



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

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REPORT ON THE NEAR DEATH OF



BORN: 11/25/1998
Date of Near Death: 3/5/09

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO ANY COUNTY AGENCY

REPORT FINALED: 02/04/10

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.

OCYF Bulletin 3490 "Child Death Review Report Protocols" requires a regional office to commence a review upon receipt of a report that a child has suffered a near death as a result of child abuse or neglect. The purpose of this review is to make recommendations to help prevent similar injuries and or deaths in the future and to confirm agency compliance with applicable laws, regulations and standards.

Family Constellation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Family members		
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	11/25/98
[REDACTED]	Brother	[REDACTED] 2004
[REDACTED]	Mother	[REDACTED] 1975
[REDACTED]	Father	[REDACTED] 1978
[REDACTED]	Maternal Aunt	Adult
[REDACTED]	Non - family member	Adult
[REDACTED]	Non- family member	[REDACTED] 1999
[REDACTED]	Non- family member	[REDACTED] 1992
[REDACTED]	Non -family member	[REDACTED] 1995
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Adult

*Not a Household Member

Circumstances of Near Death**According to the CY47:**

The Children's Protective Services of the Philadelphia Department of Human Services received a report [REDACTED] on March 5, 2009 that child, [REDACTED], was hospitalized at St. Christopher's Hospital with 35 percent partial and full thickness burns to her face, chest, back, arms and hands.

According to interviews and documentation, [REDACTED] and her brother, [REDACTED], were left alone in their bedroom playing with a lighter. The mother, [REDACTED], reported that she and the children were living with [REDACTED] when the fire occurred in the home. On the night of the fire, [REDACTED] stated she left the children asleep at 12 midnight and [REDACTED] agreed to supervise the children while she spent the night at a friend's home. [REDACTED] reported when she arrived at 7:00am, the fire had already occurred and [REDACTED] had been taken to the hospital. There were four children and two adults in the home; [REDACTED] was the only one that suffered from smoke inhalation and burns. [REDACTED] saw the smoke and told the children to leave the house. [REDACTED] noticed that [REDACTED] was still in the house he went back into the house, found her, and

pulled her out. The family took [REDACTED] to a next-door neighbor's home and put her in the shower until the paramedics arrived and took her to the hospital. EMS picked [REDACTED] up from the neighbor's house and she was immediately taken to St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. On arrival, [REDACTED] was conscious and able to speak to medical staff. Soot was noted in the oral cavity and [REDACTED] was intubated and transferred [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] suffered burns to the top of her scalp, face, ears, hands, fingers, arms, chest, back and lungs/soot in oral cavity. The brother, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] were assessed by the medical staff at St. Christopher's Hospital. [REDACTED] did not suffer any injuries from the fire. Due to the severity of the injuries suffered by [REDACTED], she was hospitalized from 3/5/09 through 7/24/09.

According to the DHS social worker, she was unable to interview [REDACTED] about the fire. [REDACTED] has a speech impediment which made it difficult to understand, [REDACTED] assisted [REDACTED] with answering the questions. As relayed by [REDACTED] he told the social worker that [REDACTED] was on fire. [REDACTED], the Fire Marshall reported the fire started in the room [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in. The home was completely damaged and all members of the family were displaced.

[REDACTED] reported she was unable to contact [REDACTED] and her family members. [REDACTED] and family are refusing to speak with [REDACTED] and DHS.

The mother rented a room for her and the children three weeks before the fire. [REDACTED] reported her and the children's father separated in May 2008. Initially when [REDACTED] moved to Philadelphia, she and the children were living with her sister, [REDACTED], and her family. [REDACTED] and her sister did not get along and [REDACTED] rented a room from [REDACTED] for her and the children.

After the fire the DHS social worker contacted the children's father, [REDACTED] who currently resides in Franklin, Indiana. DHS worker, contacted the Children and Youth from Johnson County, Indiana to assure the children's safety. A safety visit was conducted and the home was approved by Children and Youth for Johnson County. On 3/13/09, [REDACTED], the brother, was reunited with his father. [REDACTED] was released from St. Christopher's Hospital on 7/24/09 and reunited with her father.

The mother is homeless and refusing shelter services.

Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interview

The OCYF Program Representative reviewed the complete 2009 case file provided by DHS. The file included medical documentation from St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, investigation summary, authorization releases, data form

/demographic information, risk/safety assessments, intake team meetings, progress notes, medical and school records. The OCYF interviewed the DHS Social Worker, who worked with the [REDACTED] family and is still employed by DHS. The DHS Social Worker interviewed [REDACTED] Special Victims Unit Detective [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Social Worker from St. Christopher's. [REDACTED] from OCYF attended DHS Internal Fatality Review Meeting.

Case Chronology.

Prior to [REDACTED] near death incident on 3/5/09, the family and children were not known to DHS.

Findings and Recommendation

[REDACTED] safety and well being were addressed by DHS and the children were permanently reunified with their biological father and moved to Franklin, Indiana. [REDACTED] was discharged from the hospital and reunified with her father on 7/24/09.

Department of Human Services made a referral to the Children and Youth for Johnson County in Indiana to assure the children's safety. A safety visit was conducted and the home was approved by Children and Youth for Johnson County.

According to the documentation and the interviews, the mother left the children with a caretaker who agreed to watch the children. OCYF and DHS agreed the fire was an accident. This case was [REDACTED] closed on March 20, 2009.