



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:



Date of Birth: 07/28/2013

Date of Incident: 02/09/2014

Date of Oral Report: 02/09/2014

FAMILY KNOWN TO:

Cambria County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:

September 9, 2014

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. Cambria County convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report on 03/06/2014.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	07/28/2013
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1991
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2006
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2009
[REDACTED]	Maternal Grandmother (MGM)	[REDACTED] 1973
[REDACTED]	MGM's Paramour	[REDACTED] 1955
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED] 1991
[REDACTED]	Uncle	
[REDACTED]	Family Friend	

* Note: Not a member of the household.

Notification of Child (Near) Fatality:

Cambria County Children, Youth and Family Services received notification of the near fatality of [REDACTED], six (6) months of age at the time of incident, on 02/09/2014. The victim child's initial [REDACTED], performed at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center on 02/09/2014, indicated that the child had 2nd degree burns [REDACTED] [REDACTED], with Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, certified the child to be in serious condition due to suspected child abuse. The victim child's burns covered 20% of her body. On the same date, the victim child was transferred by [REDACTED] Ambulance [REDACTED] to University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's (UPMC) [REDACTED] located in Pittsburgh, PA. It was reported to Cambria County Children and Youth Services that the child was expected to survive. [REDACTED] at the UPMC [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also reported that there were scratches on the victim child's face, bruising on her shoulders, a contusion to her nose, bruising inside her right ear, and scratches under both of her ears.

The Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families (DPW/OCYF) was notified by Cambria County Children and Youth Services of the near fatality on the same date, 02/09/2014.

Summary of DPW Child (Near) Fatality Review Activities:

The DPW's Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed current and past case records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. Engagement and follow up communications were conducted with [REDACTED]. A Regional Office representative participated in the near fatality review meeting on 03/06/2014. The Department reviewed Cambria County Children and Youth Services' child protective service (CPS) procedures, case notes, steps taken to ensure safety of other children, the agency's minutes from the Near Fatality Review Team Meeting, and [REDACTED].

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

Records indicate that the family was known to Cambria County Children and Youth Services.

On 10/13/2011, allegations of parental drug and alcohol use and inadequate shelter were received by the children and youth agency. Following brief intervention services, it was determined that the identified children were never exposed to any safety threats even though [REDACTED], the mother of the children, did admit to using drugs and alcohol while the children were in the care of another caregiver. The case was closed on 12/09/11.

On 02/01/2013, information was received by the children and youth agency concerning the mother's teenage brother who was in a sexual offenders' program through the Cambria County [REDACTED]. No services were necessary or provided by the agency and the report was documented as information only.

On 07/29/2013, the agency received allegations from [REDACTED] concerning drug and alcohol use by the caregivers and concerns of the wellbeing of a newborn. [REDACTED] had three (3) positive drug screens during pregnancy all for marijuana. Two (2) of the drug screens were during her pregnancy and one (1) upon admission. The natural mother admitted to marijuana use frequently during the week and she denied any other drug use. No other drugs were indicated by the administered drug screens. Brief intervention services were provided and the newborn was referred to [REDACTED]. Records indicate that the agency utilized the In Home Safety Assessment and Management Process and determined that there were no safety threats manifested in the family and the children, including the newborn, were receiving appropriate care resulting in case closure on 09/27/2013.

Circumstances of Child (Near) Fatality and Related Case Activity:

The victim child was in the care of her biological father [REDACTED], at the time of the incident. [REDACTED] was caring for [REDACTED] at the home of his brother, [REDACTED], located at the [REDACTED] in [REDACTED], PA. Initially, the father reported

that child developed diaper rash, and he stated that he placed the child in the bath tub at which time the child started screaming and crying. According to the father, he removed the child from the bathtub and he could see her skin was bubbling and peeling. The father dressed the child and took her to an apartment of a family friend, [REDACTED] felt the child was soaking wet, took her clothes off, saw the burns and the two (2) of them immediately drove the child to Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center located in Johnstown, PA.

When the report was received by the children and youth agency, caseworkers implemented a safety plan whereas the alleged perpetrator, [REDACTED], and the victim child's biological mother, [REDACTED], each agreed that [REDACTED] would have no contact with the child. Cambria County Children and Youth Services notified the hospital's [REDACTED] Department about the incident and respective safety plan, and that if [REDACTED] would arrive at the hospital to see the victim child, they are to immediately notify the Cambria County Children and Youth Services. The mother has two (2) additional children of which [REDACTED] is not the biological father, and he does not have contact with these children, however, the safety plan does include a provision that he would have no contact with the mother's other children. The father reports that he has a son [REDACTED], but there is no contact or involvement with this child.

On 03/26/2014, Cambria County Children and Youth Services defined the case status as pending criminal court action. On 05/13/2014, the agency, through the criminal investigation and by the admission of the perpetrator, indicated [REDACTED] for the abuse of [REDACTED].

Current Case Status:

On 03/11/2014 at the completion of the agency's investigation, Cambria County Children and Youth Services accepted the family for services with the focus being parenting skills and the victim child's [REDACTED].

The victim child [REDACTED] UPMC [REDACTED] on 03/07/2014 and transferred [REDACTED]. During her stay at the [REDACTED], the child received [REDACTED]. On 03/27/2014, the child was [REDACTED] and placed in the care of her [REDACTED]. Since the victim child's release, she has received [REDACTED], [REDACTED] services through Cambria County [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. Cambria County Children and Youth Services continues to monitor the mother's efforts to ensure the child received the [REDACTED] are [REDACTED].

On 04/09/2014, the Johnstown Police arrested and charged [REDACTED] with intentionally burning the then six (6) month old child. [REDACTED] finally admitted to Pennsylvania State Police detectives that he intentionally put the baby in hot water because he was angry and frustrated. He confessed to law enforcement prior to participating in a lie detector interview. [REDACTED] stated to officers that submerged the child in hot water knowing that it was too hot. He referenced that he was frustrated with everyday life due to his inability to find a job and support himself. [REDACTED] was charged with aggravated assault and endangering welfare of

children and he was subsequently incarcerated in the [REDACTED] County Jail. On 04/14/2014, he posted bail, and he is currently awaiting criminal court proceedings via [REDACTED] County Commonwealth Court. A condition of [REDACTED] bail includes no contact with the victim child.

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

- Strengths:
 - The agency maintained consistent communication with the UPMC [REDACTED].
 - The agency expediently implemented safety plans to ensure safety of the victim child and the biological mother's other two (2) children.
- Deficiencies:
 - No deficiencies were identified.
- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:
 - No recommendations were identified.
- Recommendations for Change at the State Level:
 - No recommendations were identified.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The report from Cambria County Children and Youth Services was received by the Regional Office on 07/22/2014. The report details the topics that were discussed during the Near Fatality Review meeting held on 03/06/2014. The children and youth agency conducted the investigation and ensured that the Cambria County [REDACTED], was apprised for their progress and final outcome. There were no deficiencies identified.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

- County Strengths:
 - Cambria County Children and Youth Services was immediate in informing the Central Region office of the near fatality of [REDACTED].
 - The agency has developed an effective Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) community team; members of which represent a wide array of community services and supports. The MDT team was supportive of the agency's response and actions to the report on [REDACTED].
 - Collaboration was evident between the agency and medical practitioners and hospital personnel.
 - The agency was diligent in ensuring that the victim child received and continues to receive [REDACTED] after her [REDACTED].

- The agency developed a family service plan specific to the identified needs of the child and family.
- County Weaknesses:
 - The children and youth agency needs to be diligent in obtaining [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] after an identified child is [REDACTED]. *(Note: This weakness did not prevent the victim child from [REDACTED].)*
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:
 - At the time of this report, the Regional Office has not identified areas on non-compliance.

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

The Regional Office completed interviews and obtained records as required. The agency provided appropriate services to the family during the investigation and ensured the safety of other children relevant to the case. The case is currently active with Cambria County Children and Youth Services. The Regional Office has established no recommendations at this time.