



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

John Bruno

**Date of Birth: 04/25/2011**  
**Date of Death: 03/18/2017**  
**Date of Report to ChildLine: 03/15/2017**  
**CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]**

**FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY AT TIME  
OF INCIDENT OR WITHIN THE PRECEDING 16 MONTHS:**

**Bucks County Children and Youth Services**

**REPORT FINALIZED ON:**  
08/18/2017

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. Section 6349 (b))

**Reason for Review:**

Pursuant to the Child Protective Services Law, the Department, through OCYF, must conduct a review and provide a written report of all cases of suspected child abuse that result in a 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.

The Child Protective Services Law also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a fatality or near fatality is substantiated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the report to ChildLine.

Bucks County has not convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report due to the report being determined as [REDACTED] within 30 days of the report to ChildLine.

**Family Constellation:**

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
John Bruno	victim child	04/25/2011
[REDACTED]	sibling	[REDACTED] 2007
[REDACTED]	mother	[REDACTED] 1973
[REDACTED]	father	[REDACTED] 1977

**Summary of OCYF Child Fatality Review Activities:**

For this review the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) reviewed all records and case notes for the victim child, sibling and family during the investigation. SERO reviewed the county’s investigation/assessment and structured case notes.

**Summary of circumstances prior to Incident:**

The agency received a report on 02/27/2010 regarding the sibling who was 3-years-old at the time of that report. There were concerns for lack of supervision in that the child had wandered from the family home. The father, who worked at night, had been playing hide and seek with the child and fell asleep. The child decided to leave the home and take a walk in the neighborhood. The family was unaware the child could unlock the door. When the father woke he began searching for the child and immediately called 911. He was informed the police had the child in their care. The report [REDACTED] and the agency gave the family recommendations for child proofing the home. No services were needed or provided.

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

On 03/15/2017, the county received a Child Protective Services (CPS) report alleging the 5-year-old victim child arrived at the hospital in cardiac arrest and was observed to have abrasions to his forehead and ligature marks around his neck. The mother stated the child was playing outside in the snow for approximately 15 minutes with the family dog. The mother stated she checked on the child several times. The final time she saw the dog dragging the child by his scarf. He was face down in the snow, was blue and unresponsive. The mother states when she dressed the child to play outside she wrapped the scarf around his neck once and pulled his hood up over his head, possibly leaving the ends of the scarf hanging out the front of the coat. The mother removed the scarf which she stated was wrapped tightly around the child's neck at this time. She picked the child up from the snow and carried him into the home and laid him on the floor and then called 911. The parents were instructed on how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation as they waited for paramedics to arrive. The child had no heartbeat at this time, which lasted 37 minutes. The child was transported via ambulance to the local hospital and then transferred to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). [REDACTED]

On 03/18/2017, the child passed away. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the reporting source felt it odd the mother would move the child inside the home, out of the cold and snow, to wait for paramedics to arrive.

The safety of the sibling was immediately assessed and although no safety threats were noted, the sibling was staying with a family friend as the family was dealing with this terrible tragedy.

Interviews with all relevant parties occurred. The report was [REDACTED] on 04/13/2017. The cause of death was determined to be Asphyxiation by strangulation and the manner of death was accidental. No criminal charges have been filed. The case has not been accepted and therefore, no services are being provided by the county. The family has sought [REDACTED] on their own.

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

The county was not required to submit a report since there was not an Act 33 meeting due to the report being [REDACTED] within 30 days.

**Department Review of County Internal Report:**

The County [REDACTED] the report within the first 30 days of receiving the referral; hence, no County Internal Report was required.

**Department of Human Services Findings:**

- County Strengths:  
There was clear documentation in the case notes and investigation report. All parties were interviewed. Timely safety assessment on sibling was made. Sensitivity for the family's loss was demonstrated.
- County Weaknesses:  
None noted.
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.  
None noted.

**Department of Human Services Recommendations:**

Consideration could be given regarding a public service announcement around appropriate and safe ways to dress a child for play in the snow or cold weather. Although this child's death was a tragic accident, it may have been averted if the child's scarf was tucked inside his coat.