Case Study #1

The Case of the Drunk Driving Student

Student Background:

My name is Alisha, I am a 21 year old mother of 2 elementary school students. I am in my second year at my local community college. I work part time and attend class full time. I participate in a program for low-income parents who receive government assistance at my college. I also participate in an accelerated program that is helping me to earn my GED while pursuing college credits. I have a couple of ideas of what I want to do, but I’ve only narrowed it down to social work and nursing. I sit in the front of the class not only out of interest, but because I need glasses but can’t afford them right now. I drive to and from class in my car that can be quite undependable and has bald tires...

Scenario:

Alisha comes into your office first thing in the morning. She needs your help. She had a couple of drinks with friends, and decided that she was capable of driving home. Her two children were at the sitter’s house, a couple of blocks from her home. She decided that since the children were just a few streets over, she’d go ahead and pick them up. By the time she reached her children it was dark out and began to rain. Now after having a couple of drinks, driving in the dark, and in a car with bald tires, she hydroplanes and hits a tree.

Alisha informs you that she was driving on a suspended license because she had failed to maintain insurance, due to lack of finances. She put her face in her hands and says, “it wasn’t bad, but because the tire blew out I couldn’t continue home. I was afraid.” She looks at you and confesses that she got the kids out of the car, walked home in the rain, and reported the car stolen… Now that truth has come out she has been ordered to serve 90 days in jail, and her children are being sent to foster care. Her mother lost custody of her as a child, and therefore was unable to take the children in her care. She has no support, and felt as though she was just getting her life on track.