

The Mosley Family

The Mosley family consists of Stephen, 41, Miranda, 38, Coby, 16, Theresa, 14, and Brandon, 10. Stephen feels isolated in the family. Over the years, he has tried to connect with Coby through athletics; however, Coby did not really take up any sport. He had been enrolled in basketball and baseball, but he did not really like either. Stephen had agreed to be an assistant coach on these teams, but he could see that Coby did not really have an affinity for these sports. Coby would rather spend his time drawing and playing video games.

Stephen's relationship with Theresa has been reaching a tension point. Theresa recently has started to show interest in boys and dating. Stephen and Miranda had agreed that Theresa could not date until she was 17. This was more Stephen's desire than Miranda's. Theresa tried to get her parents to switch this rule, and they refused. She would then go to Miranda when Stephen was not around and cry to her, wanting to know why she could not date. Miranda had begun dating when she was 13, and was not as adamant about the no-dating rule as Stephen. Miranda would tell her that she should listen to her father, and that although it might not be the fairest thing, if she waited, maybe her father would change his mind.

Stephen and Brandon do not spend much time together as father and son. When he found out that Brandon had autism, Stephen was extremely angry. He did not want to have another child after Theresa was born. Having a child with special needs was something he had a very difficult time accepting. Brandon tends to be a quiet child, although he is able to use language. He has a mild level of autism and is functioning in school. Stephen has let Miranda be the main person to work with him on his schoolwork and language development.

With Coby and Theresa, Stephen played a more active role in schoolwork, expecting them both to go not only to college but to graduate school as well. He did not have a specific career aspiration for them, only that they were going to be professionals. About a year ago, Stephen began to have trouble at the advertising agency where

he is employed. Because the economy was not doing well, the company began laying people off. They began with the newly hired; however, they began talking about laying off people with some seniority who were making more money than others in the company. This scared Stephen, as he knew that if he were laid off it would be very difficult to find a new job with his current professional level and salary.

Stephen and Miranda began to talk about Miranda moving from part-time to full-time to ensure financial stability in the family. Miranda was concerned about this move because she thought that Brandon needed the individualized attention she could give him. Stephen and Miranda began having more discussions about finances, which tended to start arguments between them.

Miranda feels overwhelmed in the family. She feels like the hub of a wheel, having to keep everything together. Although in the beginning of her marriage she and Stephen felt the “sparks” that most people talk about when they say they are in love, it had been years since they felt those. She and Stephen had not had a vacation, or even a night alone, since Coby was first born. Once they realized that Brandon was autistic, their relationship moved from husband and wife to two people living in the same house and taking care of one another. It has been almost one year since they had sexual relations. Although they do not dislike each other, the passion in their marriage seems to be missing. Miranda spends most of her time trying to help Brandon. He needs the most help of the three children. Coby seems to be the most independent, and Miranda has let him explore his independence for the last several years. With Theresa, Miranda tried to connect her with activities such as soccer and cheerleading.

Although Coby is the oldest of the siblings, he feels like he is the most disconnected. His father has tried to connect with him, but it always seemed forced and not natural. He gets along with his mother, but she is too busy with other matters, especially Brandon. Coby also feels a disconnection at school. He is not involved in any clubs or organizations. Further, because of his smaller stature, some of the boys in school make fun of him. He has not yet tried asking a girl out because he does not think that anyone would say yes, and he does not want to be disappointed.

Coby's relationship with Theresa is one of love and hate. He knows that he loves her, but she can be very annoying to him. To prevent anything from escalating, Coby has purposely tried to reduce the amount of contact between them. Coby's relationship with Brandon is quite complicated. Coby knows that Brandon was an unplanned pregnancy. He thinks that not only would his parents have been happier if Brandon had never been born, but he and Theresa would have been happier as well. Coby does not have much interaction with Brandon. Because of their age difference, he lets his mother take care of Brandon instead of doing that himself.

Theresa views herself as the most social member of the family. She gets along with everyone in the family, although she does not have that much in common with her father and occasionally thinks he is a bit rigid, especially when it comes to her dating. There are times when she and her mother really connect; however, it seems that her mother spends a lot more time with Brandon. Theresa also tries to spend time with Brandon because he needs more help than anyone else. Her relationship with Coby is one of acceptance, although he has not really opened himself to her. She does fine in school academically, but does much better interpersonally, where she has a large social network.

Brandon finds himself most connected with his mother. She spends a lot of time ensuring that he is doing well and making progress in school. She tends to be around him a lot and does not allow him to be fully independent. Brandon understands that he is a little different but does not understand why his mother continually watches out for him. Theresa also seems to care about him, unlike his brother Coby, who seems indifferent to him. Brandon has not quite connected to his father. He is doing well in school, with special assistance from teachers.

Seven months ago, while he was finishing his sophomore year, Coby began to complain about school. He had done well academically before this time. Once this new school year began, however, he started to say in the morning that he was not feeling well and could not go to school. When he did go to school, he would put his head down on his desk and would sometimes sleep. After Coby asked to be sent home a couple of times, the school nurse informed Stephen and Miranda, who took him to the doctor. The doctor found nothing medically wrong with him.

Coby said that he wanted to be home-schooled. When asked whether there was something going on at school that was bothersome for him, Coby said no. He had gotten along well with classmates and had several friends, but Stephen and Miranda realized that Coby was spending less and less time with them. They tried to encourage him to be more active with his friends. Coby refused.

Stephen and Miranda did not agree on how to handle the situation. Miranda wanted to talk with Coby and see what might be bothering him. She thought that maybe if they let him stay home one day, it would get him out of his stubbornness of saying he was not going. Stephen did not think this was the right approach. He believed that they just needed to force him to go to school and that he would get over it. After a couple of hours of going back and forth, Stephen said, "Look, just do whatever you want to do, since that's what happens anyway." After this, Miranda did not want to make more of a situation out of it, so she thought it was best for her and Stephen to agree.

Stephen and Miranda explained to Coby that if he did not go to school he would lose his driving privileges. Coby said, "I don't care about driving, I just don't want to go to school." The next day, Coby refused to go to school. They then restricted his access to television and video games. Coby did not say anything to this restriction. He just went to his room and stayed there. At dinner that night, Theresa asked Coby what his problem was and why he was not going to school. Coby looked at her, said "Screw you," and left the table to go to his room. Miranda told Theresa that she needed to stay out of the situation.

After four days of Coby refusing to go school, Stephen had had enough. He told Coby that he had to go to school and that was the end of it. Coby said no. It got into a heated exchange and the two pushed each other and almost came to blows. Miranda tried to intervene, but Stephen told her to stay out of it. When they were alone in their bedroom, Stephen accused Miranda of babying the children and not helping Coby learn how to be a man. Miranda accused Stephen of not having been there for him when he was growing up.

After the argument with his father, Coby started calling Theresa and Brandon names. Although Coby had teased Theresa in the past, he had never gone after Brandon like that. One day, Coby turned to Brandon and said, "I never wanted you as a brother. You're such an embarrassment." This scared and worried Miranda and Stephen.

Coby's grades for that semester were almost failing. Stephen and Miranda were scared that Coby would not be able to recover and would have to repeat his junior year. They again pleaded with Coby. Coby said he was not going to go and that he would get his GED.

Stephen and Miranda made Coby go see the school counselor. They met for 30 minutes. The school counselor tried to probe what was going on with Coby in terms of grades, friends, his family, or anything else. Coby did not speak much during the meeting. When the meeting was over, Coby told his parents that he did not like her and would not go back to see her. The school counselor suggested to Stephen and Miranda that they seek family therapy because Coby seemed to be dealing with stressors that were originating at home rather than at school. At that point, Stephen and Miranda decided to take the whole family to therapy.

What are the risk factors of Mosley family? Proximal risk factors and Distal risk factors

What are the possible protective factors of Mosely family?