

Jada

Jada is 15 and is meeting with you because her mother wants her to get involved in an afterschool program. Every time you talk to her, Jada starts laughing. At first, you just repeat what you say so she can hear you, but she keeps laughing, which is making it hard for you to communicate with her.



1. WHAT IS YOUR GUT FEELING?

2. WHAT NEGATIVE ASSUMPTIONS DO YOU THINK ADULTS MIGHT MAKE ABOUT THIS TEEN'S BEHAVIOR?

3. WHAT ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS MIGHT THERE BE, OR WHAT DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC MIGHT BE AT WORK?

Alternative Explanations: Jada expresses discomfort by laughing, and she is nervous talking to someone she doesn't know well.

Developmental Characteristics: Jada may be attention-avoiding and expresses her nervousness about being the center of attention by laughing.

Danny

Danny is 16 and arrives at counseling appointment 15 minutes late. You notice some fresh bruises on his legs and a recent cut on his arm that may require stitches. When you ask about the cuts and bruises, Danny tells you that he and his friends like to do extreme sports, and padding and helmets get in the way, so he doesn't use them. Then Danny tells you that he's been having trouble seeing the chalkboard at school lately because his vision is blurry.



1. WHAT IS YOUR GUT FEELING?

2. WHAT NEGATIVE ASSUMPTIONS DO YOU THINK ADULTS MIGHT MAKE ABOUT THIS TEEN'S BEHAVIOR?

3. WHAT ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS MIGHT THERE BE, OR WHAT DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC MIGHT BE AT WORK?

Alternative Explanations: Danny may have arrived late because his mom was at work and he doesn't have a car and had to take the bus. He might have blurry vision because he needs glasses, or because he already has them and doesn't wear them because he doesn't like how they look or feel.

Developmental Characteristics: Danny is in a developmental stage where new experiences are especially appealing. He is also highly influenced by his peer group, and might seek their approval by not wearing pads or helmets.