



REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:

[REDACTED]

Date of Birth: 07/15/2017
Date of Incident: 11/21/2017
Date of Report to ChildLine: 11/21/2017
CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]

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

Beaver County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:

July 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 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.

Beaver 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 12/19/2017.

Family Constellation:

| <u>First and Last Name:</u> | <u>Relationship:</u> | <u>Date of Birth:</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| [REDACTED] | Victim Child | 07/15/2017 |
| [REDACTED] | Biological Mother | [REDACTED] 1995 |
| [REDACTED] | Biological Father | [REDACTED] 1994 |
| [REDACTED] | Maternal Half-Sister | [REDACTED] 2010 |
| [REDACTED]* | Maternal Grandmother | [REDACTED] 1974 |
| [REDACTED]* | Maternal Grandfather | [REDACTED] 1974 |

* 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 Near Fatality Review Activities:

The Western Region Office of Children, Youth and Families (WERO) attended the full Act 33 local review meeting. Additionally, WERO obtained and reviewed all records pertaining to the family.

Children and Youth Involvement prior to Incident:

Beaver County Children and Youth Services (BCCYS) had no prior reports on the family.

Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 11/21/2017, the mother came home from work and found the victim child was not acting like himself, he was lethargic and his eyes were rolling back into his head. The child had been alone in the care of his father during the day. The mother then called Emergency Medical Services who transported the victim child to

██████████. The victim child presented with a bruise on his lower back and buttocks as well as bruising to his left forearm and left wrist. The father would not give an explanation for the victim child's injuries. It was also noted that the hospital determined that the child had a brain bleed and was transported to ██████████ for treatment.

Once at ██████, the victim child was assessed and it was reported that the child had bleeding on the brain, the skeletal survey showed a buckle fracture on his left femur, and healing rib fractures. ██████████ also reported that they observed bi-lateral hematomas reflecting older and newer blood. The victim child also had an ophthalmology exam which resulted in the findings of retinal hemorrhages.

The mother was interviewed concerning the injuries to her child and she stated that she was not aware of the injuries, but when she came home from work that day she noticed changes in her son and took him to the hospital. She did disclose that there was domestic violence in the home, but stated she never witnessed any abuse to her son by the father. The father stated he did not know how the victim child received the injuries even though he was home alone with the child the entire day. The 7-year-old half-sibling had been in school during the day and was interviewed but reported that she had witnessed no abuse.

The victim child was discharged from ██████ to the mother. The victim child, the 7-year-old sibling and the mother went to live with the maternal grandmother, where they currently remain. The victim child has continued to make his follow up appointments and BCCYS has followed up with the family concerning the appointments. BCCYS opened the family for services and are providing the family with parenting classes, ██████████ services for the children and transportation to and from the necessary appointments for the child. The mother does have a strong family support system to assist her as she continues to struggle through this incident.

The father was interviewed several times and did not provide any information regarding how the victim child received his injuries. The father finally confessed to causing the injuries by shaking the victim child, and throwing him on the couch after becoming frustrated with the child crying and being fussy. The father has been charged with aggravated assault, simple assault, endangering the welfare of a child and endangering another person. The father was incarcerated and remains in the ██████████ awaiting his formal arraignment scheduled for 04/04/2018 and trial scheduled for 07/09/2018. The mother has filed for a Protection from Abuse (PFA) order. BCCYS submitted a finding of indicated physical abuse in regard to the allegations against the father for causing bodily injury to a child through a recent act; resulting in bruising and intracranial injury. The investigation summary was submitted 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:
 - BCCYS remained in compliance with all deadlines and statutes required of a Near Fatality meeting, summary, and notifications. BCCYS worked very closely with Beaver Falls Police Department in quickly responding to the referral as well as remaining in communication with each other, the [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].
- 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 provided.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies:
 - None provided
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse:
 - It was noted the ways in which BCCYS, law enforcement, and medical professionals communicated was above proficient and expedited the investigation process that ultimately lead to an arrest, further assuring the safety and well-being of the victim child and his family.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The Department received a copy of the report on 01/24/2018 and the Department is in agreement with the report.

Department of Human Services Findings:

- County Strengths:
 - The County conducted a complete and thorough investigation of the incident and completed all collaterals and findings in a timely manner.
- County Weaknesses:
 - None
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.
No areas on non-compliance were identified.

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

It was noted in this case that a history of domestic violence existed between the mother and the father, however the mother continued to allow potential exposure of this violence to her children. It would be recommended that continued efforts be made to offer education and safety to parents who experience domestic violence in an attempt to expose the potential risk this environment has on the children living in such circumstances.