



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE NEAR DEATH OF



Date of Birth: 1/8/09
Date of near Fatality incident: 2/4/09

**The family was known to Northumberland County
Children and Youth Services.**

This report is confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released.
(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 No. 1147, now known as Act 33 was signed by Governor Rendell on July 3, 2008 and went into effect 180 days from that date, December 30, 2008. This Act amends the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and sets standards for reviewing and reporting child fatality and near child fatalities that were suspected to have occurred due to child abuse. DPW must conduct child fatality and near fatality reviews and provide a written report on any child fatality or near fatality where child abuse is suspected.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED]/89
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED]/89
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	1/8/09

Notification of Fatality:

The child was brought to Geisinger Hospital, Danville on 2/4/09 by his mother after having a seizure at home. The child was hospitalized with [REDACTED]. The symptoms were consistent with [REDACTED]. The parents were unable to provide an explanation for the injuries. The child was in [REDACTED]. The Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families was notified of the near death report on 3/19/09 after the [REDACTED] on both parents was submitted and received from Northumberland County Children and Youth Services on 3/6/09. Both parents continued to reside in the home together, and no charges were filed at that time by law enforcement. Both parents are young, and this is the first child to both parents. The mother had been suffering from [REDACTED].

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

For this review the Central Region Office of Children Youth and Families reviewed Northumberland's complete case record for the family, which included Geisinger Medical Center's medical records. Also interviewed was the Northumberland County Children and Youth [REDACTED].

Case Chronology:

Previous CY involvement:

Prior to the [REDACTED] referral on 2/4/09, the family had never been opened for services with the county agency. The agency had 1 prior [REDACTED] report with the family due to the mother dropping the baby on the floor at Geisinger Hospital shortly after giving birth.

- 1/8/09 - A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] alleging that the mother had dropped the child while at the hospital shortly after giving birth. Neither the mother nor the father picked the child up from the floor. The agency visited the child and the parents at Geisinger Hospital on 1/9/09 and developed a safety plan with the parents, the maternal grandparents and the maternal great grandmother. They all agreed to provide supervision between the mother and the child. The agency caseworker met with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] reported that the mother did not show a sense of urgency after she dropped the baby. The mother reported to the agency caseworker that she was in labor between 24-36 hours. The baby was delivered by [REDACTED]. The mother was also [REDACTED]. The nurse brought the baby into the mother's hospital room and gave the baby to her to feed. The mother reported that she went to move and the baby rolled out of her arms. She claims that she called for the nurses and rang the buzzer. She stated that she did not try to pick the baby up because she could barely move and she was afraid that she would step on the baby.

The [REDACTED] came into the hospital room while the agency caseworker was there on 1/9/09. He reported that everything looked good for the child. At that time the [REDACTED] wasn't sure if the child's skull fracture was due to the trauma of the birth or the fall.

The child was [REDACTED] home with the parents; however, a safety plan was developed between the mother, the father, the maternal grandfather, maternal step grandmother, maternal grandmother and maternal great grandmother. Everyone agreed to the supervision between the child and his mother at all times. The safety plan was monitored through surprise home visits and communication with everyone included on the safety plan. The case remained opened on intake during the investigation. Before the referral could be closed, a [REDACTED] report came in. The report details are below.

- 2/4/09 - A [REDACTED] report [REDACTED] was received from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] due to the child being hospitalized for seizures and having [REDACTED]. The mother brought the child to Geisinger Hospital after he had a seizure at home. The child's injuries were consistent [REDACTED]. The parents were unable to provide an explanation for the child's injuries. The child was in [REDACTED]. On 3/2/09 the county agency received a letter from [REDACTED].
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The mother and the father [REDACTED]. The case was opened for services.

Circumstances of Child's Near Fatality:

The child was brought to Geisinger Hospital on 2/4/09 by his mother after having a seizure at home. The child was hospitalized with [REDACTED]. The parents were unable to provide an explanation for the injuries. The child was in [REDACTED]. The Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families was notified of the near death report on 3/19/09 after the submission of [REDACTED] was received from Northumberland County Children and Youth Services on 3/6/09. Both parents continued to reside in the home together and no charges were filed at that time by law enforcement. Both parents are young and this is the first child to both parents [REDACTED].

The child was released from [REDACTED] to the paternal aunt voluntarily by his parents. The agency had conducted emergency ChildLine and criminal clearances on the paternal aunt. The child had remained in her care and all visits between the child and his parents were supervised by the child's paternal aunt. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As a result of the [REDACTED], the family was provided services from Northumberland County Children and Youth Services. They also received a family resource worker from the county agency that addressed [REDACTED] budgeting, child care information, child development and [REDACTED]. The child had an [REDACTED] done on 4/22/09, but he did not qualify for services as he was developmentally on target. The parents moved to Columbia County on 5/11/09; therefore, a referral was made to Columbia County Children and Youth Services on 5/11/09. The child was already living with paternal aunt at that time.

Current / most recent status of case:

On 3/2/09 the county agency received a letter from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The family resided in Columbia County from 5/11/09 until 10/19/09. The child had resided with his paternal aunt at the time the case was transferred to Columbia County Children and Youth Services on 5/11/09. According to case notes from Columbia County Children and Youth Services, the child had moved in with the maternal grandmother and maternal step grandfather at some point. The child's parents also resided with the maternal grandparents, but were never permitted to be unsupervised with the child. The child's father eventually left the residence due to a family conflict. The family was cooperative with Columbia County Children and Youth and remained an active case until the family moved back to Northumberland County. The family was re-opened for services with Northumberland Children and Youth Services on 10/21/09. At that time the child began residing with the maternal great-great grandmother whom

assured the county agency that she would not permit the child any unsupervised contact between the child and his parents. The agency conducted emergency ChildLine and criminal clearances on the maternal great grandmother. The parents were in agreement with the living arrangements. The county agency monitors the safety plan through direct observation and discussion with the parents and maternal great grandmother. The county agency is providing the parents with a Family Resource Worker. The parents are attending anger management classes, active parenting classes, and receiving casework services from the county. The family was referred to the Family Preservation Unit at Northumberland County Children and Youth Services in November 2009 in order to assist with reunification of the child with his parents. [REDACTED]

Services to children and families:

The county agency is providing the parents with a Family Resource Worker. The parents are attending anger management classes, active parenting classes, and receiving casework services from the county. The family was referred to the Family Preservation Unit at Northumberland County Children and Youth Services in November 2009 in order to assist with reunification of the child with his parents. [REDACTED]

County Strengths and Deficiencies as identified by the County's Near Fatality Report:

A county death team review was not completed as required.

County Recommendations for changes at the Local Levels as identified by Fatality Report:

None

Recommendations for changes at the State Level:

None

Central Region Findings:

An area of major concern is that the mother did not have any type of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The agency continues to provide services to the family with a goal of reunification. Northumberland County [REDACTED] the near death on both the mother and the father, as it could not be determined

which one caused the serious injury since they were both in the home at the time the serious injury occurred.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance issues:

None