



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

Geovanni Rotar

**Date of Birth: 12/06/2013**

**Date of Death: 08/14/2017**

**Date of Report to ChildLine: 08/14/2017**

**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:**

01/25/2018

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) [REDACTED] the report of suspected child abuse within 30 days of receiving the report. Therefore they were not required to convene a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report.

**Family Constellation:**

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Geovanni Rotar	Victim Child	12/06/2013
* [REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1996
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED] 1993
[REDACTED]	Paternal Grandmother	[REDACTED] 1975
[REDACTED]	Paternal Grandfather	[REDACTED] 1972
[REDACTED]	Paternal Aunt	[REDACTED] 2001
[REDACTED]	Paternal Uncle	[REDACTED] 2005
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2012
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2016

\* 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 all current and past records pertaining to the family. The victim child's [REDACTED] records were obtained and reviewed. LCCYS [REDACTED] the report [REDACTED] within 30 days of receiving the report. Therefore, they did not have to submit a county report on the fatality. LCCYS documented all of their investigation activities and supplied the WRO with all necessary documentation.

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

The victim child's paternal grandparents and paternal aunt and uncle had two prior [REDACTED] reports to LCCYS. The first report dated 10/10/2014 was regarding home conditions of the family. Due to the unlivable conditions the family moved in with the victim child's mother. The second report dated 01/16/2015, alleged that the family was residing in the old home that was deemed uninhabitable and this report was determined [REDACTED] as the family was still living with the victim child's mother.

The victim child's family had two prior [REDACTED] reports. The first report was received on 03/02/2016 in which the concerns were with the victim child's father who removed the victim child's brother's [REDACTED] putting the child at further risk. This report was [REDACTED] and closed.

The second [REDACTED] report was reported on 05/01/2017. This report alleged the children being outside with insufficient supervision and inappropriate discipline. The home was dirty and was infested with cockroaches. The father and the children were living with the paternal grandparents. The poor housing conditions were in the paternal grandparent's home. The case was accepted for services on 06/29/2017. LCCYS referred the family to in-home services to assist them [REDACTED].

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

On 08/14/2017, LCCYS received a [REDACTED] report that the victim child had been transferred from a local hospital to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh (CHP) on 08/13/2017 after being found face down in an above ground swimming pool. The victim child died as a result of the drowning on 08/14/2017. No alleged perpetrator was identified on the report.

On 08/13/2017, the father took the victim child and his older brother to his boss's house for a birthday party. The father stated that the child was right next to him and he was watching him 98% of the time. The children were all running around playing in the yard as there was a bounce house, a baby pool and a big above ground pool. The father stated he turned for a few minutes and the child's brother ran up to him and that the two of them did not see the victim child so they went to look for him. A few seconds after that they could see everyone start running for the pool and gathering around. The victim child was in the pool face down. The victim child was reportedly missing and possibly submerged in the water for 20 minutes, [REDACTED] before being located in the pool. It was reported that the victim child tried to fill up his squirt gun with water from the pool and may have fallen into the pool and could not get out.

The victim child was taken by ambulance to the local hospital [REDACTED]. cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was performed on the child for 38 minutes

prior to the return of spontaneous respirations. The victim child was transported via medical helicopter to the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh (CHP). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the child passed peacefully with the family at bedside on 08/14/2017.

The LCCYS caseworker went to the paternal grandparent's home and interviewed the father. The caseworker also went to the mother's home and spoke with her and the victim child's older brother. The caseworker ensured the safety of all of the children.

On 08/29/2017, LCCYS submitted the [REDACTED] Investigation report to ChildLine with a status of [REDACTED]

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

LCCYS was not required to submit a report due to the [REDACTED] investigation being [REDACTED] within 30 days.

- Strengths in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families;
  - None
  
- Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families;
  - None
  
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on reducing the likelihood of future child fatalities and near fatalities directly related to abuse;
  - None
  
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies; and
  - None

- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse.
  - None

### **Department Review of County Internal Report:**

LCCYS [REDACTED] the report of suspected child abuse within 30 days of receiving the oral report. Therefore they were not required to submit an internal report.

### **Department of Human Services Findings:**

- County Strengths:
  - LCCYS completed the [REDACTED] investigation within 30 days of the date of the oral report.
  - LCCYS ensured safety of the other child in the home. They interviewed the mother and father. A home visit was made to each of the parent's homes.
  - LCCYS responded immediately to the report.
  - LCCYS obtained the victim child's [REDACTED] records as part of the investigation.
  - LCCYS supplied all records to the WRO.
- County Weaknesses:
  - LCCYS never interviewed any other individuals that attended the pool party and allegedly other people who were in or around the pool when the incident occurred.
  - LCCYS never questioned if the father was drinking or using any substances.
  - [REDACTED] allegedly told the mother that the victim child was in the pool for 20 minutes before being found, there is no documentation in the case file that the agency investigated this statement.
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.

#### **3490.55. Investigation of reports of suspected child abuse**

(d) When conducting its investigation, the county agency shall, if possible, conduct an interview with those persons who are known to have or may reasonably be expected to have, information relating to the incident of suspected child abuse including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(5) Eyewitnesses to the suspected child abuse.

**Department of Human Services Recommendations:**

The Department recommends efforts be made via a public service campaign to provide further community education regarding children and pool safety. Pool owners should be educated to understand the need to have a responsible person supervising a pool at all times when children are invited to the home.