



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:



Date of Birth: 08/24/2012
Date of Death or Date of Incident: 04/12/2013
Date of Oral Report: 04/12/2013

**FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE CHILD WELFARE
AGENCY**

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
January 3, 2014

Unredacted reports are confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released to the public.

(23 Pa. C.S. Section 6340)

Unauthorized release is prohibited under penalty of law.

(23 Pa. C.S. 6349 (b))

Reason for Review:

Senate Bill 1147, Printer's Number 2159 was signed into law on July 3, 2008. The bill became effective on December 30, 2008 and is known as Act 33 of 2008. As part of Act 33 of 2008, DPW must conduct a review and provide a written report of all cases of suspected child abuse that result in a child fatality or near fatality. This written report must be completed as soon as possible but no later than six months after the date the report was registered with ChildLine for investigation.

Act 33 of 2008 also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a child fatality or near fatality is indicated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the oral report to ChildLine. Philadelphia County has convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
██████████	Victim Child	08/24/2012
██████████	Sibling	██████████ 2009
██████████	Sibling	██████████ 2011
██████████	Mother	██████████ 1992
██████████	Father	██████████ 1992
██████████	Maternal Grandmother	██████████ 1968

Notification of Child (Near) Fatality:

On April 12, 2013, Department of Human Services received a phone call ██████████ stating that the parents reported that the child was pulling himself up on the bed frame and fell backward on a knife. Parents reported that one of the children must have brought a Swiss army knife into the room. Child has a 7cm stab wound to the back of his head. The knife penetrated the brain stem. The hospital made arrangements for organ donation as the child was not expected to survive. Child was on life support at St. Christopher's Hospital. The parents' story was not consistent with injuries. This incident was certified as a near fatality by Dr. ██████████

Summary of DPW Child (Near) Fatality Review Activities:

The Southeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed all current and past case records pertaining to the ██████████ family. Follow up interviews were conducted with the Supervisor, ██████████. The Regional Office also participated in the Community Review Near Fatality meeting on May 3, 2013 where all aspects of the case was discussed during the meeting

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

- On February 4, 2011 there was a GPS report regarding [REDACTED] suffering from [REDACTED] and subsequently admitted to the [REDACTED]. It was reported that the child's maternal 15 year old aunt picked him up in a car seat; [REDACTED] was not securely placed in the seat and fell out. The Mother immediately rushed to the child and took him to the hospital. Case was rejected due to there not being any suspicion of child abuse.
- On 12/21/2011, a GPS report was received by DHS that there were 3-4 children in a home and only an 18 year-old man who appeared to be an older sibling of the children was entering and leaving the residence. These children were terrorizing older neighbors. It appeared that the parents did not reside in the same home with the children. It appeared that the parents did not provide adequate supervision of the children. This report was discussed with DHS hotline supervisor and rejected due to the history the family had with DHS; the person who appeared to be the older sibling was the father.

Circumstances of Child (Near) Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 4/12/2013, The Department of Human Services received a call [REDACTED] to report that the parents' informed them that the victim child was pulling himself up on the bed frame and fell backward on a knife. Parents reported that one of the other children must have brought a Swiss army knife into the room. Child has a stab wound to the back of his head. The knife penetrated his brain and brain stem. Child was not breathing on his own and was [REDACTED]. During that time the hospital started making arrangements [REDACTED] and the victim child was not expected to survive. Child was transported to St. Christopher's Hospital [REDACTED]. The parents' story was not consistent with injuries. It was later noted that on 4/12/2013 the parents took victim child to Germantown Hospital but they no longer have an emergency room and victim child had to be taken to St. Christopher's Hospital. It was reported by Dr. [REDACTED] that the knife was about 4-5 inches long with a ½ inch width. The injuries which victim child sustained were critical and [REDACTED]. Dr. [REDACTED] was consistent with stating that the injuries did not occur from child falling onto the knife rather the stab wound was inflicted. Biological father later admitted to stabbing victim child while he and the mother were involved in domestic violence incident.

This case was [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Current Case Status:

- Father continues to be incarcerated at [REDACTED] Correctional Facility with charges of attempted murder, aggravated assault, endangering the welfare of a child, possession of an instrument of crime, simple assault and recklessly endangering another person. There is currently a warrant out for the mother's arrest.
- Children are currently placed in foster care with [REDACTED]. Mother has supervised visits but has since left her place of residency and her whereabouts are unknown.

County Strengths and Deficiencies and Recommendations for Change as Identified by the County's Child (Near) Fatality Report:

- Strengths:
County completed the investigation in a timely fashion.
- Deficiencies:
None noted
- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:
None noted
- Recommendations for Change at the State Level:
None noted

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The County Internal Report was received on 11/7/2013. It was well written with no compliance concerns/issues at this time.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

- County Strengths:
County did a good job with the investigation
- County Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted at this time
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:
No non-compliance areas noted.

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

The Department recommends that the County continue to have infomercials surrounding the topics of domestic violence and the effects it has on families.