



REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:

[REDACTED]

Date of Birth: 01/10/2017
Date of Incident: 06/19/2019
Date of Report to ChildLine: 06/19/2019
CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]

FAMILY KNOWN TO COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY AT TIME OF INCIDENT OR WITHIN THE PRECEDING 16 MONTHS:

Lycoming County Children and Youth Services
Union County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
12/19/2019

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.

Lycoming County Children and Youth Services (LCCYS) has convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 07/12/2019. The review included participation and input from Union County Children and Youth Services as a joint review.

Family Constellation:

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
[REDACTED]	Victim Child	01/10/2017
[REDACTED]	Half-Sibling	[REDACTED] 2009
[REDACTED]	Half-Sibling	[REDACTED] 2005
[REDACTED]	Biological Mother	[REDACTED] 1990
[REDACTED]	Biological Father	[REDACTED] 1987

Summary of OCYF Child Near Fatality Review Activities:

The Central Region Office of Children, Youth and Families (CERO) obtained and reviewed all current case records pertaining to the [REDACTED] family. CERO staff reviewed various reports, assessments, and case documentation provided by Lycoming and Union County. CERO staff discussed the case with the county on 07/12/2019 and 08/23/2019.

Summary of circumstances prior to Incident:

On 03/10/2010, LCCYS received a report regarding [REDACTED] that occurred when the half-sibling of the victim child was present. The mother acted to protect the child and left the family home for the evening. The mother was able to obtain [REDACTED] and the need for further agency services was negated. The case was closed on 03/24/2010.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On 10/02/2018, Union County Children and Youth Services (UCCYS) received a report for truancy regarding the two half -siblings of the victim child. The mother worked third shift and would come home and sleep after getting the children ready for the bus. If the children missed the bus, they would stay home or walk the distance to school which caused them to miss school or be late. On this date the children were found walking the 5.8 miles to school. Attendance improved as the agency was involved and the case was closed on 12/03/2018. Another truancy referral was received on 01/07/2019 by UCCYS. This case was closed on 03/08/2019 after attendance improved.

Circumstances of Child Near Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 06/19/2019, LCCYS received a report of suspected child abuse after the victim child was brought into the hospital in respiratory arrest. The biological mother indicated the victim child was normal in the morning and had asked for a diaper change. The biological mother noticed the victim child felt warm and gave her a ½ tablespoon of Tylenol with juice. The victim child fell asleep in the biological mother's arms, but her breathing was weird, and she made a gurgling sound. The victim child became unresponsive and the biological mother called 911. The biological mother ran outside with the victim child and someone gave them a ride to the hospital where CPR was initiated. The victim child was resuscitated at the hospital and was taken to [REDACTED]

The biological father had been in the home for Father's Day but was incarcerated on 06/16/2019. The biological father did not normally reside in the home. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The police found drugs and tools for measuring drugs in the room where the biological father was staying. The biological father admitted to his father that he had left two Gatorade bottles in the home and one had heroin in it. The biological mother was able to confirm that the victim child had taken a drink from the Gatorade bottle. The biological mother was not aware there were drugs in the home or in the bottle.

[REDACTED] a toxicology screen was conducted. The screen returned positive for benzodiazepines and morphine/codeine. The victim child had been given benzodiazepines at the hospital. The victim child was released to the biological mother on 06/20/2019 with no effects seen from the drug ingestion. During the time the victim child was in the hospital, the biological mother was with her the entire time. The half -siblings were with the maternal grandparents.

The biological father is charged with manufacturing and delivery of a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

LCCYS filed their investigation report with ChildLine on 08/15/2019 with a status of Indicated. The biological father of the victim child was named as the perpetrator on the case as it was believed he had left the heroin in the Gatorade bottle where the victim child had access to the drink. The biological father remains incarcerated. No further services were warranted, and the case was closed by LCCYS on 08/15/2019.

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:
 - The Act 33 Team felt that both counties complied with all statutes and regulations while addressing the reports with the family. Lycoming County worked closely with law enforcement agencies while conducting the interviews and investigation. Both counties met all time frames as required.
- Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families:
 - The team did not indicate any deficiencies for either agency during their investigations/assessments.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on reducing the likelihood of future child fatalities and near fatalities directly related to abuse:
 - The team discussed the likelihood that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The team discussed seeing this pattern of people allowing [REDACTED] into their homes because they can support financially or meet some other need in their life. There is no answer to how this can be addressed or solved.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies:
 - None noted.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse.
 - None noted.

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The Central Region Office received the Lycoming County Child Near Fatality Team Report on 08/26/2019. DHS finds the county's internal report as an accurate reflection of the Act 33 meeting. The report content and findings are representative of what was discussed during the meeting on 07/12/2019. As case activity continued beyond the Act 33 meeting, there are findings that are not incorporated into the county report and will be addressed by DHS findings. Written feedback was provided to Lycoming County Administration on 08/26/2019.

Department of Human Services Findings:

- County Strengths:
 - LCCYS workers did an excellent job of interviewing and gathering information needed for the case and collaborated well with medical and law enforcement professionals.

- County Weaknesses:
 - None noted with the investigation.
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.
The following citations are being issued to Union County Children and Youth services regarding the cases completed prior to the Lycoming County Near Fatality incident.
 - 3130.21(b) – Safety – In a preliminary safety assessment worksheet completed on 10/18/2018, the children were seen on 10/11/2018 and 10/16/18. The assessment was completed more than 72-hours after the first children were seen. This item was cited on a different case during the agency’s annual inspection on 04/09/2019 and a plan of correction was accepted.
 - 3130.21(b) – Safety – In a conclusion safety assessment completed on 03/08/2019, one of the children in the home had not been seen by the agency since 01/24/2019. This is over 30 days.
 - 3490.232(e) – A general protective services case was received by the agency on 10/02/2018 and completed on 12/03/2018. This is over 60 days.

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

Parental drug use often leads to drug exposure to children. Public awareness campaigns should be expanded to identify the impact of the use of drugs on all household members. There can be negative consequences to the health of infants and children when they have exposure and access to drugs in home.