



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

**DeShawn Stoddart**

**Date of Birth: 1/31/13**

**Date of Death 1/31/13**

**Date of Oral Report: 1/29/14**

### **FAMILY KNOWN TO:**

**Philadelphia Department of Human Services**

### **REPORT FINALIZED ON:**

**09/28/2015**

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. Philadelphia County has convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report. The Act 33 meeting was held on 2/21/14.

**Family Constellation:**

| <u>Name:</u> | <u>Relationship:</u> | <u>Date of Birth:</u> |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| [REDACTED]   | Mother               | [REDACTED]/97         |
| [REDACTED]   | Maternal Aunt        | [REDACTED]/969        |
| [REDACTED]   | Maternal Uncle       | [REDACTED]/97         |
| [REDACTED]   | Maternal Uncle       | [REDACTED]/97         |
| [REDACTED]   | Maternal Aunt        | [REDACTED]/01         |
| [REDACTED]   | Maternal grandmother | [REDACTED]/66         |
| * [REDACTED] | Father               | [REDACTED]/94         |
| * [REDACTED] | Paternal grandmother | Adult                 |

**Notification of Child Fatality:**

The mother reported that last year she was pregnant and was not showing. She added that she was in school and feeling sick so she was sent home. She went to her boyfriend's home somewhere in [REDACTED], PA.). The boyfriend was reported by mother to be the unborn child's father. Mom reported that she gave birth to a baby boy at the boyfriend's home on 1/31/13. The infant child was born alive but not breathing properly and mom was unable to determine if the child had a heartbeat. Both the mother and father placed the baby in a plastic bag and put the infant into a dumpster outside the father's home on 1/31/13. The mother was not sure if the baby was dead. The mother reported that she was very scared at that time. The child's mother, [REDACTED] told the child's father that she did not observe a heartbeat, so she placed [REDACTED] in a plastic bag and disposed of his body in a dumpster behind the father's apartment building. The parents called [REDACTED] (Paternal Grandmother), who told them to take the child to the hospital. The parents told the paternal grandmother that they did, and the baby was dead. They further stated they took the child to the hospital and the child was cremated. This was reported to DHS on 1/29/14. There is no evidence that a child was born, and no body was ever discovered.

**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. An Act 33 meeting was held on 2/21/14, and attended by a representative of the region.

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

The family was known to Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to this incident. On October 28, 2013, DHS received a GPS report regarding [REDACTED] being evicted from the home of her maternal grandmother, where she lived with her boyfriend, [REDACTED] was 8 weeks pregnant and her mother would not allow her to live in her home. The maternal grandmother learned of the pregnancy and told [REDACTED] she had to leave her home. This report was investigated and there were no findings present. During the course of that investigation, [REDACTED] was arrested [REDACTED]

On January 7, 2013, DHS received a GPS report alleging [REDACTED] was being left home overnight by her mother. The mother was believed to have been a prostitute, and was going out almost every night. Her mother returned home one night with her nose broken, and her face was bloodied. Over the holidays, [REDACTED] mother met a man and allowed him to move into the house. [REDACTED] father was recently released from jail but his whereabouts were unknown. The report was investigated and there were no findings present.

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

[REDACTED] made a report while [REDACTED] on 1/29/14. She was interviewed by a PA State Trooper from the [REDACTED] Barracks. The reporting source notified ChildLine, and the maternal grandmother. [REDACTED] reported that she gave birth to a baby boy at the boyfriend's home on 1/31/13. The infant child was born alive but not breathing properly and the mother was unable to determine if the child had a heartbeat. Both parents placed the baby in a plastic bag and put the infant into a dumpster outside the father's home on 1/31/13. The mother was not sure the baby was dead. The mother reported that she was very scared at that time. The infant's mother, [REDACTED] told the child's father that she did not observe a heartbeat, so she placed [REDACTED] in a plastic bag and disposed of his body in a dumpster behind the father's apartment building. [REDACTED] report was determined to be [REDACTED] by Philadelphia DHS on 2/21/14.

**Current Case Status:**

This case was closed by DHS on 2/21/14.

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

- **Strengths:**

**Compliance with statutes and regulations**

The Act 33 Team felt the MDT SWSM did an excellent job of investigating the case and conferencing with the chain of command.

The Team also noted that the MDT SWSM's did a thorough job of documentation of interactions with his supervisor and the [REDACTED] Police Department

**Services to [REDACTED] and extended family:**

The minor mother was active with DHS as a child. On November 22, 2013, she was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- **Deficiencies:**

None found.

- **Recommendations for Change at the Local Level:**

None

- **Recommendations for Change at the State Level:**

None

**Department Review of County Internal Report:**

The Department concurs with the county report's findings and recommendations.

**Department of Public Welfare Findings:**

- **County Strengths:**

Thorough investigative efforts by the county investigator

- **County Weaknesses:**

None

- **Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance:**

None

**Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:**

The Department recommends that the county continue to conduct thorough investigations and continue to provide their standard of excellence with regard to their documentation.