



REPORT ON THE FATALITY OF:

Kardair Williams

Date of Birth: 11/12/2015
Date of Death or Date of Incident: 03/27/2017
Date of Report to ChildLine: 03/27/2017
CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]

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

Lawrence County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
09/15/2017

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.

Lawrence County Children and Youth Services (LCCYS) has convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 04/21/2017.

Family Constellation:

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Kardair Williams	Victim Child	11/12/2015
[REDACTED]	Biological Mother	[REDACTED] 1996
[REDACTED]	Maternal Grandmother	[REDACTED] 1976
* [REDACTED]	Biological Father	[REDACTED] 1994
* [REDACTED]	Paternal Grandmother	Unknown

* Denotes an individual that is not a household member or did not live in the home at the time of the incident, but is relevant to the report.

Summary of OCYF Child Fatality Review Activities:

The Western Region Office of Children Youth and Families (WRO) obtained and reviewed the current records provided by LCCYS pertaining to the family. WRO staff reviewed the medical records [REDACTED] as well as the [REDACTED] Police Department reports provided by LCCYS. WRO also spoke with the caseworker assigned to this investigation to obtain additional details regarding the incident.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

This family was not known to LCCYS. The LCCYS caseworker verified that the family had no prior history with Trumbull County, Ohio Children Services. The mother and the victim child resided in Trumbull County, Ohio.

Circumstances of Child Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 03/27/2017, LCCYS was notified that a 16-month-old child arrived around 4:30 AM by ambulance at UPMC Jameson Hospital in [REDACTED], Pennsylvania. The ambulance personnel stated that upon arrival to the scene of the incident, the victim child was found unresponsive. The report stated that the father gave several different stories of the incident which included the father stating that he went to get

a sippy cup for the victim child and the victim child fell between the bed and bedside table and the television then fell on the victim child. The father then stated that the victim child fell off of the bed and hit his head on the night stand. The father also stated that the victim child fell off of the television stand causing the head injury. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They reported that the victim child [REDACTED] and was transferred to CHP via ambulance. The victim child arrived at CHP around 7:00 AM on 03/27/2017 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The victim child was pronounced deceased at approximately 9:15 AM on 03/27/2017.

A medical assessment was completed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A post mortem skeletal survey was ordered and an autopsy was requested from the Allegheny County Medical Examiner. This report stated the victim child had a large acute left subdural hematoma, an oval bruise on his left lower leg which may be consistent with a bite mark or the victim child being hit with a circular object. The victim child did not have a skull fracture or swelling on the outside of his head. According to the medical report written by the Allegheny County Medical Examiner, the "life acute life ending injury is consistent with the shaking and shearing effects of abusive head trauma". The report stated the blood in the subdural hematoma was "very fresh" indicating the injury occurred shortly before the victim child became unresponsive. The report stated the victim child's injuries were not caused by a "simple fall from a stacked mattress. Further assessment of the bruise on the victim child's leg determined this was not a bite mark. The cause of this injury remains unknown."

The father had been visiting with the victim child for 4-5 months [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He drove to Ohio on the Friday prior to the incident to pick up the victim child from his mother's home. The father explained that he got up to make a sippy cup for the victim child in the kitchen around 4:00 AM and heard a "thud." He saw the victim child lying on the floor and when he went to pick up the victim child he "went limp." The father said that the victim child must have woken up and the television stand was right by the bed. The victim child must have hit his head on the television stand. The father said he was not in the room when the incident occurred. The father left the home to get the paternal grandmother, leaving the child behind. The paternal grandmother came to the father's home to see the victim child. The father and the paternal grandmother took the victim child to her home and called 9-1-1. The father stated the victim child was alert but not moving prior to going to the paternal grandmother's home. The father explained that the victim child was not moving but was able to squeeze his finger. The father stated that the victim child was conscious when the ambulance arrived.

██████████ Police Department was called to the home of the father. The father reported to them that he and the victim child went to sleep around 1:00 AM after spending some time in the living room area. The father explained that the victim child was sleeping on a full sized mattress on the floor at his residence (approximately 20 inch in height from the floor). The bed was located next to a television stand which was rectangular in size about 19 inches off the ground. The bedroom was described as having soft thick carpet with "give." There was a flat screen television and an XBOX found on the television stand. Law Enforcement noted there was a video found on the father's phone from 3:30 AM depicting the victim child and the father in the living room on the sofa. The victim child is awake in the video and the father is interacting with the victim child. During the 9-1-1 call with the father he was told to breathe for the child and when the ambulance arrived the victim child was laying in the middle of the floor and neither the father or paternal grandmother were by the child performing breathing as directed by the 9-1-1 dispatcher. There was supporting surveillance video outside of the paternal grandmother's home showing around 4:00 AM the father going to her apartment and then them both returning with the victim child. The father's phone records showed he was texting a female until around 3:45 AM.

After visiting the father's home, the Assistant District Attorney reported to the agency that the television that allegedly fell on the victim child was small. Furthermore, the bed that victim child allegedly fell from to the floor would not create an impact that would have caused the victim child's injury.

On 03/28/2017, the Agency interviewed the mother. She stated that she lives in Ohio and became aware of the incident via a telephone call from the father around 5:00 AM on 03/27/2017. The father told her that the victim child was not breathing. According to the mother, the father told her he was putting the victim child's milk in the refrigerator and the victim child must have heard the father resulting in the victim child waking up. According to the mother, the father explained to her the victim child must have gotten out of bed in the dark room and touched the television stand and pulled the television onto him. The paternal grandmother then told her that the child may have fallen out of bed.

Interviews were also conducted with ██████████ who previously lived in the home and currently resides in Ohio. She reported he was a good father to his daughter. This sibling was examined at CHP on 04/04/2017 and there were no injuries found.

LCCYS submitted the ██████████ Investigation report with the status of ██████████ on 05/04/2017. There have been no criminal charges filed as of 08/01/2017 as the determination from the Allegheny Medical Examiner's office autopsy is still pending.

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

- Strengths in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families;
 - The agency commenced an investigation immediately after receiving the report
 - The agency took steps to assure the safety of the father's child with another mother. The child was assessed medically and there were no medical concerns or signs of abuse with this child.
 - The requested all medical documentation related to the victim child in this incident. Communication was established and maintained with medical personnel.
 - The agency interacted with the [REDACTED] Police Department and the Lawrence County's District Attorney's Office in a professional and cooperative manner. There was cooperation and coordination with law enforcement personnel throughout the investigation process.
 - The agency engaged the mother and other family members in a professional manner. The agency personnel were able to establish rapport with the family and obtained cooperation with the family members. This made it possible to obtain information from the family members.
- Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families;
 - There were no deficiencies noted.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on reducing the likelihood of future child fatalities and near fatalities directly related to abuse;
 - There are no recommendations.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies; and
 - There are no recommendations.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse.
 - There are no recommendations.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The WRO received the Lawrence County Fatality Team Report on 05/25/2017. WRO found the county's internal report as an accurate reflection of the Act 33 meeting. The report content and findings are representative of what was discussed during the meeting on 04/21/2017, and the WRO accepted the report.

Department of Human Services Findings:

- County Strengths:
 - The Agency contacted Ohio, where the victim child resided to obtain any prior history, as well as to request courtesy home visits and interviews of the biological mother.

- The Agency interviewed the biological mothers of the victim child's half-siblings. The Agency also requested an exam of one of the half-siblings whom had regular contact with the biological father.
- The Agency conducted many additional collateral interviews during the investigation [REDACTED]
- The Agency complied with all report and investigation timelines.
- The Agency collaborated with Law Enforcement to complete the investigation.
- County Weaknesses: and
 - None noted
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.
 - None noted.

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

The Department recommends that in child fatality/near fatality cases, county Children and Youth Agency's go beyond household member and alleged perpetrator interviews and consider gathering and including information from half-siblings and their parent, past caretakers/babysitters of the child victim, ex-paramours of the perpetrator and communicating with other states or counties if case members were found to have lived outside of where the incident occurred.

The Department is also recommending there be legislation to support securing televisions over 32' and ensuring the surface on which the television is placed exceeds a particular size to prevent them from falling.