

Jane Doe has always had difficulty learning. When she was in grade school, she didn't read pre-school books until 3rd grade. Her mother, when she wasn't out getting high, would shun her severely for not being able to learn like other children. Her teachers tried to work with her, she had an Individual Education Plan, and she was referred to Regional Center services. Her mother never followed through with the voluntary Regional Center services. When the school would get "too involved" with their lives, her mother would move to another county and change schools.

Jane hasn't seen her father since she was too young to remember. Her mother has had a string of boyfriends that sometimes took more than a casual interest in Jane. The older Jane got, the more these men would take advantage of her- sometimes forcing her to perform sexual acts against her will. Jane, at first, would report these acts to her mother. Her mother would either dismiss her claims or get angry at her and call her a "slut" for stealing her boyfriends. She was told not to talk about anything that happened in her home to anyone in authority, or else she would be taken from her mother and would never see her again.

On several occasions, Child Welfare Services would get involved with Jane's family. Referrals usually came from teachers who felt there was something "off" about the young girl. These referrals often were "evaluated out" due to insufficient evidence of a problem. Jane was never cooperative with social workers who earnestly tried to question her, out of fear she would be orphaned and her mother sent to prison forever.

As a child, Jane was ex[posed to drugs, domestic violence, neglect, and sexual and physical abuse. She felt worthless and sometimes wished she would die. Her depression worsened and worsened through adolescence, but was afraid to take her own life. She associated with unsavory figures, and became comfortable in the underbelly of society.

At the time of her first arrest as a juvenile, she had run away from home. Everything she owned was in a backpack. Her arrest was for stealing food from Walmart and fighting with the security guard.

Item: raggedy old stuffed animal

How do you feel about arresting this woman?

What mental health issues do you think she may be experiencing?

What do you think the item represents to her?