



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

[REDACTED]

**Date of Birth: 08/11/2012**  
**Date of Incident: 09/14/2017**  
**Date of Report to ChildLine: 09/14/2017**  
**CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]**

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

**Wyoming County Human Services**

**REPORT FINALIZED ON:**  
03/22/2018

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.

Wyoming County has convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 10/11/2017.

**Family Constellation:**

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	08/11/2012
[REDACTED]	Biological Father	[REDACTED] 1984
[REDACTED]	Biological Mother	[REDACTED] 1978
[REDACTED]	Father's Paramour	[REDACTED] 1984
[REDACTED]	Mother's Paramour	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2007
[REDACTED]	Paternal Half Sibling	[REDACTED] 2016
[REDACTED]	Father's Paramour's Daughter	[REDACTED] 2009

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

The Northeast Regional Office of Children Youth and Families (NERO) received and reviewed records of the Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigation. NERO staff had a conversation with the investigating worker and her supervisor. NERO staff participated in the Act 33 meeting on 10/11/2017. The meeting included a review of the agency file, medical records and a discussion related to the incident including reports from law enforcement.

**Summary of circumstances prior to Incident:**

Wyoming County Human Services had no prior involvement with the family as all family members are residents of Luzerne County. Luzerne County Children and Youth Services (LCCYS) had no prior involvement with the family.

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

On 09/14/2017, the victim child was brought to the emergency department of a local hospital with a stab wound to the upper chest that no one could explain. The victim child, sibling and younger half sibling were with the father in Wyoming County at a friend's house. The father reported to hospital staff he did not know how the victim child became injured. The father reported the children were playing in the back yard of the home and the victim child came running to the front bloody with the stab wound. The victim child had received a laceration to the left subclavian artery, injury to the left subclavian vein and a penetrating injury to the apex of the left upper lobe.

The victim child was transported to the hospital by emergency medical services (EMS). EMS reported they were unable to obtain a blood pressure and the victim child was in and out of consciousness. EMS were applying pressure, but noting unstable vital signs and intermittent episodes of unresponsiveness. The victim child was taken to the operating room (OR). Upon entering the OR the victim child was in full cardiac arrest and underwent external compressions. Emergency surgery was performed. The victim child received considerable blood product support, he was warmed with irrigants prior to closure. Once the bleeding was controlled, the victim child was transported by helicopter to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) of a specialty hospital. At the time of transport there was a substantial chance of neurological damage, limb loss and the victim child remained critically ill.

The victim child was taken to the OR and underwent exploration and neurolysis of the left brachial plexus with micro-anastomosis, left common carotid artery to axillary bypass graft with right lower extremity femoral vein, volar/dorsal fasciotomies left upper extremity, and left upper extremity volar fasciotomy closure. The victim child also sustained ischemic infarcts, subdural hematoma and diffuse encephalopathy. The victim child remained hospitalized until 10/09/2017. The victim child was transferred to children's rehabilitation center where he remained until his discharge on 11/02/2017. The victim child would continue with outpatient rehabilitation and follow up appointments with neurology and orthopedics. The victim child had made significant progress at this point; however he still had no use of his left arm and the victim child did suffer a brain injury.

Initially, the father reported to law enforcement as well as to the medical personnel he did not know how the victim child became injured. On 09/15/2017, the father said to the mother "if I tell you what happened you can't tell anyone". The mother reported the father disclosed that he had gotten into a verbal altercation with one of the men at the house. The father stated he took the pocket knife out of his pocket and the victim child ran into it.

Wyoming County Human Services interviewed the cardiothoracic surgeon and he stated that the knife entered straight down parallel to the victim child's neck into the chest. The doctor added the victim child was definitely stabbed in a downward motion indicating the reports that the victim child ran into the knife could not be accurate.

Wyoming County Human Services did attempt an interview with the victim child. When asked how the injury occurred the victim child stated "my daddy". The victim child was not able to elaborate or be interviewed due to the extent of his injuries. The victim child's sibling was present at the house during the incident but he denied he witnessed the victim child get injured.

On 09/18//2017 the mother filed for and was granted a protection from abuse order. A permanent order was granted and the father can have no contact with the victim child or his sibling for a period of three years.

The father has been charged by the Pennsylvania State Police with (F1) aggravated assault, (F1) aggravated assault – victim less than 13 and defendant 18 or older, (M1) simple assault, (M1) endangering the welfare of children – parent/guardian/other commits offense, (M2) simple assault and (M2) recklessly endangering another person.

Wyoming County Human Services Indicated the case on 11/9/2017.

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

Information in this section is copied directly from the county report.

- Strengths in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families; The dynamic of the CPS investigation being in Wyoming County and all the identified family members residing in Luzerne County made the process somewhat convoluted. The collaboration between the two counties as well as law enforcement is a definite strength. The support and guidance from the Northeast Regional office has been paramount in enabling the county to develop an Act 33 team and the convening of the review team for this incident.
- Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families; No recommendations made.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on reducing the likelihood of future child fatalities and near fatalities directly related to abuse; No recommendations made.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies; and No recommendations made.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse. No recommendations made.

**Department Review of County Internal Report:**

Wyoming County Human Services submitted the County Review Team Report to NERO on 01/08/2018. NERO determined that the county internal report accurately reflected background case history and the status of the CPS investigation.

**Department of Human Services Findings:**

- County Strengths:

Wyoming County Human Services conducted a timely CPS investigation. Interviews were completed and all medical records received. The agency worked in collaboration with the law enforcement and with LCCYS. Wyoming County Human Services had no experience with the Child Fatality/ Near Fatality process and required technical assistance from NERO which they readily accepted.

- County Weaknesses: and None

- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.

None

**Department of Human Services Recommendations:**

Department of Human Services recommends all counties with little or no experience in the Child Fatality and Near Fatality process, as required by Act 33, bring their teams together at least annually. This will allow the team to communicate with one another, to review their protocol and to discuss any improvements or changes that need to occur.