



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:



Date of Birth: 08/28/2013
Date of Incident: 10/10/2013
Date of Oral Report: 10/10/2013

FAMILY KNOWN TO:

Union County

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
03/23/2015

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. Union County has convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report on 11/12/13.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
██████████	mother	██████████ 1993
██████████	father	██████████ 1989
██████████	victim child	08/28/2013

Notification of Child Near Fatality:

On 10/01/13 the child was seen by his pediatrician with no injuries noted. On 10/10/13, the mother took the 6-week-old child again to see his primary care physician as the child was acting fussy. The doctor noticed that the child was twitching and he suspected seizures. He also noted small bruises on the child’s back, neck and scrotum. He instructed the mother to take the child immediately to Geisinger Medical Center. The child was seen at Geisinger Hospital ██████████ room the same day with the following injuries; ██████████ and numerous bruises to the child’s face, arms, back, knee and scrotum. The child was admitted to the ██████████ due to uncontrollable seizures. The treating physician at Geisinger, certified the child to be in serious condition based on suspected child abuse. The doctor believed the child would survive. Union County Children and Youth Services was notified on the same day of the above findings.

Summary of DPW Child Near Fatality Review Activities:

The Central Region Office of Children Youth and Families obtained and reviewed all current case records pertaining to the ██████████ family. Medical records from Geisinger Medical Center were also obtained. Follow up interviews with caseworkers ██████████ and ██████████ and Chief ██████████ were conducted on 10/16/13. Regional staff also participated in the County internal Fatality Review Team meeting on 11/12/13 where ██████████, treating physician, gave a detailed account of the injuries and time frames of occurrence.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

On 8/28/13, the agency received a call from ██████████ that ██████████ tested positive for marijuana after giving birth to her son, ██████████ The

family was open for GPS services. During the assessment period, on the initial home visit, Ms. [REDACTED] was instructed to stop breast feeding and put the infant on formula until she could provide a negative drug test. During the next 4 weeks, there were 2 more home visits and the mother tested negative for drug use. The baby was referred to [REDACTED]; however, the mother was resistant to starting this service. The father was also tested and his results were negative each time. The agency was still providing Intake services regarding parenting to the family at the time of the incident. The agency was assuring that mom was not breast feeding and switched to formula.

Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:

The victim child was taken to the Geisinger Medical Center's [REDACTED] on 10/10/13 after being seen by his primary care physician in the morning. The child's peridatirician noticed that the child was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] also noted that the child had small [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] instructed the mother to go to the Geisinger Medical Center's [REDACTED] immediately and the baby was subsequently found to have [REDACTED] several small bruises, all consistent with non-accidental trauma." The next day the victim child underwent further [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The child's mother reported that the child's demeanor had changed significantly since October 1, 2013, the date he saw his pediatrician without any injuries noted from that exam. He was fussy, constipated, and not easy to console as usual. She reported that he seemed to be deteriorating over the course of "about a week" before he was admitted in serious condition to GMC [REDACTED] police along with Union C&Y conducted interviews of the mother, father and paternal grandmother. Due to the time frames of the injuries, both the father and paternal grandmother were ruled out as perpetrators by law enforcement and the alleged perpetrator appeared to be the mother. The CY 48 was completed on 12/05/13 with an indicated status against the mother. The mother was charged with attempted homicide and placed into the [REDACTED] prison.

The child's father was found under the influence of drugs subsequent to his son's discharge into care and was admitted for [REDACTED] rather than going back to jail for parole violation. Due to not completing his [REDACTED], he was placed back in [REDACTED] prison.

Current Case Status:

[REDACTED] was discharged into foster care. A home study was completed on the paternal grandmother, and the plan was to move him in March to her home. However the agency was subsequently informed that she uses drugs and when she was tested, she was positive for [REDACTED] and therefore was eliminated as a resource. The mother remains in [REDACTED] county jail and her preliminary hearing was conducted on 3/6/14. The case will be headed for trial. [REDACTED] remains in [REDACTED]. Both attorneys were notified by C&Y that visitation is available if requested. Children and Youth continue to monitor the placement of [REDACTED]

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

- Strengths: The county agency complied with regulations and response time as required.
- Deficiencies: The county's report did not reference any specific identified weaknesses
- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level: The county report did not reference any specific changes or recommendations at the county level.
- Recommendations for Change at the State Level: The county report did not reference any specific changes or recommendations at the state level.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The Department reviewed the submission of Union County Children and Youth Agency's report regarding this case. The county report was received on 11/12/13. Due to the circumstances of this case, there are no areas to dispute or concur with identified in the report.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

County Strengths: Upon review of the documents associated with this particular case it would appear there is a positive working collaboration between law enforcement and the county agency. The agency has a very good working relationship with law enforcement and the medical staff at Geisinger Medical Center. Their input and availability was vital in the agency's investigation and final disposition in the finding of indicated.

County Weaknesses: The circumstances of this incident and review of the county's case did not identify any systemic weakness.

Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance: The review of the county case file notes and medical records did not find any areas of non-compliance.

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

There were no recommendations offered.