

CASE STUDY: Elementary student strangled over a crayon.

Sara Sych

Setting

An art elementary room with crayons on each desk. The room is colorful, and has lots of things for children to do. It's part of a school that is surrounded by both middle and lower class suburb. The school is well funded.

Case

Susan has been getting hours of observation, as part of her education classes. The elementary teacher is one they brought in to teach at her college, Mr. Stark, so she knows the teacher she's getting hours at. Along with Susan, Samantha is also in the college class Mr. Stark is teaching, she joins Susan in most observation hours there.

One day there was an elementary student upset over a yellow crayon so they strangled the other child for it. The teacher reacted fast and was able to pull them apart, but it left the strangled child crying, and the crayon child in an anger fit. They were then escorted out of the classroom, one for the nurse, one for the principal's office.

After the event, Mr. Stark took control of the situation and the classroom preceded to go as normal. In the college course, Susan and Samantha asked Mr. Stark about the incident. They were told that the child has been a victim of abuse, that the family moved around, and the school has called child services. However nothing really stuck, but they had photographed proof from bruises down the child's arms. The child got suspended for three days. The family was moving that weekend, so the suspension had the child not in school for the rest of his time at the city.

Discussion Questions:

1. Was the school right for punishing the child right before they were switching schools?
2. Should the punishment have been more or less severe knowing the circumstances?
3. How would you have reacted to this situation?

Case Closure Questions:

1. In future practice, what would you do differently as a result of reading this case?
2. Has this case changed your views of troubled students?
3. What did you learn from this case?