



Edward Coleman
Regional Director

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

(570) 963-4376
Fax (570) 963-3453

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

REPORT ON THE NEAR DEATH OF



BORN: 10/16/05
DATE OF NEAR FATALITY: 1/08/09

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO
Northampton County Children, Youth and Families

REPORT DATED 01/22/10
REPORT FINALIZED 02/09/10

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 fatality as a result of suspected child abuse. DPW must conduct child fatality and near fatality review and provide a written report on any child fatality or near fatality where child abuse is suspected.

Family Constellation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1968
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED] 1967
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 1998
[REDACTED]	Sibling	[REDACTED] 2001
[REDACTED]	Victim	10/16/2005

Notification of Near Fatality

Mother has [REDACTED] and is [REDACTED]. She has been too weak to care for child. [REDACTED], family friend, came to home to help with child. [REDACTED] left a 5 gallon bucket of hot water on the floor. Child was reportedly running or playing then tripped and fell into the water. 911 was called immediately. Child is in serious condition and expected to live. [REDACTED]

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

Northeast Regional Office (NERO) reviewed the CYS file containing the investigation including Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment. The hospital reports were also reviewed. All parties involved and all family members were interviewed by Northampton County Children, Youth and Families. Interviews were documented in the file and reviewed by NERO.

Case Chronology:

01/08/2009-Near fatality reported; the caseworker made an immediate response to the hospital to see victim child. Interview of witnesses and [REDACTED] were conducted at the hospital.

01/08/2009-County made home visit to assess the safety of the other children in the home. Safety was assessed, and there were no observable safety threats. The home conditions and supervision were adequate at the time of the visit. No plan required.

01/08/2009-Hospital visit to assess the safety of the victim child.

01/09/2009-Hospital visit to obtain pictures of the victim child.

01/12/2009-Victim child discharged to home.

01/13/2009-Home visit to check on recovery of the victim child. Safety was assessed on all children at this visit.

01/28/2009-Office visit by the [REDACTED] for follow up interview.

02/27/2009-[REDACTED].

02/27/2009-Case closed.

Previous CY involvement:

The family had no previous involvement with Northampton County Children, Youth and Families

Circumstances of Child's Near Fatality:

Child was running through the house. Child fell in a bucket of hot water that had been prepared for cleaning. Child had 2nd degree burns on his right arm, wrist, and hand (blisters) and some blisters on his right hand fingers. Child received surgery related to the injuries. There were two adults in the home at the time of the incident. Mother had a friend, [REDACTED], helping her because she has [REDACTED] and could not perform her [REDACTED] duties (i.e. changing child, etc.) without assistance. Both adults were present at the time of the incident. The child ran into the kitchen and fell into a bucket of water that had been prepared for cleaning. The adults intervened immediately, but not before the child fell into the water.

Current / most recent status of case:

The [REDACTED] investigation concluded that the child's injuries were accidental and medical opinion supports the caretaker's explanation and history as being consistent with the injury. There are no criminal charges pending.

Services to Children and Families:

The case was closed on 02/27/2009 after the investigation was completed. It was determined that this injury was an accident and there was no abuse or neglect. The county felt mother had sufficient supports to care for the children. The father was also living in the home, and friends were available to help during the times when the father was not in the home.

County Recommendations for changes at the Local (County or State) Levels as identified by way of County's Near Fatality Report:

An internal review was conducted on this case on 02/03/2010. The county found that a CY-104 (referral to law enforcement) was not completed. The county also found that assessments for all three children were lacking in documentation other than a mention

of their presence at a home visit. The children, particularly the victim child, were not questioned by the investigator regarding how the injuries occurred.

The county ascertained they need to have a quality review check to ensure that CY-104's are completed when necessary. The county also concluded that all witnesses need to be interviewed (including the children) as part of a thorough investigation and to assess safety of the children.

The county found in their internal review, that the children were not interviewed and all children in the household should have been interviewed. The county also reported that a CY-104 was not done on this case and they will be checking more closely that referrals to law enforcement are done on every death/near death report.

Northeast Regional Office Findings and Recommendations:

The injuries were deemed accidental

Investigation determined case was [REDACTED] CY 104, referral to law enforcement, was not completed at the time of the investigation, as per CPSL and regulation. County subsequently sent a CY-104 to law enforcement on 01-14-2010.

Supervisory oversight should include a review that all pertinent interviews are completed.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance issues:

- *Safety Assessments were conducted in a timely manner.
- *The investigation was conducted in a timely manner.
- *Risk Assessment was completed in a timely fashion.
- *The county was issued an Licensing Summary citation for not completing a referral to law enforcement at the time of the investigation.

The family was not accepted for service and was given notice of the [REDACTED] findings. The other children in the home were 8 and 11 years old. The county did not identify any threats or issues requiring referrals for these children.