



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE NEAR DEATH OF



BORN: 09/09/08

Date of near death incident: 04/20/09

**The family was known to
Mifflin County Children and Youth Services
Clear Concepts
County Base Service Unit**

REPORT FINALIZED: 02/05/09

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] 83
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED] 79
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	9/9/08
[REDACTED]	Brother	[REDACTED] 07
[REDACTED]	Half-brother	[REDACTED] 03
[REDACTED]	Household Member	[REDACTED] 85

Notification of Fatality:

The victim child was living in the home with her father, mother, brother and a household member. On 4/20/09 Mother brought the child to the Lewistown Hospital ER reporting that the child's one year old sibling hit the child on top of the head with a plastic scrubber. Child's head was extremely swollen and child was pale in color. Child had bruising all over her body in various stages of healing. The injuries did not match mother's explanation. Child was transferred to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA in critical condition, but was expected to survive. CT scan of the child's head revealed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

For this review the Central Region reviewed Mifflin County's complete case record for the family, Lewistown Hospital Medical Report, Geisinger Medical Center's Medical Report, and interviewed [REDACTED], casework supervisor, [REDACTED], caseworker, and [REDACTED] Administrator from Mifflin County.

Case Chronology:

Previous CY involvement:

Prior to the near death report on 4/20/09, the family had never been opened for services with the county. The agency had 7 previous [REDACTED] reports on the family [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 9/16/03 A [REDACTED] report was received [REDACTED] regarding the mother being 8 months pregnant, along with being arrested in Lancaster for forgery, possession of heroin and heroin paraphernalia. The county did not accept this report for investigation due to the mother being in jail in Lancaster County for an unknown amount of time.

9/25/03 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] regarding the mother coming back to Lewistown with drugs. She had fresh track marks, and was soon due to deliver her baby. Her mother was going to care for the infant once born. The agency kept the referral open to assess where the child and mother would be living. [REDACTED] and her infant, [REDACTED], moved out of county with no forwarding address. The agency closed the referral on 11/26/03, and planned to make a referral to the other county once they obtained the address for her and her infant. The agency attempted to locate [REDACTED] through family, but received no response. [REDACTED]

5/31/07 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] delivered a baby boy, [REDACTED] at Lewistown Hospital. [REDACTED]

The agency closed the referral on 7/27/07 after home visits were made, [REDACTED]

- 4/20/08 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] Referral source reported that the baby [REDACTED] screams when his diaper is changed, and he is always dirty. [REDACTED] penis sometimes appears swollen, as if it is not cleaned properly. The agency closed the referral on 5/21/08 after a home visit was made. Children and home were clean and appropriate. At the home visit, there were no health and safety concerns. No collateral contacts were made.

11/10/08 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The child is 9 weeks old, and was admitted to Geisinger Medical Center two weeks prior due to a condition that the parents were not aware of when the infant was released from the hospital immediately following her birth. [REDACTED] The mother was very appropriate, caring, attentive and cooperative [REDACTED] when the infant first came home; however, she had since avoided [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also stated that the infant is not going to her follow up appointment at Danville. The caseworker conducted weekly contacts with the [REDACTED]

family while the referral was open. The mother was cooperative and there were no child abuse/neglect concerns; however, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It didn't appear throughout the county's investigation that these issues were hindering her ability to care for the children. After many collateral contacts were made with [REDACTED] the agency closed the intake on 1/9/09. Referrals were made for the mother to receive continued support for [REDACTED]

- 1/26/09 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED]. She could not reach anyone else, so she called her previous caseworker. [REDACTED] made it clear that there were no concerns about [REDACTED] care of the child or her relationship with the child. [REDACTED]. The agency closed the intake on 3/10/09 after Mifflin County assisted the mother [REDACTED]. The mother had family willing to assist her and the children if she was experiencing a difficult day [REDACTED]. During this intake, there were no child abuse or neglect concerns.
- 4/15/09 A [REDACTED] report was received from [REDACTED] regarding the mother being on parole and drug paraphernalia being found in her home and poor home conditions. The agency had attempted two announced home visits without success. The caseworker then sent a letter requesting a home visit on 4/23/09. The [REDACTED]/Near Death, [REDACTED] came in on 4/20/09. The mother, father and a household member were listed as the alleged perpetrators.

Circumstances of Child's Near Death:

On 4/20/09 the mother brought the child to the Lewistown Hospital Emergency Room. She reported that the child's one year old sibling hit the child on top of the head with a plastic scrubber. Child's head was extremely swollen and child was pale in color. Child had bruising all over her body in various stages of healing. The injuries did not match mother's explanation. Child was transferred to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The police and the agency questioned the mother. The mother did not go with the child to Geisinger. Child's older sibling ([REDACTED]/07) was placed in care with his paternal great-grandparents. The safety plan was that the mother and father were to have no contact with the children

and that the grandparents would ensure the children's safety at all times. Emergency clearances were done on the grandparents. The victim child has an older half sibling ([REDACTED]/03) who lives with maternal grandparents. A safety plan had also been developed with those grandparents regarding no unsupervised contact between the parents and [REDACTED] were scheduled for a full skeletal survey. The survey for [REDACTED] was completed on 4/21/09; [REDACTED] full skeletal survey was completed on 4/29/09 with [REDACTED]. Due to [REDACTED] residing with his maternal grandparents for most of his life, a skeletal survey was not completed on him

Current / most recent status of case:

The [REDACTED] listing the Mother and [REDACTED] as the perpetrators. The father was not [REDACTED] as a [REDACTED] investigation establishing that he was not in a care taker role.

Children remain safe and together in foster care. The agency originally had [REDACTED] in a kinship home; however, when [REDACTED] was released from the hospital, the grandparents stated they could not care for both children [REDACTED] appears to be developmentally on track. Her brother [REDACTED], is in the same foster home and presents significant developmental delays. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] will continue to go to Danville for periodic check-ups; however, the doctors state that there is no long term or lasting effects from the abuse.

Mifflin County Children and Youth Services obtained from the court Aggravated Circumstances with reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family on May 4, 2009.

Mother was incarcerated from 9/2/09-9/17/09 for charges of theft and receiving stolen property in 2005.

On 11/20/09, Mother was charged with aggravated assault, endangering welfare of children, simple assault and recklessly endangering another person. The other perpetrator/household member at the time of incident was charged with aggravated assault, simple assault, and recklessly endangering another person. There was a preliminary hearing for Mother on 12/15/09 but it was continued.

[REDACTED] has made a full recovery and is doing well in foster care.

Services to children and families:

[REDACTED] are placed in foster care together, and all contact with natural parents is supervised by CYS.

The agency did not seek dependency of [REDACTED] as he was already living with his maternal grandparents. There is an agreement between the grandparents and the agency that they

will provide supervision of all contact between [REDACTED] the mother, with [REDACTED]. The natural father of [REDACTED] is not involved. The agency does not have an open case on [REDACTED] at this time as grandparents are his caretakers and they are assuring his safety.

Visitation for [REDACTED] is supervised one hour every other week at the agency office.

CYS is providing intensive reunification services through Family Intervention Crises Services (FICS). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Both parents have completed parenting classes; [REDACTED]

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

The agency was proactive in assisting the mother in obtaining her [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Although there were recurrent referrals to the county agency, Mifflin County Children and Youth Services did not open the family for any ongoing supportive services.

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

The county agency did not conduct a fatality review team as required.

Recommendations for changes at the State Level:

None

Central Region Findings:

Mifflin County CYC staff responded appropriately in regard to assessing and assuring the safety of the victim child's siblings. The agency continues to provide services to the family with a goal of reunification. Mifflin County [REDACTED] the near death on both the mother and the household member, 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