



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

**REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:**



**Date of Birth: October 3, 1998**  
**Date of Incident: September 6, 2013**  
**Date of Oral Report: September 6, 2013**

**FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:**

Armstrong County Children Youth and Families

**REPORT FINALIZED ON:**

**July 3, 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))



ACCYS on-call caseworker contacted ChildLine to confirm the near fatality report and requested any additional information pertaining to this report.

**Summary of DPW Child Near Fatality Review Activities:**

The Western Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families (Department) obtained and reviewed all records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. The regional office also participated in the Act 33 County Internal Fatality Review Team meeting on September 25, 2013.

**Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:**

On October 21, 2005, Armstrong County Children and Youth Services (ACCYS) received a [REDACTED] alleging that the child had been sexually abused by a babysitter. On December 13, 2005, this report was Indicated and the case was closed at intake.

**Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:**

On September 2, 2013, the child complained of abdominal and back pain, nausea, vomiting and a fever. The child reported the symptoms to her father. The child asked her father to take her to the doctor. The father stated that he had to go to work and did not have any money to take the child to the doctor's office.

On September 4, 2013, the child went to the school nurse, the school nurse called the father and advised him to take the child to the doctor. The father stated that he would, but never took her for medical treatment.

On September 6, 2013, the child called her mother who lives in [REDACTED] and asked her mother to come and get her, so she could be taken to the hospital. The mother stated that she would be coming to Pennsylvania to take her daughter to the hospital. The mother then called a friend to take her daughter to the hospital. She then called the father and asked him to take the child to the local gas station to meet the mother's friend, so the friend could see the child. The mother's friend transported the child to [REDACTED] in her vehicle.

The child arrived at the [REDACTED] Emergency Room with severe abdominal pain. The child's [REDACTED] of the child's abdomen showed a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that the child's condition worsened due to the father not seeking medical treatment for the child. [REDACTED], a physician at [REDACTED], certified the child to be in critical condition. The physician stated the child would survive, but it would be a long recovery. He also stated that this situation was made more complicated because the issue was not addressed when the child first spoke to her father about the symptoms. The child received [REDACTED] and was transferred via medical helicopter to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh. A team of medical specialists from [REDACTED]

██████████ were present during the life flight from ██████████ to assist during the transport.

On September 6, 2013, at 9:45 pm ACCYS on-call caseworker received a call from the Department on-call worker informing them of the near fatality report of the child. It was reported to the county that it was a numbered report due to medical neglect. The county on-call caseworker reported to the Department's on-call worker that they were already contacted by ██████████ Emergency Room staff concerning this child. At 10:45 pm, the ACCYS on-call caseworker contacted ChildLine to confirm the near fatality report and requested any additional information pertaining to this report. The report was confirmed. The ACCYS on-call caseworker contacted Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth and Families (ACCYF) to conduct a courtesy visit to see the child at ██████████ Armstrong County was also informed of another child residing in the home, unknown of the age and location of the child.

On September 7, 2013, ACCYS determined the child's sibling was 18 years old and resided in the father's home. ACCYS contacted ██████████ to get an update on the child and it was reported that the child was doing fine and that the mother did arrive and was with her daughter. The ██████████ staff reported there had been no contact from the father to check on the condition of his daughter. The ██████████ staff also stated that the mother appeared appropriate in her interactions with her daughter.

On September 10, 2013, the caseworker met with the child and the mother at the hospital. The mother informed the ACCYS caseworker that she had physical and legal custody of her daughter; however, a few months prior, while the child and her 18 year old sibling were visiting, the father asked for the children to remain with him and she agreed. She stated that she maintained regular contact with her children while they resided with their father. She stated that, upon ██████████ the child would be returning with her to ██████████. The mother also stated that she did not feel the father maliciously withheld medical care for her child, but did not excuse his behavior.

On September 11, 2013, ACCYS received the documentation from Allegheny County OCYF regarding their visit with the child. It was reported that the child had a ██████████ and ██████████. It was reported that the child was also being ██████████. The child was in stable condition but will remain in the hospital ██████████. The child was deemed safe in the hospital setting.

On September 16, 2013, the child ██████████ into her mother's care and custody.

On September 17, 2013, the ACCYS caseworker spoke with the mother concerning the child and the mother reported that they had returned to ██████████ and her daughter was doing well. The mother reported that a ██████████ came to her home to see the child today. She also reported that the child would be living with her until she turns 18 and had not had any contact with the father.

On September 19, 2013, after several attempts and unannounced visits to the father's home, the caseworker was able to meet with the father and older sibling. The local law enforcement office was aware of the meeting and chose not to attend. The father stated that he believed that the child only had the stomach flu and that he thought she was starting her menstrual cycle which explained the further stomach pain. He also stated that, due to the lack of insurance, he was hesitant to take the child to the doctor. The father stated he was unaware that his daughter was in the hospital. He had thought that she was at her maternal grandmother's home, and that was his reasoning for not contacting [REDACTED] to check on his daughter's condition.

On September 25, 2013, ACCYS conducted a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting. It was determined that this was a case of "Medical Neglect", and that the report would be submitted as indicated. The CY-48 was submitted to Childline as Indicated based on medical evidence of medical neglect.

On September 25, 2013, ACCYS closed the case due to the youth residing in [REDACTED] with her mother. ACCYS did have contact with the local Children and Youth agency in the mother's home county. No reports were found on the mother and her children in [REDACTED]. The mother's interactions between her and her daughter were deemed appropriate, so the case was not transferred to [REDACTED].

**Current Case Status:**

Case was closed with ACCYS on September 25, 2013.

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

Strengths:

The county responded in a timely manner and gathered the information concerning the incident. In addition, the county was in compliance with all statutes and regulations and services to the children and families.

Deficiencies:

None were noted.

Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:

None were noted.

Recommendations for Change at the State Level:

The review team recommended that ChildLine should contact the local CYF on call worker, even though they notified OCYF at the state level.

**Department Review of County Internal Report:**

The County report was received on November 6, 2013 and was reviewed. The Department is in agreement with the county on its findings.

**Department of Public Welfare Findings:**

County Strengths:

The County completed the Act 33/MDT meeting in a timely manner and had all the required people present. The County completed the Act 33/MDT report in a timely manner and submitted it to the Department. The County also ensured the safety of the child.

County Weaknesses:

None were determined.

Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:

No areas of non-compliance.

**Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:**

None