



REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:

[REDACTED]

Date of Birth: 09/21/2017

Date of Incident: 10/23/2017

Date of Report to ChildLine: 10/23/2017

CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]

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

Delaware County Children & Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:

05/10/2018

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 the Office of Children, Youth, and Families (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.

Delaware County Children and Youth Services convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 11/15/2017.

Family Constellation:

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
██████████	Child	09/21/2017
██████████	Mother	██████████ 1990
██████████	Father	██████████ 1985
██████████	Half-Sibling	██████████ 2005

Summary of OCYF Child Near Fatality Review Activities:

The Southeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families (SERO) obtained and reviewed all current investigation notes and gathered pertinent information from the Delaware County Act 33 team.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

No prior involvement with Delaware County Children, Youth, and Families Agency.

Circumstances of Child Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 10/23/2017, the county received a Child Protective Services (CPS) report citing concerns about suspected child abuse for causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act. The victim child was brought to ██████████ emergency department via ambulance. The victim child sustained a left parietal hematoma and skull fracture resulting from the incident. Additionally, the attending physician determined that the child was in serious condition as a result of the injury.

The victim child was subsequently transferred to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to received specialized pediatric care as a result of the left parietal skull fracture and large left parietal hematoma. The mother reported that while carrying the infant, the child fell down three to four concrete steps while strapped in his car seat carrier. The mother was named as the perpetrator.

The county interviewed the parents of the victim child; at which time the original account of what led to the incident changed. Initially, the mother stated that she was the individual carrying the child in the car seat at the time of the incident. However, the amended statement was that the father was the individual responsible for the child at the time of the incident and that the father had failed to strap the child into the car seat. The father reported that the mother was inside of the home at the time of the incident. The mother expressed fear and concern about disclosing that the father was responsible due to domestic violence concerns and her fear of the father getting into trouble. The treating medical team stated that the injuries sustained were consistent with such an incident and concluded that the incident was most likely caused accidentally. Furthermore, the physician determined that the affected area was not directly exposed to the concrete but that the victim child's head was in contact with the padding of the car seat.

The county assessed through the investigative process and through consultation with a county solicitor that the incident was not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly motivated and therefore the report was unfounded. There were no criminal charges filed by law enforcement. However, there were concerns for the family surrounding the issues of domestic violence, safe sleep practices, alcohol abuse, and safety and risk factors. The family was accepted for ongoing services and a referral to community education services made to address the General Protective Service (GPS) concerns associated with the family. The report was unfounded by the county on 12/21/2017.

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:

- County collaborated well with key players involved in the process to include law enforcement, medical community, and Acts 33 team
- Medical representative on the review team avowed that greater training would be given to new physicians regarding the certifying of Near fatality and fatality reports to ensure that reports are being certified appropriately and not as means to get the attention of the county to respond to reports.

Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families:

- None 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:

- None noted

Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies:

- None noted

Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse:

- None noted

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The department attended the Act 33 meeting on 11/15/2017 facilitated by the Delaware County Review Team. The county submitted an untimely report.

Department of Human Services Findings:

County Strengths:

- The county was very responsive in addressing the concerns noted in the report and collaborated well with key players;

County Weaknesses:

- The county submitted an untimely County report. Discussion was had regarding the internal communication breakdown that led to the late submission of the report to the Department. The county will put in place a more feasible plan to ensure that the Department receives the report timely.

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

- Untimely report submitted as required by the CPSL.

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

- Domestic abuse continues to be an issue that impacts children, youth, and families. The ongoing discussion of how this issue impacts the safety of children should be paramount. Funding for PSA and other means of communication should be considered during budget season to support efforts toward the safety and well-being of children whose family is compromised because of this issue.