



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:



Date of Birth: 08/11/12
Date of Incident: 05/29/13
Date of Oral Report: 05/29/13

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:
Any Public or Private Child Welfare Agency

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
10/14/13

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. Montgomery County has convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report on June 19, 2013.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
[REDACTED]	Child	08/11/12
[REDACTED]	Biological Mother	[REDACTED]/90
[REDACTED]	Maternal Grand Mother	[REDACTED]/63
[REDACTED]	Maternal Uncle	[REDACTED]/82*
[REDACTED]	Biological Father	[REDACTED]/91*
[REDACTED]	Paternal Grand Mother	[REDACTED]/71*
[REDACTED]	Paternal Uncle	[REDACTED]/95*

*Household member but not present at time of incident

Notification of Child Near Fatality:

Reporting Source stated the mother filled the bathtub with scalding hot water, and then put [REDACTED] in the water head first. The biological mother was emotionally upset and told the nurse "I just wanted the child to stop crying". [REDACTED] suffered severe symptoms of [REDACTED]. There were burns to her [REDACTED]. Hospital staff expressed concern for [REDACTED]. There was swelling, redness, and blistering to the burned areas. [REDACTED]

Summary of DPW Child Near Fatality Review Activities:

The Southeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed case documents pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. Contact was made with the ongoing Montgomery County case worker to obtain current information on the family. The regional office also participated in the County Internal Near Fatality Review Team (Act 33) meeting on June 19, 2013.

Record and Documents Reviewed:

- Medical (Einstein Healthcare Network)
- Medical (St Christopher's Children's Hospital)

Montgomery County Police Report

Safety Assessments with Safety Plan
Risk Assessment
Family Service Plan
Case Documentation

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

The family did not have prior involvement with the Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth.

Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:

[REDACTED], biological mother, transported [REDACTED] to Einstein Hospital Emergency in Montgomery County on 5/29/13. [REDACTED] was presented to triage in a car seat covered in a blanket. The biological mother began to cry when asked questions of what happened. The nurse removed the blanket and observed [REDACTED] with red face and making a whimpering sound/cry. There were blistering and redness to the right side of [REDACTED] face and her scalp was wet. As she was undressed, there was more blistering on the left arm, and redness to the upper chest. At that time, the biological mother stated "I hurt my baby", the nurse asked how the biological mother stated: "hot water"

[REDACTED]. The biological mother admitted to filling the bathtub with scalding hot water and putting baby [REDACTED] in face first. She then pulled the baby out of the water and called 911. The biological mother stated she knew this would hurt the baby but would not give explanation of why she put the baby in the scalding water. The degree of the burns was severe; areas burned were the face, trunk, back and upper extremities.

[REDACTED] was transferred to St Christopher's Hospital in Philadelphia [REDACTED] for further treatment and examination on 05/29/13. At St Christopher's, [REDACTED] received skeletal exam, XRAYs, and CT Scan, all test were negative and she was only treated for burns.

[REDACTED] that what she had done to her baby was an accident. Prior to the incident, the biological mother was employed at [REDACTED] retail store where she worked part time; she also attended school at night for medical assistant. The primary pediatrician, Dr. [REDACTED], reported that she was shocked to hear of the incident, and that the biological mother was always doting about [REDACTED]; and that she would call with questions on what type of cereal to feed [REDACTED]. Immunizations were also current.

The mother denied having a history of drug or alcohol abuse, as well as [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The biological mother was unable to discuss her behavior or explain her reason for the attempt to harm her child, after

admitting that she was aware of her actions. Recommendations [REDACTED] [REDACTED] are for the biological mother to receive [REDACTED] services upon resolving all criminal charges. This recommendation has been written in the family service plan along with making sure that the biological mother participates in parenting classes. This case is opened for services, and has been transferred to the ongoing department as of 7/30/13 to ensure that the biological mother receives appropriate [REDACTED] support so that another incident does not occur. The biological mother will have supervised visitations with [REDACTED] at Montgomery County Children and Youth.

The biological father was brought into Montgomery County OCYF to meet with the caseworker and to learn more about what occurred with his daughter [REDACTED]. It was explained that the case would be opened to receive services from Montgomery County. The caseworker explained and reviewed the family service plan with the biological father, and obtained his signature. The biological father stated that he could not understand how the biological mother would do something to their baby. According to the biological father, the couple met two years ago, things were going well, [REDACTED] came several months later. He soon found out that the biological mother was involved in another relationship, and the two broke up. Since that time he has not had very much contact with [REDACTED], and that he did not feel comfortable going to the mother's home. The biological father went on to share one incident when the biological mother called him to say that she was going to leave [REDACTED] outside. He then called the paternal grandmother to go and get [REDACTED]. When the paternal grandmother arrived at the biological mother's home, the mother would not release [REDACTED] to the paternal grandmother. Instead she got into the car with [REDACTED] and began driving around to keep the paternal grandmother from [REDACTED]. After a period of time, the biological mother stopped and allowed the paternal grandmother to take baby [REDACTED]. The biological father is employed and works in the state of Maryland, he has offered to financially support [REDACTED], but the biological mother refuses to accept the offer. The biological father maintains contact with his parents; the paternal and maternal side of the family has been supportive throughout the investigation. The biological father feels that the maternal side of the family blames him for the incident.

Attorney, [REDACTED], has provided legal representation for the biological mother. The attorney has maintained contact with the county caseworker in regards to criminal charges, obtaining services on the family service plan, and supervised visitations; the attorney has received copies of all of the documents submitted to him by Montgomery County OCYF. The family of the biological mother has provided full support by attending all meetings at OCYF, obtaining legal representation, posted bail, and has taken on the responsibility of caring for [REDACTED] while the biological mother follows up with [REDACTED] and OCYF. The biological mother currently resides with her maternal great grandmother at [REDACTED] Norristown, PA. She continues to work at [REDACTED] retail store and attend school.

The [REDACTED] was completed on July 5, 2013 and was [REDACTED] as it [REDACTED] the definition of child abuse as it pertains to the CPSL.

Current Case Status:

Supervised visits occurred at the beginning of the investigation in the intake department. Once the case was transferred to ongoing services the visits were discontinued until results from the biological mother's [REDACTED] were received by OCY.

Visits are to resume on October 1, 2013 as stated by OCY management staff. [REDACTED] lives with the maternal grandmother. The county does not have custody however the county petitioned the court for the maternal grandmother to have custody. This decision was made per the mother's attorney, biological mother, and OCY.

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

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- Strengths:
None identified

- Deficiencies:
None identified

- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:
The county should consider providing resources to both parents during prenatal so that both are involved with receiving appropriate community supports.

The Department of Health should consider a warm line regarding parenting issues with referral to nursing personnel if necessary.

- Recommendations for Change at the State Level:
None

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The county conducted a thorough investigation. All required documents were submitted in a timely manner. Documentation demonstrated full assessments for the maternal and paternal side of the family.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

- **County Strengths:**
- The County presented all required case documents to OCYF for completion of full review of the case.

- **County Weaknesses:**

- The County did not provide the Regional Office with their report until 9/27/2013 after requests from the Regional Office.

- **Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:**

- None identified

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

The county will need to follow up with providing services for the family as identified on the Family Service Plan. This mother will need supportive [REDACTED] services to enhance her parenting skills.