



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE FATALITY OF

Kaiyah Beck

BORN: May 08, 2007
Date of Death Incident: December 2, 2009

The family was not known to Allegheny County Children and Youth Services.
The family was not known to other public/private social service agencies.

This report is confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released.
(23 Pa. C.S. Section 6340)

Unauthorized release is prohibited under penalty of law.
(23 Pa. C.S. 6349 (b))

Reason for Review:

Senate Bill No. 1147, now known as Act 33 was signed by Governor Rendell on July 3, 2008 and went into effect 180 days from that date, December 30, 2008. This Act amends the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and sets standards for reviewing and reporting child fatality and near child fatalities that were suspected to have occurred due to child abuse. DPW must conduct child fatality and near fatality reviews and provide a written report on any child fatality or near fatality where child abuse is suspected.

Circumstances of Child’s Fatality:

On November 29, 2009, Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families received a report (that two year old triplets, [REDACTED] and Kaiyah Beck (DOB: 05/08/2007), had suffered a number of injuries allegedly from falling down a flight of stairs at their residence. The report indicated that Kaiyah hit her head on a wall, was unresponsive and was not expected to survive. Kiayah passed away on December 2, 2009 from traumatic brain injury.

Summary of Review

1. Family Constellation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Kaiyah Beck	Child	05/08/2007
[REDACTED]	Sibling (Sister)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Sibling (Sister)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Mother’s Boyfriend	[REDACTED]

2. Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

The OCYF Regional Program Representative reviewed the case file provided by Allegheny County CYF for the [REDACTED] on this family. The file included the investigation summary, demographic information, risk/safety assessment and safety plan, and progress notes. Interviews were conducted with Allegheny County CYF staff, including the intake caseworker and the current intake supervisor. Also reviewed were the medical and forensic records provided by the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Case Chronology

The thirty-one month old child received [REDACTED] at the family home on November 29, 2009 while the mother’s [REDACTED] was babysitting her and her two sisters. The [REDACTED] alleged that all three children had fallen down a steep flight of stairs after they followed him from the first to the second floor of the residence. According to [REDACTED], he startled the children by shouting at them to go

downstairs, and all three children fell down the steps, resulting in injuries to all three children and in the subsequent death of Kaiyah.

According to documentation in the record, the mother left her boyfriend to watch the triplets while she went to play BINGO. At some point, mother's boyfriend went upstairs to talk on his cell phone and to get his cigarettes, at which point the children followed him up the stairs. He reports that after shouting at the children to go downstairs, () bumped into (), who pushed Kaiyah, causing Kaiyah to fall end over end down the stairs, eventually landing on her side in the corner of the first floor room. It was reported by () that the child was breathing but unconscious at this point.

The mother's boyfriend reported that he attempted to wake Kaiyah to no avail. He then contacted emergency medical services and paramedics arrived at the home to find Kaiyah had stopped breathing. She was transported to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh where she died on December 2, 2009.

() Dr. () reports that the injuries were the result of physical abuse; however, the Medical Examiner report from Dr. () dated January 8, 2010 noted that Kaiyah died as a result of blunt force trauma to the head. Dr. () also indicated that "there was evidence of numerous contusions and abrasions consistent with a fall on stairs." Dr. () also noted other injuries including bruising to the forehead, subdural hemorrhaging from blunt force trauma, retinal hemorrhaging that occurred due to the rotational force inflicted on the brain associated with the fall. It was finally noted by Dr. () that "a fall down the stairs has sufficient force to cause the injuries consistent with the alleged perpetrator's story."

It is difficult for the county agency to determine if Kaiyah's death is the result of physical abuse or an accident. The physicians involved with the case are not in agreement over whether the children's injuries could have been caused by an accidental fall down a flight of stairs or if they were a result of abuse, therefore the status of Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families () He was arrested and charged with Endangering the Welfare of a Child and Aggravated Assault. The Aggravated Assault charge was later withdrawn.

At the time of the writing of this child fatality review, the two surviving sisters and the mother are living with a maternal great uncle until they can identify a new residence. The mother reports that she is no longer involved with (); however she is pregnant with his child.

Previous CY involvement

There was no previous involvement with Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families.

Compliance with Statutes and Regulations

The review did not identify compliance issues with statutes and regulations. Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families conducted all reviews as required.

County Recommendations for changes at the Local (County or State)

Levels as identified by way of County's Near Fatality Report:

- 1) Request for District Attorney's Certification of reports, given pending criminal proceedings against the alleged perpetrator;
- 2) Review of guidelines related to organ harvesting in cases of suspected abuse;
- 3) Review of the timing of forensic interviews to ensure factors, such as acute trauma, physical condition of children, do not influence results; and,
- 4) Consideration of formal forensic consultation related to eye findings from autopsy.

Findings and Recommendations

After reviewing the case record and interviewing stakeholders, the Western Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families has concluded Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families followed appropriate protocol in regards to the investigation of the aforementioned referral.

At the time of this report, the case is pending criminal court action against the mother's former boyfriend, as he had been arrested and charged with Endangering the Welfare of a Child. No court hearing had been held at the time of the writing to this report. The County agency provided in-home services, as well as supportive services to the family with respect to securing housing.

Additionally, the Department is in agreement with the recommendations from the county, as it is necessary to ensure guidelines for cases involving suspected abuse are established and adhered.