

Colleen Timmer
Staff Attorney/Law Clerk for:
Robert L. Deschamps
District Court Judge, Dept. 2
Missoula County Courthouse
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**MONTANA FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT,
MISSOULA COUNTY**

IN RE THE PARENTING OF: N.K.S. and E.L.S, Minor Children. LEANNAH GARDIPE, Petitioner, and TRAVIS SANDBERG, Respondent	Dept. 2 Cause No.: DR-17-545 INTERVENTION CONFERENCE REPORT
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On February 4, 2021, Staff Attorney/Law Clerk Colleen Timmer convened an Intervention Conference via Zoom video in this case as scheduled by the Court.

Present at the conference were the following:

Leannah Gardipe, Mother (pro se)
Travis Sandberg, Father (pro se)

1. The children.

There are two minor children, Namaus Sandberg, 4, and Evelyn Sandberg, 3.

2. Procedural Background.

On August 8, 2017, Leannah initiated this parenting plan action and filed a Proposed Parenting Plan. Travis did not respond to the Proposed Parenting Plan and a default was entered on December 13, 2018. However, this Court never adopted Leannah's Proposed Parenting Plan nor was there an entry of decree. Therefore, there is currently no court ordered parenting plan in place. At the time Leannah filed her Proposed Parenting Plan in 2017, there was only one child. There are now two children born of this relationship who are the subject of this parenting action. Leannah has always been children's primary caregiver/parent.

Child support was calculated by CSSD and that Order was filed with this Court on December 23, 2019. That Order states that Travis shall pay child support in the amount of \$128 per month (\$64 per child). That Order also states that Travis shall pay \$512 in child support for May 2019 through August 2019. Leannah stated during the Intervention Conference that Travis has not been paying child support.

On December 18, 2020, Travis filed a Proposed Parenting Plan. Travis stated that this occurred at the behest of Child Protective Services (CPS) following an incident in Flathead County in which CPS became involved. Leannah suffers from mental illness. On December 9, 2020, Leannah and the children were visiting her family/foster mother in Kalispell, Flathead County. Leannah stated that on that day she experienced a serious mental health episode which resulted in her going to the emergency room in Kalispell where she made a report claiming that she was hurting her children. Leannah stated that it was a "false report" brought on by her mental

health issues. As a result of the report, CPS in Flathead County removed the children from Leannah's care and placed them with Travis. They have been with Travis full-time since that date and Leannah has not seen them at all. According to Travis and Leannah, CPS in Flathead County has dismissed the DN matter because it was determined the children are in the safe care of their father. The social worker/case worker in that matter is Coreena Howard. Travis stated that the Missoula County Sheriff's department has a report on this incident as well and the case number is: 2020-20713.

3. Mother.

Leannah Gardipe is the mother of the two children in this matter. Leannah's current address is: 3130 7th Street West, Missoula. Leannah participated in the Intervention Conference and appeared pro se. Leannah lives at the aforementioned address and there is no one else in the home other than herself and the two children. Leannah has suffered from depression, anxiety, and PTSD most of her life and is on permanent disability. She receives disability income each month.

Leannah stated that after the mental health episode she experienced on December 9, 2020, she spent three weeks at Pathways Treatment Center in Kalispell. Leannah attends weekly therapy in Missoula with her counselor, Jenny Jones, and she regularly sees her doctor, Debbie Polson, also in Missoula. Leannah has consistently attended therapy for over two years. Leannah stated that prior to the episode on December 9, 2020, she had not had a mental health breakdown in six years.

Leannah has not seen the children since December 9, 2020 and expressed that she would like to speak with and have parenting time with them as soon as possible.

4. Father

Travis Sandberg is the father of the two children in this case. Travis' current address is: 2919 South 7th Street West, Missoula. Travis participated in the Intervention Conference and appeared pro se. Travis lives at the aforementioned address with his wife, Katie. Also residing in the home are Katie's children, ages 6, 12, and 14. Travis has a 14-year-old daughter from a previous relationship who is also in the home every other weekend.

Travis is currently not employed but his occupation is a roofer. Travis is hoping to return to work once it picks up for the season.

5. Status of the Children

The two children are currently residing with Travis in his home. The children have not seen their mother since her mental health episode on December 9, 2020. Prior to that date, Leannah was the primary parent and the children had not seen Travis in approximately two years. According to Travis, Flathead County CPS determined that the children are safe in his care.

Leannah and Travis both reported that the children are healthy. Namaus, 4, began Head Start yesterday. Namaus does have some speech delay issues. Travis stated that he will be getting help with this through Head Start. Both children are covered by Medicaid.

5. Positions of the parties:

- Travis stated that he was advised by Flathead County CPS to file the Proposed Parenting Plan which asks that Leannah have no parenting time with the children. Travis states that he does want the children to have parenting time with Leannah, but he expressed serious concerns about their safety because of Leannah's mental health and what was reported to Flathead County. Travis confirmed that prior to the children being placed with him on December 9, 2020, he had not seen the children in approximately two years. He stated that he and Leannah have been unable to cooperate regarding parenting time. Both parents blame the other parent for this issue. Travis stated that he wants a significant amount of parenting time, but he also wishes to cooperate with Leannah about the children in the future.
- When Leannah initiated this parenting action she requested that Travis have supervised visits. She no longer holds that position and would like for Travis to have parenting time Friday to Sunday each week. Leannah agreed that she and Travis have been unable to cooperate regarding the children. As stated above, both parents blame the other parent for this issue. Leannah expressed that she would like to see the children as soon as possible.

6. Recommendations:

- Due to CPS' involvement and concerns about Leannah's mental health, this matter is best handled through a Court ordered contested hearing on **Friday, February 12, 2021 at 9:00 -11:00 a.m.** via Zoom.
- At the time of this Intervention Conference, Leannah had not filed a Response to Travis' Proposed Parenting Plan. She was advised to do so.
- Both parties were advised to submit any relevant evidence before the scheduled hearing and all documentation submitted to the Court must be provided to the other party prior to that hearing date.

DATED: February 4, 2021.

ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED BELOW
On Behalf of Colleen Timmer

cc: Leannah Gardipe
Travis Sundberg

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/98315899122?pwd=dnBxZkUzaW50ZHMvNmxCelh0Rzlidz09>

Meeting ID: 983 1589 9122

Password: 202042

Dial by Telephone

+1 646 558 8656 or +1 406 444 9999

Meeting ID: 983 1589 9122

Password: 202042