



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF



Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 2009
Date of incident: 03/06/2011

**The victim child was previously known to
Blair County Children, Youth and Families**

This report is confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released.

(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.

Family Constellation:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Relationship</u> | <u>Date of Birth</u> |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| [REDACTED] | Victim child | [REDACTED]/09 |
| [REDACTED] | Father | [REDACTED]/79 |
| [REDACTED] | Mother | [REDACTED]/81 |
| [REDACTED] | Sibling | [REDACTED]/07 |
| [REDACTED] | Maternal grandmother | |
| [REDACTED] | Maternal grandfather | |
| [REDACTED] | Paternal grandfather | |
| [REDACTED] | Paternal grandmother | |

Notification of (Near) Fatality:

The victim child allegedly went to sleep at 3:00 pm on 03/05/11 and did not wake up. The child's parents went to wake the child up at 10:00 pm that same day. The child was non-responsive and had shallow breathing. The parents called the ambulance and the child was taken to Tyrone Hospital ER via ambulance. The child was given [REDACTED] and the child woke up. A toxicology screening was completed and the child tested [REDACTED]. The child's father reported that there is [REDACTED] in the house. According to [REDACTED] of Tyrone Hospital, the child must have got into the [REDACTED] stated that there was a lack of supervision due to the pills not being secured. The child was transferred to Geissinger Hospital [REDACTED] via an ambulance.

Blair County Children, Youth and Families (BCCYF) saw the victim child at Tyrone Hospital before being transferred to Geissinger Hospital. The safety plan for the victim child was that upon his release from Geissinger Hospital on 3/7/11, he would be released to his maternal grandparents in Tyrone, PA. A Blair County caseworker conducted a safety check on the maternal grandparent's home and completed clearances.

The parents were permitted to visit the child supervised by the maternal grandmother or maternal grandfather in the grandparent's home. The doctors at Geissinger Hospital stated that child responded to [REDACTED] and the child's condition was completely resolved by the time of discharge. The child

was scheduled for a follow up visit with his Primary Care Physician, [REDACTED], after discharge. There were no health issues that resulted from this incident.

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

The Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed all past and current records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. Interviews were conducted with the Blair County Children, Youth and Families caseworkers and supervisors involved in the case.

Case Chronology:

Previous CY involvement:

Blair County Children, Youth and Families previous history with the family included a [REDACTED] received in April 2007 with allegations of the parents using drugs and leaving the child home alone. Blair County Children, Youth and Families put [REDACTED] in the home and the county agency reported that circumstances improved. The referral was closed during the 60 day assessment period.

Blair County Children, Youth and Families received a second [REDACTED] on the family on 05/04/10. The allegations were that the parents were using drugs, the child [REDACTED], was outside without clothes on and the home was dirty. The parents were drug tested and tested positive for [REDACTED]. The parents had old prescriptions in the home. The mother had an old prescription for [REDACTED], and the father had an old prescription for [REDACTED]. The other allegations were not substantiated. Blair Children, Youth and Families closed the family at intake, as the parents had prescriptions for the [REDACTED], although old prescriptions, Blair County Children, Youth and Families did not have sufficient evidence to substantiate drug abuse.

Circumstances of Child's Near Fatality:

The victim child's sibling, [REDACTED] went with the maternal grandmother, [REDACTED], on 03/06/11. [REDACTED] was seen by the Blair County Children, Youth and Families caseworker on 03/06/11 at the maternal grandparent's residence.

Blair County Children, Youth and Families caseworker saw the victim child and his sibling again on 03/07/11 in the maternal grandparent's home. As part of the safety plan, unannounced home visits were made by Blair County Children, Youth and Families caseworker. The parent's were permitted to visit the children supervised by the maternal grandmother in her home. The maternal grandparents agreed to contact the local police if the parents attempted to take either child.

During the course of the [REDACTED] conducted by Blair County Children, Youth and Families the parent admitted that after putting the child to bed, the father went out and purchased [REDACTED]. The child's mother admitted that both she and the father used the drug the night of the incident and were under the influence. The parents alleged that the pills that the child ingested came from the paternal grandmother who also lives in the home who is suffering from [REDACTED]. She takes pain medication and allegedly drops pills occasionally. The paternal grandmother stated that her pills are locked up, and she never drops pills. The Tyrone Police confirmed that they saw where the paternal grandmother locks her pills in her bedroom. Neither the Tyrone nor Geissinger Hospital could verify how many pills the child ingested or what type of [REDACTED] was taken. [REDACTED] from Geissinger Hospital stated that the dosage could have been one pill or more; however, it was certainly a lethal dosage.

The parent's originally stated that the child had stumbled and hit his head on the floor between 02:00 pm & 03:00 pm on 03/05/11. The child's parents thought that was the reason the child was non-responsive when they attempted to wake the child at 09:15pm. The parent's did not call 911 until 10:16pm. The child's father stated that when he attempted to wake the child at 09:15pm he had trouble waking him, so he called his father, [REDACTED], who also lives in the home to assist in waking the child. When the child would not respond, they decided to call 911.

At the time the child was transported to the Tyrone Hospital, the parents thought the child was being treated for a head injury. Once the child and the parents arrived at the Tyrone Hospital, the parents could not understand why the child was given the [REDACTED], since they thought he was being treated for a [REDACTED], not a [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] on 03/21/11 for the victim child ingesting an undetermined amount of [REDACTED] which result in the child's serious health condition. The parents admitted to being under the influence of [REDACTED] at the time the child ingested the pills.

Current / most recent status of case:

No charges are pending for this incident. The Tyrone Police informed the county agency that they were not pressing charges. The father, [REDACTED] has been incarcerated in Blair County Jail since 08/08/11 for unrelated charges that include possession of marijuana. The mother, [REDACTED] is homeless and recently arrested for unrelated charges. She is awaiting her hearing.

The children are residing with their maternal grandparents. The children are currently visiting with their mother once a week. The visits are supervised, in the community. The father was included in the visits until his incarceration. The

children are receiving [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] began preschool on 08/29/11.

Both parents [REDACTED], but have not maintained sobriety. The parents have not maintained stable housing. The children seem to be doing well according to the Blair County Children, Youth and Families. Blair County Children, Youth and Families have not supported reunification with the children and their parents until both parents maintain stable housing and maintain sobriety. All parties continue to follow the informal placement of the children in the maternal grandparents' home. The safety plan continues to be followed. Blair County Children, Youth and Families monitor compliance with announced and unannounced home visits with the maternal grandparents and contact with children's mother. There have been no concerns regarding compliance with the safety plan. The maternal grandmother is willing to continue to care for the children. The agency will continue to provide ongoing services to the family.

Services to children and families:

The victim child has been placed informally with the maternal grandparents since 03/07/11 upon his [REDACTED] from Geissinger Hospital, and his sister has been placed in the same home since 03/06/11 as part of the safety plan. Blair County Children, Youth and Families did not take court action, as the parents voluntarily permit the children to reside with the maternal grandparents. The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for serious physical injury on 03/21/11, and the case was opened for services on that date. Blair County Children, Youth and Families referred both children to [REDACTED] and the victim child's sister is in preschool. The parents have been referred to [REDACTED].

County Strengths and Deficiencies as identified by the County's Near Fatality Report:

The Near Fatality Team Report reflected that the agency had conducted a thorough investigation and that the conclusion to indicate both parents and open the family for ongoing services was necessary and appropriate. The team further agreed that court intervention should occur if the family was not compliant with the safety plan and recommended services.

County Recommendations for changes at the Local Levels as identified by Fatality Report:

Blair County Coroner, [REDACTED] recommended that a protocol be developed with Hospital Emergency Rooms that children that come to the ER with a significant injury, have blood drawn, logged and tested. Urine testing indicates opiates; however, blood testing would indicate the type of opiate.

Recommendations for changes at the State Level:

None recommended.

Central Region Findings:

Blair County Children, Youth and Families responded and acted appropriately to the child abuse allegations and implemented a safety plan for the victim child and his sibling. The [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The victim child obtained and ingested an unknown amount of [REDACTED] while under both parents care. The child is currently in good condition and is healthy. This case was presented to the county MDT on 03/17/11, which recommended the case be indicated and opened for services.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance issues:

There were no non-compliance issues identified during the review.