



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE DEATH OF

Elena Ramos-Panzullo

02/18/01: Born

04/06/09: Died

FAMILY KNOWN TO:
Delaware County Children and Youth

Drafted: 10/05/09
Finalized: 02/03/10

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 review and provide a written report on any child fatality or near fatality where child abuse is suspected.

1. Family Constellation.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Elena Ramos-Panzullo	Deceased Child	2/18/01
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1971
[REDACTED]	Father of deceased child	unknown
[REDACTED]	Half -- brother	[REDACTED] 1992
[REDACTED]	Half -- sister	[REDACTED] 2007

Notification of Fatality:

On 4/11/09, the reporting source made the report to ChildLine about eight year old Elena with the information that [REDACTED] received from the [REDACTED] was afraid to call this in for fear of retaliation from the child's mother. [REDACTED] reported that the child had [REDACTED]. The child died of a serious blood infection and a heart attack. [REDACTED] claimed in the past, when the child was sick, the mother would take the child to the hospital right away. This time the mother did not take the child to the hospital until her fever was 105 degrees. The mother refused an autopsy and is having the child cremated on Tuesday 4/14/09. [REDACTED] also claimed that [REDACTED] knows that the mother did not give the child the medication she required. The case was registered for medical neglect resulting in a physical condition (death) based on the allegations presented.

According to Delaware county Children and Youth Social worker [REDACTED] and supervisor, [REDACTED], the child was very [REDACTED] and she was [REDACTED]. This report was not called in to ChildLine by [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] at the time of death because the hospitals felt there was no foul play nor neglect.

2. Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed.

For this review the SERO reviewed the family's files and the complete Delaware County Children & Youth case file. SERO interviewed [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], the Delaware County Children and Youth social worker, [REDACTED], county caseworkers who provided direct in-home services to this family. A fatality review was not conducted by the county. The case was [REDACTED] within 20 days of the report.

Case Chronology:

Previous CY involvement:

The family has been known to the county since 2/10/03 for a [REDACTED] case involving [REDACTED] as the victim child, and his mother. The case was [REDACTED] but the family was opened for services. The family was provided Services to Children in their Own Home (SCOH), parent education, and consultation with medical professionals. Case closed in 5/12/04.

9/28/04 -The County reopened services for the family, [REDACTED] for improper supervision of Elena. [REDACTED], child's mother, has a history of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The agency put SCOH in place to stabilize the family functioning and to ensure Elena's safety. Elena has [REDACTED], was [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and would continue to have [REDACTED]. The SCOH services were in place to insure that Elena and [REDACTED] were receiving proper supervision and medical care. [REDACTED] continued to have problems in school.

In 2005 - The mother requested [REDACTED]. The family participated in [REDACTED] to prevent placement of the children. Mother had difficulty getting Elena into school to meet her needs and [REDACTED] continued to have behavioral problems in school.

In December 2006 - the mother had also been in an auto accident and it was reported that [REDACTED], her son, was being given the responsibility to care for his sister, Elena. While being checked for this accident, [REDACTED] found out she was [REDACTED] was born on April 23, 2007.

On May 2, 2007 - [REDACTED] was hospitalized due to [REDACTED] incident by her father. The mother was injured at the same time due to domestic violence. PFA order was obtained and [REDACTED] father was no longer in the home. [REDACTED] father was arrested and incarcerated for the assault on the mother.

2/25/08 - [REDACTED] was involved with [REDACTED]

7/12/08 - [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

10/31/08 - [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]

Circumstances of Child's Fatality or Near Fatality:

Elena had multiple hospitalizations through out her short life. She was [REDACTED]. She had [REDACTED]. Child received her special medical services through [REDACTED].

On 4/5/09 the mother reported that Elena was out of sorts and coming down with something. She then saw what she described as a "horrible look on her face." She noticed

that the child's feet were blue and child was cold to touch. She called 911. The EMS performed CPR on Elena. She was taken to Chester Crozier Medical Center. Elena was in [REDACTED], was revived and air lifted to CHOP. The child's condition deteriorated and there was [REDACTED]. Child was put on [REDACTED]. Her [REDACTED]. The doctors at [REDACTED] asked the mother to consider removing the child from [REDACTED]. The mother could not make this decision at this time. Child was continued on [REDACTED], but the mother did agree with a "do not resuscitate order."

The social worker was kept up to date from the mother. She wanted the social worker to know what was happening up to the end. The mother called to let her know her difficult decisions. The social worker went to the hospital to support her even though there were multiple family and friends there also.

Elena died at 5:55am 4/6/09. There was no indication at the hospital that this incident was anything but death by natural causes. The cause of death was "Gram Negative Rod Sepsis." The mother was told that the [REDACTED].

According to [REDACTED], this was [REDACTED]. The child was provided with good care by the mother, the child was not malnourished and there were no signs of abuse or neglect. There was no delay in the response by the mother for medical care of the child.

It must be noted that neither hospital, CCMC nor CHOP, reported this as a suspicious death from suspected abuse. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The County was aware of the mother's history of drug use, and did not observe any indications of current use.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance issues:

Due to the multiple problems in this family, Delaware County CYC provided services for the family from 2004 to present.

- The county's family file was kept up to date on all Family Service Plans and Risk Assessments. As the need would arise, there would be a revision of the FSP.
- The notes of the family contacts were always noted whether it was a phone contact, face to face, home visit or an office visit.
- All of the medical reports for Elena were kept and reports of her ongoing condition are noted in the file.

County Strengths and Deficiencies:

Strengths-with regard to compliance, statutes, regulations and services to children and families: The county social worker was very involved with the family. She kept the file up to date and recorded all contacts. The notes were kept to show all doctor visits for Elena, her hospitalizations, and the child's over all well being.

The social worker worked very closely with this family as evidenced by the calls that the mother made to her during Elena's final hospitalization. [REDACTED] was asking for support while having to make the difficult decisions for her child. The social worker was there to support her through this time.

Recommendations for changes at the Local (County) Levels:

This child death was not a result of child abuse. Both the hospitals, CCMC and CHOP reported that the mother did not neglect nor abuse Elena. She was given the care needed by her mother.