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REPORT ON THE DEATH OF

Trenton C. Johnson

BORN: 05/06/09
DATE OF FATALITY: 06/06/09

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:
Bradford County Children and Youth Services

REPORT DATED: February 5, 2010

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 fatality as a result of suspected 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>
Trenton C. Johnson	Child/Victim	05.06.09
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2009
[REDACTED]	Half Sibling	[REDACTED] 2004
[REDACTED]	Half Sibling	[REDACTED] 2005
[REDACTED]	Father of [REDACTED] (Resides at another location)	[REDACTED] 1980
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1982
[REDACTED]	Father of [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 1984
[REDACTED]	Maternal Grandmother	
[REDACTED]	Maternal Grandfather	

Notification of Fatality

Bradford County Children and Youth Services received a report [REDACTED] of Trenton C. Johnson [REDACTED] on 06.06.09. Child/Victim was found "unresponsive and blue, with blood in the mouth and nose". Child/Victim was treated by Emergency Medical Personnel at the family residence and transported to Towanda Memorial Hospital. The Child/Victim was subsequently transferred to the [REDACTED] at Geisinger Hospital in Danville where the Child/Victim died. [REDACTED] physician [REDACTED] did not believe that biological mother's explanation was consistent with presenting injuries.

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted a site record review at Bradford County Children and Youth Services on 06.11.09. The [REDACTED] case file and caseworker case notes were reviewed. Interviews were also conducted with Bradford County Children and Youth Director, assigned [REDACTED] Intake Caseworker and [REDACTED] Supervisor.

Case Chronology:

06/06/09

[REDACTED] investigation commenced. Case reviewed with Bradford County Children and Youth on call supervisor. Allegations at time of referral to Bradford County Children and Youth involved a four week old male being transported to medical facility earlier in the day. Information presented to medical facility by biological parents was inconsistent with Child/Victim's condition. Blood was observed in nose and mouth. Parents indicated that Child/Victim was fed earlier in morning and was physically healthy. [REDACTED] alleged that information provided by biological parents was inaccurate.

06/06/09

Montour County Children and Youth contacted by Bradford County Children and Youth to commence [REDACTED] investigation at Geisinger Hospital in Danville. Family seen at hospital. Case data forwarded to Bradford County Children and Youth Service. Collateral contact with crisis worker at Bradford County. At the time of arrival at the medical facility Child/Victim was in full cardiac arrest and was intubated by Emergency medical personnel.

06/07/09

Bradford County Children and Youth crisis worker completes safety assessment at family residence. Siblings of Child/Victim assessed. Both biological parents interviewed on this date. Parents of Child/Victim indicated that Child/Victim was healthy the morning of the incident. Child/Victim was fed at 06:15 and went back to bed. Both Child/Victim and twin sibling were sleeping in the same bed with biological mother. A safety assessment was conducted. Children were conditionally safe with a safety plan of Maternal grandmother agreeable to moving into household and supervising all contact between [REDACTED] and children.

06/07/09

Bradford County Children and Youth crisis worker had collateral contact with investigating trooper from Pennsylvania State Police. Allegations reviewed. Bradford County Children and Youth reviewed current safety plan with Pennsylvania State Police. At this juncture the law enforcement agency is not certain as to cause of death but no abnormal trauma noted on Child/Victim. Information secured by law enforcement agency is consistent with information secured by Bradford County Children and Youth.

06/08/09

Supervisory case review by Bradford County Children and Youth Supervisor. [REDACTED]. The assigned caseworker reviewed information secured from Geisinger Hospital and investigating law enforcement agency. No suspicious bruising was noted. Initial report has listed death as Undetermined final results will be determined by autopsy. Law enforcement agency does not suspect child abuse/neglect at this juncture.

06/08/09

Collateral contact by Bradford County Children and Youth with Pennsylvania State Police.

06/09/09

Bradford County Children and Youth Child Protective Services caseworker had collateral contact with Pennsylvania State Police Trooper investigating the case. Law enforcement agency indicates that the preliminary findings from the autopsy on Child/Victim do not suggest child abuse or neglect. The etiology of the Child death is still under investigation and no definitive cause has been determined. At this point the law enforcement agency is viewing the incident as either natural or accidental.

06/18/09

Supervisory case review between Bradford County Children and Youth supervisor and assigned [REDACTED] caseworker. Medical data still not complete. Actual cause of death has not been rendered by coroner at this point. Testing results are still pending. [REDACTED]. Parenting services provided to biological mother [REDACTED]. Youth Advocate Program will have weekly contact with biological mother at home.

06/25/09

Supervisory case review at Bradford County Children and Youth. Medical findings reviewed. Involvement of law enforcement / status of investigation discussed. Investigating law enforcement agency still has not received conclusive findings from coroner. There continues to be no suspicions of abuse or neglect by biological mother of Child/Victim.

06/26/09

Bradford County [REDACTED] intake caseworker had in person contact with biological parents of Child/Victim, siblings of Child/Victim and various extended family members. Safety assessment completed on children in household. Bradford County Children and Youth determined that all children within home are safe and parents are providing appropriate care/supervision. Safety plan modified. Maternal grandmother no longer required to remain within household. [REDACTED].

06/26/09

Pennsylvania State Police investigating officer had collateral contact with Bradford County [REDACTED]. Information secured from family by the law enforcement agency is consistent with information provided to Bradford County Children and Youth by biological parents of Child/Victim. [REDACTED].

07/02/09

Bradford County Children and Youth Supervisory case review with assigned [REDACTED] caseworker. Family has been cooperative. Concerns raised for additional services to biological mother and children. Biological mother verbalized to assigned Bradford County Children and Youth caseworker that the four year old sibling/child and five year old sibling/child were not responding to biological mother's attempts discipline. Biological mother was amenable to securing services to assist [REDACTED]. Referral made to Youth Advocate Program.

07/10/09

Supervisory case review by Bradford County Children and Youth with assigned [REDACTED] caseworker. Request for medical records still has not been successful. Re-contact medical providers and request information.

07/14/09

Contact between Bradford County Children and Youth caseworker and biological mother of Child/Victim. Status of Youth Advocate referral discussed. Biological mother of Child/Victim and four year old and five year old sibling of Child/Victim will be receiving services from the Youth Advocate Program. [REDACTED]. Mother cooperative.

07/20/09

Bradford County supervisory case review. There are still no final determinations made by the coroner. Law enforcement agency will contact Bradford County Children with results when they are secured.

07/30/09

Bradford County Children and Youth supervisory case review. Information secured from medical providers. Data reviewed with law enforcement agency. [REDACTED]. Family to be closed at [REDACTED] intake level and referred for community based [REDACTED] services.

08/04/09

Bradford County Children and Youth caseworker had in person contact with biological parents of Child/Victim and all children within home. No safety issues. [REDACTED].

08/05/09

Bradford County supervisory case review with assigned [REDACTED] caseworker. [REDACTED] active with the family through Youth Advocate. No safety issues identified. Risk assessment reviewed. The overall level of risk was determined to be low. Family amenable to community services. Case closed. By Bradford County Children and Youth. [REDACTED]

Previous Children and Youth Involvement:

Bradford County Children and Youth had no prior activity with this family.

Circumstances of the Child's Fatality or Near Fatality:

On 06/06/09 the biological parents of the Child/Victim contacted the Emergency Medical Service of Bradford County and requested assistance due to the biological mother discovering her infant "unresponsive". The Child/Victim was treated on site by medical personnel, intubated and taken to Towanda Memorial Hospital. Child/Victim was subsequently life flighted to the [REDACTED] at Geisinger Hospital/Danville. The Child/Victim was placed on life support and died shortly after admission.

Current Status of Case

Bradford County Children and Youth Service completed the [REDACTED] on July 31, 2009 and [REDACTED]. The preliminary autopsy results indicated that the cause of death was natural with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome hypothesized. The law enforcement investigation did not find any criminal culpability on the part of the [REDACTED]. No criminal charges were filed.

The final autopsy results on this case were received on January 30, 2010. The findings were reviewed with the law enforcement agency. The final determination concluded that the Child/Victim died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The Pennsylvania State Police has closed its file on this case.

At the time of Bradford County Children and Youth Services closing the [REDACTED] investigation on this case the family was referred for [REDACTED] and home based services. The family was amenable to the service referral and was actively participating [REDACTED] and the Youth Advocate Program. [REDACTED]

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted a site record review at Bradford County Children and Youth Services and determined that the county agency followed the statutory and regulatory timeframes regarding timeliness of [REDACTED] intake. Bradford County secured the assistance of Montour County Children and Youth Services in meeting the twenty four hour response time. All requisite documentation regarding caseworker contacts, notice of rights and final determination correspondence was completed according to the periodicity established by The Child Protective Services Law.

The Department Of Public Welfare, Northeast regional Office Of Children, Youth and Families determined that there were no violations of the regulations relating to the Child Protective Services Law.

Findings:

The instant case file clearly evidenced a collaborative investigatory effort on behalf of Bradford County Children and Youth Services and the law enforcement agency. The collaboration occurred from the onset of the [REDACTED] report and continued until the conclusion of the Child Protective Services investigation. The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families reviewed Bradford County Children and Youth Services [REDACTED] case file and the manner in which the agency documented a process and decision making on cases assigned for [REDACTED] investigation. While the agency evidenced consistent supervisory review of cases there was some confusion in Bradford County's formal documentation of the process in the case files. A recommendation was made to document the decision making in a more consistent manner. Bradford County Children and Youth administrative staffs have acknowledged the discrepancies and have undertaken a modification of record keeping.

Recommendations:

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional office Of Children Youth and Families has recommended that Bradford County Children and Youth Services review the existing case record documentation process. The Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families recommended that county administrative staff focus particular attention on the specific delineation of supervisor/caseworker directives and decision making rationale. It was evident that much of the information of this information was readily ascertained through interviews with supervisory and casework staff conducted during the site visit at Bradford County Children and Youth. However, the case recording of some of the internal agency supervisory/caseworker was not documented within the case file.