



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE FATALITY:

Seanita Brown

Date of Birth: January 12, 2009

Date of Death or Date of Incident: July 16, 2013

Date of Oral Report: July 16, 2013

FAMILY KNOWN TO:

Philadelphia Department of Human Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:

03/01/2015

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. 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. On August 2, 2013, the county had convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report.

Family Constellation:

| <u>Name:</u> | <u>Relationship:</u> | <u>Date of Birth:</u> |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Seanita Brown | victim child | 01/12/2009 |
| [REDACTED] | sibling | [REDACTED] 2006 |
| [REDACTED] | sibling | [REDACTED] /2012 |
| [REDACTED] | mother | [REDACTED] /1988 |
| [REDACTED] | mother's paramour | [REDACTED] /1987 |

Notification of Child Fatality:

On July 15, 2013, victim child was taken to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia by biological mother and biological mother's paramour. On July 16, 2013 Department of Human Services received a [REDACTED] report stating that child was pronounced dead at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Mother reports that victim child reported that she was stinky and wanted to take a bath. Mother informed child not to stay in the bath too long. Mother checked on child due to child being too quiet and realized that child was in the tub face up. Mother and paramour took child to the hospital where they tried to resuscitate her, but were not successful. Child was pronounced dead.

Summary of DPW Child Fatality Review Activities:

The Southeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed all current and past case records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. The county review was held on August 2, 2013.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

On December 18, 2007, a [REDACTED] investigation was conducted and the results were [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

On June 12, 2008, a [REDACTED] investigation was conducted and the [REDACTED] and have been expunged from [REDACTED].

On June 8, 2011, a [REDACTED] investigation was conducted due to [REDACTED] being left home unsupervised. [REDACTED]

On September 9, 2012, a [REDACTED] report was made stating that the father hit a 6 week old infant, and had hit [REDACTED] in the past which resulted in [REDACTED] residing with a relative. This report was rejected because it did not meet the Hotline Guided Decision-making criteria for inappropriate discipline.

On June 10, 2013, a [REDACTED] report was made and a supplemental report was made on June 12, 2013 due to Seanita having bruising. Seanita had a bruise near her chin and an open wound on her back that was surrounded by a bruise. Seanita reported that her cousin who was also a child hit her in the face with a truck; biological mother did not want the cousin to get in trouble for hitting Seanita but admitted that this was true. The supplemental stated that Seanita suffered from a fractured arm two months previously. Ms. [REDACTED] reported that Seanita was at a family friend's house and the family friend's son [REDACTED] pushed Seanita down the steps causing a broken arm and bruising. [REDACTED]. However, due to the many injuries incurred by Seanita, the family was referred to a voluntary program called [REDACTED]. The mother agreed to the program on 07/03/2013 however subsequently cancelled one appointment and was not available for the second appointment scheduled for 07/10/2013.

Circumstances of Child Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 07/16/2013, victim child was taken to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia by [REDACTED] biological mother, and biological mother's paramour. Upon arrival, child's heart stopped; hospital staff attempted CPR and [REDACTED]. Child did not respond. Child had bruises on her face and a foreign object in her throat. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Biological mother reported that child reported that she was stinky and wanted to take a bath. Biological mother informed child not to stay in there too long. Biological mother continued to clean the house. Biological mother checked on child due to child being too quiet and realized that child was in the tub face up and unresponsive. Biological mother reported that child's bruises on her face came from another child at the daycare. Biological mother reported that for two days a five year old at the daycare beat child from head to toe. The hospital reported that the biological mother cried for a couple of seconds at the hospital and then called her paramour, telling him that child was dead. The paramour at the time left the hospital to take an 11-month old sibling to a relative. Child's lips were scarred; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stating that victim child sustained serious physical injuries [REDACTED] resulting in death.

Current Case Status:

- On 07/18/2013, [REDACTED] was arrested and is currently incarcerated at [REDACTED] and pled guilty to endangering the welfare of a child, conspiracy to commit aggravated assault and involuntary manslaughter.
- On 07/19/2013, [REDACTED] paramour, [REDACTED], was arrested and is incarcerated at SCI [REDACTED]. He is charged with murder, conspiracy, aggravated assault, endangering the welfare of a child and involuntary manslaughter.
- One sibling [REDACTED] resides in a [REDACTED] foster home and the other [REDACTED] continues to remain with the maternal grandmother [REDACTED].

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

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. The Department of Human Services convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report on August 2, 2013.

- Strengths:
All the children's safety and well being were addressed by DHS in a timely manner and DHS was in compliance with statutes and regulations.
- Deficiencies:
There were no deficiencies identified.
- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:
There were no recommendations.
- Recommendations for Change at the State Level:
There were no recommendations.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The Department agrees with the findings of the Act 33 review. Philadelphia DHS conducted the review timely.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

- County Strengths:

The victim child and the siblings' safety were addressed by the Hotline Social Work Services Manager and the Multidisciplinary Team Social Worker in a timely manner. The MDT SW conducted a thorough [REDACTED] Investigation.

- County Weaknesses:

There were no areas of concern identified.

- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:

There were no areas of concern identified.

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

The Department does not have any recommendations regarding this incident. The Philadelphia Department of Human Services did take appropriate actions when allegations arose and attempted to place voluntary services into the home. Philadelphia DHS completed a thorough investigation.