



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:

[REDACTED]

Date of Birth: 08/31/2012

Date of Incident: 01/24/2014

Date of Oral Report: 01/24/2014

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:

Cambria County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:

08/13/14

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. Cambria County convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report on 02/13/2014.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
[REDACTED]	Daughter / Victim Child (VC)	08/31/2012
[REDACTED]	Biological Mother of VC	[REDACTED] 1990
* [REDACTED]	Biological Father / Alleged Perpetrator	[REDACTED] 1987
* [REDACTED]	Paternal Half-Sibling	[REDACTED] 2011
* [REDACTED]	Paternal Grandmother	[REDACTED] 1971
* [REDACTED]	Brother of [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 2003
** [REDACTED]	Paternal Half-Sibling	[REDACTED] 2011
** [REDACTED]	Biological Mother of [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 1992
** [REDACTED]	Biological Mother of [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 1992

Note:

- * The incident occurred at the father's residence. The identified persons are members of this household.
- **The identified persons are not members of the either household

Notification of Child (Near) Fatality:

Cambria County Children, Youth and Family Services received notification of the near fatality of [REDACTED], 17 months of age at the time of incident, on 01/24/2014. [REDACTED] with the [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] (victim child), a previously healthy girl, was admitted on 01/24/2014 after a reported fall down a flight of stairs. The victim child sustained [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the [REDACTED] certified that the child was in critical condition.

The Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families (DPW/OCYF) was notified by Cambria County Children and Youth Services of the near fatality on the same date, 01/24/2014.

Summary of DPW Child (Near) Fatality Review Activities:

The DPW's Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families obtained and reviewed all current and past case records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. Engagement and follow up interviews were conducted with the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] consistently communicated with the Department's Human Services Representative about the case. The Department reviewed Cambria County Children and Youth Services child protective services (CPS) procedures, case notes, steps taken to ensure safety of other children, and the agency's minutes from the Near Fatality Review Team Meeting that occurred on 02/13/2014. Ms. [REDACTED] was diligent in her efforts to secure medical information from [REDACTED] which were available for review by the Regional Office.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

The agency reports that there has been no current involvement with the victim child.

Circumstances of Child (Near) Fatality and Related Case Activity:

The victim child left her mother's care to spend time with her father beginning on 01/22/2014. The visit occurred at [REDACTED] home at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] stated that she and the child's father communicated via Facebook since the father did not have a telephone. She stated that the father messaged her on Wednesday, 01/22/2014 to inform her that the dog had scratched the child face because the dog was excited and the pet did not know the child. [REDACTED] reported she received another Facebook message from the father on Thursday, 01/23/2014, that he had to grab the child by the back of her shirt so that she would not fall off the couch. A second message on the same date indicated that the child tried to lift herself up onto a bike in the kitchen resulting in a bruise under her chin. The father subsequently asked if he could keep the child until Saturday, 01/25/2014, to which the mother agreed. [REDACTED] stated that she did not have any additional communication with the father of the child until the time the child was admitted to the hospital.

[REDACTED], the victim child's [REDACTED], was the child's caretaker at the time of the incident. He reported that his son, [REDACTED], age two (2), and the victim child were visiting with him at his home. [REDACTED] resided in the home of his parents in [REDACTED]. The children and the father were playing in his room which is located in the attic of the home. [REDACTED] stated that he was putting a movie in for the children to watch when he heard "thuds" and saw the victim child at the bottom of 13 uncarpeted steps. He reports that he ran to the victim child and found her to be okay at the onset but then reports that the child went limp. [REDACTED] reported that he yelled for his brother, [REDACTED], who placed some water on the victim child's head in attempt to revive her. [REDACTED] then yelled for the father to call 911.

The victim child was transported by ambulance to [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] and then transferred to [REDACTED] via Life Flight due her

injuries. [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] stated the victim child's injuries included: [REDACTED]

When the report was received by the children and youth agency, caseworkers implemented a safety plan stating that the perpetrator would have no contact with the victim child, the other two children in the home, and his younger brother. As part of the safety plan, [REDACTED] would reside with a family member, [REDACTED] where no children reside. All parties agreed to and signed the safety plan document. Once notified of the near fatality, Cambria County Children and Youth Services also ensured the safety of the alleged perpetrator's other two (2) children belonging to two (2) different biological mothers. [REDACTED], biological mother of [REDACTED] signed a formal safety plan agreement stating that she would ensure that the child's father would have no contact with the child. [REDACTED], biological mother of [REDACTED] also signed a formal safety plan stating that she will ensure no contact between the child and [REDACTED]. When [REDACTED] was later arrested, a stipulation of his bail (if he would be able to post) included no contact with any individual under that age of 18 as an additional step to ensure the safety of the children involved in the case. At the time of this report, the father has not admitted to injuring the child.

On 02/20/2014, Cambria County Children and Youth Services, through the medical evidence and through their investigation, indicated [REDACTED] for the abuse of [REDACTED].

Current Case Status:

When Cambria County Children and Youth Services completed their investigation on 02/20/2014, the agency decided not to open the family for services. It was determined that there were no abuse or neglect concerns with the mother's care of the victim child. Information gathered after 02/20/2014 was abstracted from medical records. From the date of the incident, the victim child continued to receive [REDACTED]

On 04/22/2014, the child [REDACTED] to the care of her [REDACTED] listed the child's [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The victim child will need varying support services for the rest of her life. During a legal proceeding involving the victim child's father on 03/24/2014, [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] stated the child may never see, never walk, and never talk because of these injuries.

[REDACTED], it was planned that [REDACTED] will be made available to the family to assist with [REDACTED] management.

[REDACTED]. Prior to the incident, the victim child and her mother resided at [REDACTED]. At the time of the child's [REDACTED], her mother moved in with the maternal grandparents at [REDACTED]. It was noted that the move would allow more effective access to the services that may meet the child's needs.

On 02/14/2014, the [REDACTED] Police Department charged [REDACTED], with two (2) counts of aggravated assault and one (1) count endangering the welfare of children. Upon his arrest, [REDACTED] was confined to the [REDACTED] County Prison with a bond set at \$200,000. On 3/24/2014, [REDACTED] was ordered to stand trial at the conclusion of a preliminary hearing in front of District Judge [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]. At the time of this report, [REDACTED] remains incarcerated at the [REDACTED] County Prison.

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

- Strengths:
 - The agency maintained consistent communication with the Children's' Hospital of Pittsburgh.
 - The agency [REDACTED] maintained consistent communication with the Central Region Office.
 - The agency communicated with Westmoreland County Children and Youth Services to make them aware of the possibility that this child would be residing in their county after her discharge from the medical center.
 - The agency expediently ensured the safety of the alleged perpetrator's other two (2) children

- Deficiencies:
 - No deficiencies were identified.

- Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:
 - No recommendations were identified.

- Recommendations for Change at the State Level:
 - No recommendations were identified.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The report from Cambria County Children and Youth Services was received by the Regional Office on 02/20/2014. The report details the topics that were discussed during the Near Fatality Review meeting held on 02/13/2014. The children and youth agency conducted the investigation and ensured that the Cambria County [REDACTED], was apprised for their progress and final outcome. There were no deficiencies identified.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

- County Strengths:
 - Cambria County Children and Youth Services was immediate in informing the Central Region office of the near fatality of [REDACTED].

- The agency has developed an effective Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) community team; members of which represent a wide array of community services and supports. The MDT team was supportive of the agency's response and actions to the report on [REDACTED].
- Collaboration was evident between the agency and medical representatives.
- County Weaknesses:
 - No deficiencies were identified.
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:
 - At the time of this report, the Regional Office has not identified areas on non-compliance.

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

The Regional Office completed interviews and obtained records as required. The agency provided appropriate services to the family during the investigation and ensured the safety of other children relevant to the case. The case is currently not active with Cambria County Children and Youth Services. The Regional Office has established no recommendations at this time.