

Integrative Paper on Heather Campbell

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Author Note

First paragraph: The Heather Campbell Case

Second paragraph: What went wrong

Third paragraph: Ethical Principles Violated and Alternate Solution

Abstract

As social workers, our job includes working with people from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, sexuality, and beliefs and helping them with their physical, mental, social and spiritual needs. Because of this, we are held at a high set of standards when it comes to working with people. That is why we have the NASW code of ethics to keep us in check when it comes to these standards and ethical principles. Unfortunately, not everyone in the social work field follows these standards. For years there have been many cases in which social workers failed to follow these standards and, as punishment from the board, got their social work license revoked either for a period of time or indefinitely. An example of this being a woman by the name of Heather Campbell. This paper will discuss what this woman did to get her license taken away, how her actions affected the client and her family, what ethical principles she violated and what she could have done differently.

The Heather Campbell Case

So what is the story behind this case? The story begins back in May 2016 when four-year-old Kendall Chick was taken into custody by the state due to the mother's inability to take care of Kendall. As per request, the mother asked if Kendall could be placed in the custody of Kendall's grandfather Stephen Hood and his fiancée Shawna Gatto. In order to determine whether Stephen and Shawna are a proper guardian for Kendall, she was placed under the care of a woman by the name of Heather Campbell who became her caseworker. Kendall was placed into the care of Campbell and hood for a year before "unforeseen" circumstances occurred that would drastically change the life of the client and her family.

What went wrong

So what happened? What went wrong? As mentioned previously, Kendall stayed in the custody of Campbell and Hood for a year, but this was drastically cut short when Kendall was brutally murdered by her grandfather and his Fiancée Gatto. "The state medical examiner testified at her trial that Chick had been subjected to prolonged physical abuse, and died of blunt force trauma. Gatto was sentenced to 50 years in jail"(York, Samantha. (2019, September 15). After Kendall's death, Heather was able to keep her license until September of this year. According to the state board, they discovered that Heather did a background check on the grandfather, Stephen Hood, and found that he did, in fact, have a criminal record of assault. Despite finding this information Heather still allowed four-year-old Kendall to stay and live with the grandfather. Although she denies this detail and there isn't any proof of this fact being true,

“The board says not doing background checks was "gross negligence, incompetence or misconduct” (Jordan, K. (2019, September 16).

Ethical Principles Violated and alternative solutions

On top of this gross negligence, there were also many ethical standards from the NASW code of ethics that Heather Campbell violated. For starters, she broke standard 1.01 which is Commitment to Clients. (About. (n.d.)). This is evident due to the fact that it is evident that Campbell did not consider the well-being of the client, Kendall, before placing her in the care of her Grandfather. Another ethical standard that Campbell violated was standard 4.04 which is Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception. (About. (n.d.)). Heather Campbell violated this ethical standard by possibly being dishonest about what she knew about the grandfather. Now that we understand what this caseworker did wrong, we can now talk about the alternatives. What could she have done differently? One thing that should have happened when it came to this case is that she should have done a background check on the grandfather and his fiancée. Secondly, Campbell should have also spoken with a supervisor before letting Kendall stay with her grandfather in order to get a second opinion on how to keep Kendall safe. The lack of care for this child’s well being is something that was completely unethical and unchristian like. As social workers, we are called to love and protect those in needs and Heather Campbell completely disregarded this fact. Whether she did the background check or not, she did not handle the situation properly and deserved to get her license taken away.

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