



## **REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:**

[REDACTED]

**Date of Birth: 01/03/2015**

**Date of Incident: 02/27/2015**

**Date of Report to ChildLine: 02/28/2015**

[REDACTED]

### **FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY AT TIME OF INCIDENT OR WITHIN THE PRECEDING 16 MONTHS:**

Allegheny County Office of Children Youth and Family

### **REPORT FINALIZED ON:**

08/06/2015

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. Section 6349 (b))

**Reason for Review:**

Pursuant to the Child Protective Services Law, the Department, through OCYF, must conduct a review and provide a written report of all cases of suspected child abuse that result in a 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.

The Child Protective Services Law also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a fatality or near fatality is substantiated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the report to ChildLine.

Allegheny County Children Youth and Families (ACOCYF) has convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 03/31/2015 and 05/11/2015.

**Family Constellation:**

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
██████████	Victim Child	01/03/2015
██████████	Mother	██████████1989
██████████	Father	██████████1989

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

The Western Region Office of Children Youth and Families (WRO) reviewed the case record pertaining to the ██████████ Family. The WRO staff conducted phone interviews with the Intake Caseworker and the Ongoing Caseworker. The WRO participated in both the county's Act 33 meetings on 03/31/2015 and 05/11/2015. During this meeting, medical professionals and law enforcement presented their information. The Intake and Ongoing caseworkers presented the current information.

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

The family had no involvement with Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth and Families (ACOCYF) prior to this incident.

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

On 02/28/2015, ACOCYF received a report from ██████████ regarding an alleged abuse of an eight week old infant. The victim child was taken to the emergency room on 02/28/2015 with seizure like symptoms. The child was fussier than usual that day and was vomiting throughout the night. Victim Child presented with "twitching" in the morning. A family member suggested to the mother to take the victim child to the Emergency Room to be

evaluated. The mother and father transported the victim child to their local hospital. The initial testing revealed the victim child had a [REDACTED]. The child was then transported to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh (CHP) for further assessment and treatment.

At CHP, it was determined that the victim child had [REDACTED]. Victim child sustained [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Father admitted to shaking the victim child on one occasion. It was the hospital's finding that due to the severity of the injuries there would have to have been multiple incidents over a period of 7-10 days. This time period was consistent with mother returning back to work from her maternity leave. This was the time period where the father was alone with the victim child for an extended period of time. Mother and father worked opposite shifts for the care of the victim child.

Father was arrested and charged with Aggravated Assault (2 counts), Reckless Endangering another Person, and Endangering Welfare of Children. Father pled guilty on 06/25/2015 to Aggravated Assault, Endangering Welfare of Children, and Recklessly Endangering another Person. He was given a sentence of 6-12 months of confinement and 5 years probation, to run consecutive. He is to complete parenting classes and abide by all conditions set forth by ACOCYF.

The mother moved to Fayette County with her family for the protection and care of her child. The case was not opened with Fayette County Children and Youth. There are [REDACTED] in the home.

On 3/27/15, ACOCYF submitted the Child Protective Services Investigation Report with a finding of "pending criminal court". On 08/07/2015, ACOCYF upgraded the Child Protective Services Investigation Report to a founded status due to the father being convicted of crimes associated with the victim child's injuries. ACOCYF closed their case.

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

Strengths:

- ACOCYF responded to the referral in a timely manner. The caseworker visited the family at the hospital within the first few hours of receiving the report.
- ACOCYF worked in collaboration with the local police department in investigation the incidents.

Deficiencies:

- ACOCYF did not identify deficiencies in their report.

Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies:

- None

Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service provider to prevent child abuse:

- The Review Team recommended that ACOCYF and the adult criminal justice system engage in discussions on improved coordination of information and collaboration for the protection of children in families with dual system involvement including sharing information related to conditions of bail and probation.

**Department Review of County Internal Report:**

WRO received the Allegheny County Child Near Fatality Team report on 07/23/2015. WRO finds the County's internal report to be an accurate reflection of the Act 33 meetings. The report content and findings is representative of what was discussed during the meeting.

**Department of Human Services Findings:**

County Strengths:

- ACOCYF worked in collaboration with local law enforcement during the investigation.
- ACOCYF encouraged the use of family members to assist mother.
- ACOCYF was in compliance with regulatory requirements in completing the investigation.

County Weaknesses:

- ACOCYF completed a safety plan that was in direct violation of a court order. Father was court ordered to have no contact with the child. ACOCYF completed a safety plan that allowed the father to have supervised contacts. The supervised visits did occur. ACOCYF recognized this as an issue and one of the counties recommendations was to have better communication with the adult criminal justice system, so this does not occur in the future.

Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.

- None

**Department of Human Services Recommendations:**

ACOCYF needs to continue their collaboration with law enforcement. The Agency needs to establish procedures to obtain copies of court orders of criminal court cases that they are investigating incidents with law enforcement.