

**OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE
Scranton State Office Building
100 Lackawanna Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503**

REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:



**BORN: 06.01.11
DATE OF INCIDENT: 05.16.12**

**FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:
SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

REPORT FINALIZED ON: 04.02.13

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 1147, Printer's Number 2159 was signed into law on July 3, 2008. The bill became effective on December 30, 2008 and is known as Act 33 of 2008. As part of Act 33 of 2008, DPW must conduct a review and provide a written report of all cases of suspected child abuse that result in a child 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.

Act 33 of 2008 also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a child fatality or near fatality is indicated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the oral report to ChildLine. Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services has not convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report as the agency completed the Child Protective Services investigation within thirty days of reception of report.

Family Constellation:

Name:

[REDACTED]

Relationship:

Victim/Child
Biological Mother
Biological Father

Date of Birth:

06.01.11
[REDACTED].67
[REDACTED].64

[REDACTED]

Relative of biological mother;

[REDACTED]

Notification of Child Near Fatality:

On May 16, 2012, Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services received a call from [REDACTED] that Victim/Child, D.O.B. 06.01.11 was transported to Wilson Medical Center in Johnson City, New York by EMT personnel from Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania on May 16, 2012. Mother of child contacted 911 when she discovered that child was "turning blue and cyanotic". When treated at medical facility it was discovered that Child/Victim tested positive for oxycotin and exflexor. The case was [REDACTED] alleging [REDACTED] as the incident resulted in a serious physical condition. Subsequent to initial report the Child/Victim was transported to Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse, New York where Child/Victim was admitted for treatment due to ingestion of narcotics and diminished oxygen levels. Medical findings indicated that Child/Victim ingested Opiates and Benzodiazepene.

Summary of DPW Child (Near) Fatality Review Activities:

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted a site record review at Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services on May 24, 2012 and reviewed all relevant case files, medical reports and interview documentation. Additionally, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families representative interviewed assigned Child Protective Services casework and supervisory personnel. A follow up site record review was conducted on July 30, 2012 by Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families. The Child Protective Services case file and all case materials relating to the investigation and provision of services to the family were reviewed. Case consultation was also conducted on this date with the supervisory and administrative staff of Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services.

Summary of Services to Family:

Prior to the instant Child Protective Services investigation Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services had no prior involvement with this family.

Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:

Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services accepted the Child/Victim's case for Child Protective Services investigation on May 16, 2012 following reception of an oral report from [REDACTED]. As Child/Victim was hospitalized in New York State, Susquehanna County Children and Youth requested that the New York State

Department of Social Services, Onondaga County Field Office, conduct a twenty four hour contact with the Child/Victim in Syracuse, New York. This assessment was completed and a safety plan was developed for the Child/Victim with input from biological parents and relatives in Pennsylvania.

Interviews of the biological parents, collateral sources and relatives were conducted by staff in New York State on May 16, 2012. This information was submitted to the assigned casework staff at Susquehanna County Children and Youth. At this juncture the Child/Victim remained [REDACTED] at the Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, New York. A Safety Plan was developed at this time that involved the utilization of another family member assisting in the care and supervision of the Child/Victim at the biological home pending the completion of the CPS investigation.

Susquehanna County Children and Youth prepared all required parental notifications and notification of rights on 05.18.2012 as required by the Child Protective Services Law.

Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services casework staff met with [REDACTED] signed by all parties. Safety Plan contained provisions allowing Child/Victim to return [REDACTED] with extended family residing within the home to assist in child care pending completion of [REDACTED]

The assigned [REDACTED] staff at Susquehanna County Children and Youth conducted additional interviews with [REDACTED] biological parent and another relative identified as a resource in Pennsylvania at the family residence on May 21, 2012. The provisions of the Safety Plan were reviewed with [REDACTED] and a relative. The current Safety plan was modified with input from biological parents and agency personnel.

Home visits by casework staff from Susquehanna County Children and Youth were conducted on 05/19, 05/20, 05/21, 05/24, 05/25, 05/30, 06/08 and 06/22/12. During these contacts the county agency completed safety assessments and assisted the family in issues relating to parenting and [REDACTED].

The county agency had multiple collateral contacts with the treating physicians at the Upstate Medical Center as well as collateral contacts with the Child/Victim's pediatrician to ascertain treatment recommendations and an assessment of the family's history of involvement with the Child/Victim. Contacts were also established with the treating physician for the AP with specific discussion of AP's [REDACTED]. Records secured by agency from all medical service providers.

Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services supervisory staff and assigned intake caseworker reviewed all medical data, case notes and information secured during interviews and completed the Child Protective Services investigation on 06/15/2012. The case was determined to be Unfounded. CY 48 and all notifications and documentation relating to the investigation was completed and submitted according to Department of Public Welfare Regulations. The child found medicine [REDACTED] on the bathroom floor and accidentally ingested it.

On June 15, 2012 the county child welfare agency conducted an internal case staffing of the [REDACTED] case and determined that the family would be opened for short term, ongoing General Protective Services to provide the biological mother with an opportunity to receive [REDACTED] and assure that Child/Victim was meeting developmental milestones. The family was amenable to the agency's decision and the agency prepared a Family Service Plan at this time.

Current Case Status:

Child/Victim [REDACTED] to the biological parents. Child/Victim was [REDACTED] and had fully recovered from the ingestion of non prescribed drugs. Discharge plan included follow up with Child/Victim's pediatrician in Pennsylvania.

Following consultation with medical providers and the law enforcement agency conducting the criminal investigation it was determined that the incident was of an accidental nature. Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services concluded the Child Protective Services investigation on 06/15/12 and determined the status to be Unfounded. However, the family was accepted for short term, ongoing services by the county agency. Primary focus of the short term ongoing services centered on support for the biological mother relating to parenting issues and [REDACTED] as the family resides in a fairly rural area.

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

Act 33 of 2008 also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a child fatality or near fatality is indicated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the oral report to ChildLine. Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services has not convened a review team in accordance with Act 33 of 2008 related to this report as the case was investigated within the thirty day time frame and no agency review was required.

Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services completed all required case documentation and case disposition as required under The Child Protective Services Law. All notifications and case documentation was consistent with established Department of Public Welfare regulations and "Best Practice" standards. There was also evidence of consistent collaboration with the law enforcement agency investigating the incident.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services was not required to complete an internal report on this case as the agency completed its Child Protective Services investigation within 30 days and determined that the case was Unfounded.

Department of Public Welfare Findings:

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted a site record review and interviewed agency casework and supervisory staff on 05/24/12. All case files and medical reports were secured at this time. A follow-up site review was completed on 07/27/12 by Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families (DPW/NERO/OCYF). Entire case file was reviewed on this date. DPW/NERO/OCYF determined that Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services complied with all regulations and provisions set forth in the Child Protective Services Law. Agency response was timely and consistent with nature of allegations. Case documentation was thorough and followed all established Department of Public Welfare regulations.

Department of Public Welfare Recommendations:

DPW/NERO/OCYF found Susquehanna County Children and Youth Services to be compliant with all Department of Public Welfare regulations and statutory provisions of the Child Protective Services Law. The agency displayed a consistent attention to coordinating services and sharing of relevant data with the investigating law enforcement agency. Additionally, the county agency evidenced a great attention to the securing of background data and medical data prior to concluding the Child Protective Services' investigation.

The NERO/OCYF recommends that the county agency continues to complete investigations in a similar fashion and that agency investigative personnel receive supervisory and clerical support to assure that the same level of casework practice is maintained.