under her bed and would not come out of her room from under her bed until the very end of this writer's visit. This only occurred due to her father's request and him carrying her down the stairs. The father lives in a spacious Tudor home that presented very clean. The girls share a bedroom that was nicely decorated.

At the mother's home, the children were dressed in summer clothing on a somewhat cooler spring day. They were playing outside and showed this writer their new bunnies. They appeared extremely comfortable with their mother and engaged easily with this writer in their home. Genevieve was much

more social with this writer. The home was clean and nicely decorated. The girls share a bedroom and it was also nicely decorated as it is at their father's home. No safety concerns were observed at either of the parents' homes.

This writer spoke with both of the children separately and alone at the Family Services Office. Both of the children were engaged with this writer as they met this writer on two previous occasions. They were noted to be clean and nicely dressed for their interviews.

Sophia is nine years old. She is very easy to engage in conversation with and had no difficulty with any of the questions posed to her. She reported her mom and father fight a lot and is aware they do not like each other. She wishes they could be like friendly divorced parents that can attend the same birthday party for her like her friend at school has with her divorced parents. Her day to day routine between her mother and father's home is similar with the exception she does homework right after from her mother's home and does homework later at her father's home. She lives with her mother, Genevieve and Emily at her mother's home. At her father's home she resides with her father, Vicki, Vicki's son, Mark and Genevieve. Often, Kathleen will come over to her father's home for a visit. She reported her parents are both involved with her swimming and school. When she is sick, her mother will have her stay home and take care of her. Her father sends her to school when she is sick.

Regarding her parents' relationship, Sophia disclosed one time her father said to her he did not like how her mother looks and she's not a friend. Sophia felt bad about this because she feels she looks like her mother. Sophia stated that her father told her he has people watching her and keeping her safe. He told her that sometimes people are telling him stuff that is going on at her mother's home. Sophia feels that nothing bad is going on at her mother's home.

Regarding alcohol use, she reported both of her parents drink. Her father drinks on special occasions. Currently, her mother drinks a lot of Diet Coke. She stated her mother used to buy wine from the wine and spirit store, but she doesn't drink anymore. Sophia was asked how it was when her mother used to drink and she recalled her mother drinking two times a week and it could be either in the morning, afternoon or the evening. When asked how she knew this, Sophia reported because she saw her drink. She did not feel her mother would get drunk however.

Sophia reported that Vicki is like a second mom to her and she calls her "Vicki momma". She stated her mother does not like when she calls Vicki "Vicki momma" and told her not to say it around her.

Sophia reported enjoying her time with her mother and father equally and indicated she would love to see them both the same amount.

Genevieve was also a pleasant young girl to speak with. She goes by her nickname "Evy". She reported positive interactions in both households with her father, mother, and Vicki. She, too, calls Vicki "Vicki momma". She reported she brushes her teeth and her hair at both of the homes. Both parents take care of her when she is sick. When speaking on her living situation, she loves being at both homes and indicated she would like to be at both homes the same amount of time, but she does not want it to be as much back and forth as it is now.

When asked how her parents get along, she reported "eh". When asked to elaborate, Genevieve stated they don't talk to each other and makes her feel weird inside. While she hasn't seen them fight, Sophia has told her they are going to court.

She is also aware that her mother does not like Vicki and her mother used to talk negatively about her father, but she has not done it lately.

When asked about drinking, Genevieve reported her mother barely drinks and her father drinks on the holidays. When asked in the past about her mother's drinking, she reported she mostly drank wine for alcohol and it was mostly in the afternoons, but she has not done it in a long time. She did not feel her mother acted differently after drinking wine. One of Genevieve's wishes was her parents to get along with each other.

The conflict between the parents has been extensive and ongoing. While they have not been involved in the court system since 2012, the turmoil between parents has not lessened and has only mounted to a height in which the parents barely communicate with one another. The protocol the parents agreed to before filing any motions with the court lends credence to the parents' inability to work cooperatively with one another. It is not surprising that the order that was agreed upon in 2012 was put in place based upon the family dynamics and conflict. To list every example brought to this writer's attention by the parents would be fruitless, but of concern is that the parents are not engaged in any cooperative parenting therapy and have not been for years.

Ms. Grohs has demonstrated poor judgment in her actions. She did not follow the protocol shortly after the parenting agreement was entered in 2012. While she stated she attempted to contact Mr. Grohs prior to what led to the DCF investigation, it appears she had already attended the doctor's appointment based on Mr. Grohs' saved voicemail from the mother. This was a disregard for the court order and not only did it happen one time, but it happened twice. These actions by Ms. Grohs demonstrate her unwillingness to follow the court order. It also shows a lack of insight on her part on how it would impact future cooperative parenting if she were to continue in these actions.

The time Ms. Grohs contacted the Family Relations Office in October of 2015 after finding the inappropriate video of Genevieve on the tablet also appears to be suspect. She had spoken with an acquaintance at Safe Haven and once she was informed that DCF would be contacted, Ms. Grohs was in a position to work backwards to follow the court agreement. It is reasonable to believe that Ms. Grohs knew that contacting someone that works at an agency that handles sexual abuse, that he or she would be obligated as a mandated reporter to contact DCF. Contacting Family Relations after the fact, Ms. Grohs was trying frantically to make a wrong a right. However, it should be noted that DCF and the Safe Haven worker involved indicated that it appeared Ms. Grohs' concerns were genuine and sincere. However, Ms. Grohs was well aware of how to handle such a situation should it arise.

Mr. Grohs' concern of Ms. Grohs' drinking is valid for this writer as well. When presented with all of the sworn statements and the multiple purchases of alcohol on her banking statement, Ms. Grohs could not provide any other reasonable explanation for the charges or the statements. She maintains that she is not an alcoholic, but did acknowledge there was a period of time in the past that she may have drank

too much. The people that provided sworn statements to the private investigation agency did not demonstrate they had a vendetta against Ms. Grohs. Nor did Ms. Grohs raise any concerns of fabrication, with the exception of Kathleen, with the people who provided the statements. The drinking concerns with Ms. Grohs are long standing. Ms. Grohs has submitted to substance abuse evaluations in the past with her past arrests and DCF involvement and those evaluations indicated no treatment recommendations. However, it should be noted that this was based on self-reporting. Ms. Grohs needs to demonstrate accountability for this behavior. It is not likely her purchases of alcohol were for others and parties when some of the purchases were on an every other day basis. While she appeared to show some insight, she still does not feel that it warrants any intervention or a need to seek any professional help.

Ms. Grohs often presented anxious and tangential when meeting with this writer. Her anxiety was heightened when Mr. Grohs was in the room. She also indicated that the entire court process has given her anxiety making it difficult to even come to the courthouse. It appears that this process has been taxing on her and may lend some credibility to self-medication in the past to quell her worries. She has shown fairly well that she can abstain from drinking and should continue to show a longer period of sobriety along with supportive counseling to help her cope with her strained relationship with Mr. Grohs. Ms. Grohs could benefit from professional intervention in learning to cope with conflict and her response to it.

Mr. Grohs has to address his own behavior of going beyond a reasonable person's concern in obtaining information. It has been proven in the past that he has involved mother's adult children in the conflict. He needs to be mindful of how this will impact his own children. He provided a video tape from a gas station to demonstrate that the mother had left the children in the car while buying cigarettes. It was unclear to this writer what the footage actually showed, but what is concerning is the length that Mr. Grohs would go to demonstrate a concern that did not need that much attention. If he continues to nitpick every little thing Ms. Grohs does it will only continue to destroy any chances of having an effective co-parenting relationship with Ms. Grohs. A more reasonable way to have handled that was to speak to her about it and ask that she not do it again.

This writer met with Mr. Grohs on more than three occasions. In those meetings, Mr. Grohs had a difficult time articulating his proposal for the custody of the children. It was striking that new concerns would come forward on Ms. Grohs after the initial conjoint meeting. Serious allegations were made including Munchausen by Proxy that this writer addressed with Dr. Bartfeld. Based on his historic and current behaviors, it appears Mr. Grohs' is determined in his pursuit to demonstrate Ms. Grohs' unfitness as a parent. While it is Mr. Grohs' stance that his concerns are genuine, this relentless behavior is not helpful.

He appeared to lack the insight that his pursuit to obtain information from people in the community on Ms. Grohs' drinking or irresponsibility only compounds the conflict between the parents. Mr. Grohs paints a mission to prove something instead of trying to fix it. This will only have a damaging effect on the children despite whether he is proven right or wrong.

Father's concern of Munchausen by proxy is not supported. Per Dr. Bartfeld, Ms. Grohs may appear to be neurotic about certain medical complaints, but it did not rise to the definition of Munchausen by Proxy and there are no concerns of medical neglect.

Mr. Grohs presented as someone who wants to control the process. Whether he wants to do that in every aspect of his life is unknown. He is a successful business man and this quality has served him well in his profession. However when it comes to parenting and children, he has to understand there is another parent that has an equal voice with him. While he may not agree with Ms. Grohs' rearing style, she is allowed to have a different parenting style. Absent of any dangers to the children, Mr. Grohs should respect the child rearing choices Ms. Grohs is allowed to make. One example being that Ms. Grohs had shaved Sophia's legs. Ms. Grohs simply stated it is her choice and she would rather do it than have Sophia do it on her own. Despite Mr. Grohs' own feelings about this, this is a minor issue that is unique to Ms. Grohs' parenting style.

Mr. Grohs also would not allow Ms. Grohs to finish her thoughts or sentences while meeting with this writer. This writer had to tell him multiple times to allow Ms. Grohs to finish. He also made it difficult for this writer to keep him on task. Often times he wanted to continue on events previously addressed despite the August 2, 2012 agreement. The agreement restricts the parents from raising issues or circumstances in future motions that existed or could have been brought up prior to that date. He may not realize he is doing it, but he has to show more restraint when working with Ms. Grohs because it appears as relentless behavior and will prove to be difficult for future cooperative parenting.

Mr. Grohs also needs to demonstrate more respect to Ms. Grohs as the mother of the children. He has an adamant position on Ms. Grohs and that is she will always abuse alcohol. He does not see any room for improvement in Ms. Grohs. He even goes as far to say that if she is not abusing alcohol, then she must be abusing something else. Mr. Grohs has a right to his beliefs, however this too will not be conducive for future cooperative parenting. Mr. Grohs also has to ensure that the attitudes and beliefs of his fiancée, Vicki, do not impact his co-parenting with Ms. Grohs. It appears that after speaking with Mr. Grohs fiancée, she has a firm dislike of Ms. Grohs. It is understandable this may be because of the investigations she has been involved in with her own son, however Mr. Grohs needs to remind Ms. Frenzel she is in the role of a step-parent, not the children's mother. At times, Mr. Grohs expressed that he and Vicki can provide the children with a stable home, however he has to understand that Vicki will not replace the girls' mother. This writer is not convinced that Mr. Grohs has not been undermining Ms. Grohs in that manner. Ms. Grohs in the past has requested that she and Vicki sit down and work out their differences, which Mr. Grohs and his fiancée disagreed to. Mr. Grohs also did not honor Ms. Grohs requests that they not call his fiancée "momma".

Ms. Grohs also needs to recognize the children have a positive relationship with father's fiancée and she has been a major part of their lives over the past five years. While Ms. Grohs indicated she does not have any concerns with the father's fiancée, her past actions on contacting DCF may appear otherwise to others. It also appears the children are aware that their mother does not like Ms. Frenzel.

In the current parenting agreement there is language that *"Neither party shall use in any future motion to modify as a basis for said motion any events, issues or circumstances that existed during the parties' divorce proceedings or post-judgment issues or events that have occurred to date or which could have been raised to date."* Mr. Grohs had a difficult time with this during the evaluation and appears to lack forward thinking. This could impact future co-parenting with Ms. Grohs. He also appears to have limited insight into the impact that his actions have had on the family system. Mr. Grohs' interactions with Ms. Grohs' adult children have been brought to the court before with orders put in place to diminish any interference. He continues to have a relationship with Kathleen, despite the mother being estranged. While most may see this as admirable, it is concerning that he may be using tactics to undermine Ms. Grohs' role by having Kathleen around the children on a regular basis. Kathleen's commentary surrounding her mother historically has been negative and the children are aware of that. Moving forward, Mr. Grohs should be mindful of any negative commentary being said about Ms. Grohs and it should not be in the presence of the children.

This writer also has reason to believe that both parents are speaking of the other one negatively in front of the children. Both of the children are well aware that neither parent likes the other. Examples were provided from the children to this writer of things overheard about their parents. While it may have lessened during the evaluation process, it is believed to be an ongoing problem. Fortunately, the children do not appear too distressed over what they had heard, but each wished their parents could get along.

After reviewing medical records, it was striking that Genevieve had gained almost 34 pounds in less than a two year period. Neither parent brought up nutrition or the children's weight as a concern, but when reviewing their weight and their age, the children fell in the obese range. Also after speaking with the children's pediatrician, he noted the weight, however his concerns fell more on the conflict between the parents. It is likely that the children's weight issues are connected to the conflict between the parents. This is a concern that should be further explored by the parents. Also their inability to agree over the extracurricular activities only compounds this issue. Up until recently, Genevieve was not engaged in any extracurricular activities.

The mother's parenting approach seems to be a more laid back approach whereas the father appears to solve any issue the girls may encounter. Neither approach is the right or wrong approach, there are strengths and flaws to each one. When it came to the concerns of Sophia seeing inappropriate content on a tablet at a neighbor of mother's, it was Sophia who told the school that her father has restrictions on her access to programs on the television and tablets and her mother does not. It is imperative that the children's viewing material be restricted due to their young ages, based on their past experiences, and the dangers that the technological world now has. On the other hand, Mr. Grohs parenting approach can appear overbearing as he will go to the children's school to talk to the children if they had a problem the night before in their mother's home. This can be distracting to the school and the children disrupting them from their school day.

Finally, in addressing the parents' overall communication, it is reasonable to say it has broken down and needs a professional intervention to remedy it. The parents are both to blame in how they have worked

out parenting differences over the years. Whether there is a third party, alcohol, or manipulation involved or not, the emails and text messages that were presented to the counselor demonstrates a reason for the parents to be involved in cooperative parenting interventions. One highlight was Mr. Grohs indicating if Ms. Grohs did not return one of his beach towels, he would contact the authorities. Another exchange was due to Mr. Grohs' concerns that Ms. Grohs had been drinking and not willing to return the children. Due to Mr. Grohs concern and speaking with Ms. Grohs that night and believing her to be under the influence, the back and forth texting by Ms. Grohs was inappropriate. While their detailed parenting plan can appear exhaustive, for these parents to utilize the police and DCF as much as this family has for conflict, there should be stricter regulations in place.

Conclusion:

Frequently when a matter is referred for a post judgment Comprehensive Custody Evaluation, there has been a breakdown in communication and cooperation between the parents. In this matter, Mr. and Ms. Grohs' continuous conflict and lack of communication has demonstrated that they have not effectively co-parented their children pre and post judgment. The co-parenting therapy ceased early on without any good reasoning with Ms. Grohs' only explanation that "it doesn't work". Mr. Grohs claims he wants to co-parent with Ms. Grohs, however his actions demonstrate otherwise. For there to be any benefit to these children moving forward, a professional intervention is necessary to reduce and/or stop the incessant undermining and allegations against one another. This family has been a prime example of high conflict that the family court wishes to reduce. The parents need to have drastic changes in their behaviors in order to find success in any future collaborative parenting. It is the hope that with interventions the parents will make changes and achieve a common ground in how they proceed in raising their children. A shared parenting plan expects cooperation and communication to be successful. If it cannot be achieved, then the only other likely outcome would be delineating one parent with sole legal and physical custody which would only be a detriment to the children losing the affection, bond, and time with the other parent that they each love dearly. Therefore the following recommendations are being made:

Custody and Parenting Time:

1. The parents should continue to have joint legal custody of their minor children, Sophia Grohs born on August 22, 2007 and Genevieve Grohs born on July 6, 2009. Primary residence should remain with the mother for school purposes.
2. The recommended parenting plan is as follows: Ms. Grohs will have the children every Monday from 8:00 a.m. through Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. and Mr. Grohs will have the children from Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. through Friday at 8:00 a.m. The parents will continue to alternate the weekend access schedule from Friday at 8:00 a.m. through Monday at 8:00 a.m.
3. The parents should engage in the services of a parenting coordinator to assist them in implementing the new parenting plan, resolving any differences regarding the care of their

children, reducing conflict, and improving communication. The parenting coordinator shall have the ability to establish rules, guidelines, and meeting times and the parents should adhere to the parenting coordinator's protocol.

4. In the event neither parent can agree on a major decision regarding the children, the parenting coordinator will have the authority to make recommendations. If the parent disagrees with the parenting coordinator's recommendation, the parent may file the Request for Leave with the Court to determine if there is a basis to file a Motion to Modify.

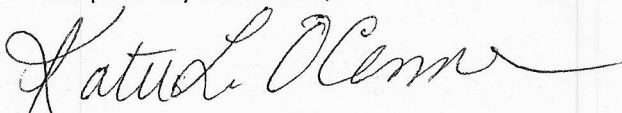
Holidays and Vacation:

Family Services recommends the holiday and vacation schedule remain the same.

Miscellaneous:

1. Ms. Grohs should not consume any alcohol during her parenting time with the minor children or 12 hours prior to her parenting time commencing. Ms. Grohs should continue to submit to alcohol testing via the SL2 Remote Breathalyzer Device through Paymer Associates for a period of six months. However, if there are any missed tests or positive results during the six months, Ms. Grohs' testing period should continue indefinitely until further order of the court. In addition, the results should be available to the parenting coordinator and/or Guardian Ad Litem, who would be at the liberty to share with the father if the results can be a basis to file a motion for modification.
2. Ms. Grohs should engage in supportive counseling that addresses, but not limited to high conflict relationships, cooperative parenting, communication, and her responses to conflict.
3. Each parent should enroll the children in one extracurricular activity per year.
4. Mr. Grohs should participate in a cooperative parenting skills course such as the one is that is available through the Connecticut Judicial Department.
5. Neither parent shall speak of the other parent in a derogatory manner in the presence of or to the children. They should also refrain from any disparaging commentary regarding the other parent to friends, family members and providers involved with their children.
6. All other custody orders should remain in effect.

Respectfully Submitted,



Katie O'Connor
Family Relations Counselor