

Fatalities

Allegheny County:

1.) An eleven-year-old male child died on Feb. 11, 2012 due to physical injuries he received. Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth and Family Services substantiated the report in March of 2012 and named the mother's paramour as the perpetrator. Emergency responders were contacted by the mother due to the child being unresponsive. The child was taken to the hospital by emergency responders. Upon examination at the hospital, the child was found to have blunt force trauma to his head, trunk and extremities. The child died approximately two hours after arriving at the hospital. The child had been home with mother's paramour and was instructed to vacuum the floor. The child did not do this and the mother's paramour beat the child for approximately ten hours while the mother was at work. When the mother returned home, she found the child injured and barely breathing. The mother's paramour told the mother to tell police that the child fell out of a window. The mother called several family members for help and eventually contacted emergency responders almost two hours after finding the child. The child has a younger sibling who also lived in the home. The sibling witnessed parts of the incident. The sibling underwent a full examination at the hospital and no injuries were found. The sibling is currently in foster care due to the incident. This family was not known to the county agency prior to the incident. The mother's paramour has been charged with homicide and child endangerment and is currently incarcerated. The mother has been charged with endangering the welfare of a child and involuntary manslaughter and is currently incarcerated.

Berks County

2.) A newborn male child died on Jan 9, 2012 due to physical injuries. Berks County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in March 2012 and named the mother as that perpetrator. The adolescent mother of the deceased infant hid her pregnancy from her family. On the date of the child's death, the mother stayed home from school and gave birth to the child in the toilet and then attempted to flush the child down the toilet. The mother went to the hospital later that evening due to hemorrhaging, which she told her family was from her menstrual period. The mother was questioned about the cause of the hemorrhaging and eventually admitted that she gave birth to the child in the toilet. The child was found at the home in a trash can, covered in a sheet. The autopsy showed that the child was born alive and took at least a few breaths before his death. Water was found in the child's sinus cavity and stomach. The coroner's report indicated that the cause of death was drowning, and the manner of death was homicide. The mother was arrested on March 5, 2012 for homicide and concealing the death of a child. The mother, who is a minor, was placed at Berks County Detention pending her preliminary hearing. There is a three year old sibling of the mother in the home; however, it was determined that the three year old is safe in the home. The family was known to the county in the early 1990's due to truancy concerns with the mother, but there was no current county involvement.

Bucks County

3.) A one-year-old female child died on March 7, 2012 due to injuries sustained around February 26, 2012. Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency substantiated the report in April 2012 naming mother's paramour as perpetrator by commission for causing the child's injuries and mother as perpetrator by omission for failing to protect the child from abuse. The mother brought the child, who was unresponsive, to the hospital on February 26, 2012. Mother stated that she had been out of state over the weekend and that her paramour had agreed to watch both the child and the child's two older sisters. The paramour reported that on Saturday, February 25, 2012 he got angry at the child while he was changing her diaper and he then made her carry the dirty diaper to the trash can. While the child, who had a cast on her leg at the time, was carrying the diaper, she allegedly fell into a stack of chairs in the kitchen which then fell onto her. The paramour stated that after the incident the child was not responsive and was gasping for breath. The child's older two siblings were called into the room by the paramour to assist in attempting to wake the child. The attempts were unsuccessful and the paramour then called the mother to report what happened. Mother returned to the home the following day and found the child unconscious. The paramour also admitted to kicking the child in the head while he was wearing boots and that he also grabbed the child by her arm causing her arm to break. Per the medical exam, the child was diagnosed as having a severe brain hemorrhage, retinal hemorrhaging in both eyes, broken left forearm that was approximately 10-14 days old, multiple old and new rib fractures, a pulmonary contusion, a re-fracture of her right leg which had been broken around January 7, 2012, and old burns on her hip from a cigarette lighter. Through their investigation the county was able to substantiate the mother's paramour as the one who inflicted the injuries to the child. The county was also able to determine that the mother was aware of her paramour previously physically abusing the child, but continued to allow her children to be cared for by her paramour. The paramour has been arrested and is currently incarcerated related to this incident. A criminal investigation is ongoing related to mother's involvement with the abuse. The child's older sisters, ages 9 years and 5 years, are currently residing in the home of their maternal grandmother and maternal uncle. The mother has no contact with these children at this time. The county previously received a report on this family in August 2011 regarding concerns about the lack of proper dental care for the oldest sibling. The family was accepted for ongoing supportive services to monitor the mother's follow through with the child's dental care. The family was open with these services until the beginning of February 2012. During this time the county also investigated a general concern about healed burns to the back of the child's thigh and the child's leg being broken but did not provide services related to this concern as the mother was able to provide an explanation or the child's injuries.

Delaware County

4.) A one-year-old female child died on Feb. 17, 2012 due to physical injuries. Delaware County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in April 2012 and named the mother and the mother's paramour as perpetrators of physical abuse. The mother initially reported that the child had been sick for a few days. She called an ambulance on the date of incident due to the child having labored breathing. Child was pronounced dead shortly after arriving at the

hospital. The child had multiple bruises and abrasions all over her body. Additionally, the child had a pulmonary edema, extensive hemorrhage and a bruise to the small intestine, extensive scalp hemorrhage, fluid and blood in the abdomen, and a lacerated liver. It was determined that these injuries were indicative of non-accidental blunt force trauma. Both the mother and her paramour were unable to provide an explanation for injuries sustained by the child. The child had two siblings who resided with her in the home at the time of the incident. They were also interviewed and were unable to provide an explanation for the child's extensive injuries. After the child's death the two siblings were placed in the care of their maternal aunt. Delaware County Children and Youth Services accepted the family for SCOH services (Services for Children in their Own Home.) The mother currently has supervised visitation with her children. The police investigation is ongoing. The county did not have previous involvement with this family.

Erie County

5.) A five-month-old male child died on Feb. 20, 2012 due to physical injuries he received eleven days earlier. Erie County Office of Children and Youth substantiated the report in March of 2012 and named the mother and her paramour as the perpetrators. The child was transported to the hospital by emergency responders due to being in cardiac arrest. The child was placed on a ventilator and was subsequently removed from life support on February 20, 2012. The child suffered bilateral hemorrhages, massive brain swelling, retinal hemorrhaging, bruising around his left eye and fractures to both arms. The injuries were in various stages of healing. The mother reported that on February 7, 2012, her paramour had been caring for the child and fell while carrying the child. The mother reported that the child hit his head when this happened and had various stages of consciousness. The mother also reported that on February 9, 2012, the child stopped breathing and she pushed on his chest which made the child begin to breathe again. She checked on the child a few minutes later and found him unresponsive, which prompted her to contact emergency responders. The medical examination revealed the child's injuries were inflicted and some of the injuries were likely the result of abusive head trauma. The mother and her paramour do not have any other children. This family was not known to the county agency prior to the incident. Both the mother and her paramour have been charged with criminal homicide, aggravated assault, endangering the welfare of a child and recklessly endangering a child. They are currently incarcerated.

Philadelphia

6.) A two-month-old child died on March 18, 2012 due to physical injuries. The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) substantiated the case in April 2012, naming the child's father as the perpetrator of physical abuse. On the date of incident, emergency responders were called to the home by a relative of the child. Police arrived at the home and found the father in a bedroom. He was holding a knife to his neck and threatening to kill himself. The police found a note written by the father apologizing for killing the child. The father was taken into custody and admitted to police that he had been drinking alcohol that day and had attempted to put the child to sleep. The father stated that he punched the child in the head. He also stated that he held the child very tightly to his chest so that the child was unable to

breathe. The medical examiner determined that the manner of the child's death was homicide due to suffocation. The father has been arrested and is charged with murder, aggravated assault, endangering the welfare of children, simple assault, and recklessly endangering another person. He is currently incarcerated at a Philadelphia County jail. The mother stated that she will be receiving grief counseling services. DHS has since closed the family's case as there are no other children in the home and no need for services. The family did not have prior involvement with the county agency. The father does have an extensive criminal history and is a multiple state Megan's Law Offender.

7.) A six-year-old male child died on March 29, 2012 from physical abuse and neglect. Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) substantiated the case in April of 2012, naming the child's mother and father as the perpetrators. The medical examiner determined that the child died from blunt force trauma to the head and malnutrition. The child also had bruises covering his body. The child was approximately the size of a three-year-old due to emaciation. The child was in the sole care of his parents and he was not attending school. The child had a three-year-old sister, who was determined to be healthy. The sister was placed in kinship care with a maternal uncle at the time of the child's death, and presently remains with the uncle. The county agency was previously involved with this child from 2007-2009 when the child was placed into the care of distant relatives due to concerns of neglect and drug abuse by the parents. The child was returned to the parents care per court order in 2008 and DHS monitored the family's case for a year, closing the case in 2009 due to compliance by the parents. DHS was also previously involved with seven older siblings, who were removed from the parents and adopted. Two of the older siblings were involved with DHS at the time of the child's death and were participating in visitations with the child; however, the county did not have an open case on the victim child at the time of his death. DHS had no previous involvement with the child's younger sister. The parents are both currently incarcerated, awaiting trial on charges of aggravated assault, conspiracy, endangering the welfare of children, simple assault, recklessly endangering another person, and conspiracy to commit murder. The mother is also charged with murder.

Near Fatalities

Beaver County

1.) An eight-month-old female child nearly died on Jan. 5, 2012 due to physical injuries. Beaver County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in January 2012 and named the father as the perpetrator. The child was flown to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh after becoming unresponsive while in the father's care. A medical exam showed that the child sustained bilateral acute subdural hemorrhaging, early signs of brain edema, and bruising on the neck. The child was put on life support. The father was caring for the child at the time of incident and stated that he dropped the child; however, abusive head trauma was suspected based on the child's injuries. The child's sibling was removed from the home and placed with her maternal aunt. The child was discharged from the hospital on May 3, 2012 and is in the

care of the mother. The sibling has also been returned home to the mother. The child is stable but requires 24-hour care due to traumatic brain injury, retinal hemorrhage, right leg DVT, G-tube dependent feeding, and developmental delays. The mother is receiving intensive in-home services from Project Star and eight hours of nursing daily. This family was known to Beaver County Children and Youth. In May 2011, a report was made to the county alleging that the family did not have electricity in the home. The caseworker who responded to that report found that the home was clean and utilities were on, and the case was closed at intake. A second referral was received in October 2011 regarding the condition of the home. The caseworker was unable to make contact with the family at the home and found that the family had moved in with the maternal grandmother. The mother explained that the utilities at the old address were turned off due to non-payment, which is why the family moved in with the maternal grandmother. The family was able to stay with the maternal grandmother, whose home was appropriate, until mother could get into public housing. The case was again closed at intake.

Bucks County

2.) A five-year-old male child nearly died on January 27, 2012 due to physical injuries he received from a lack of supervision. Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency substantiated the report in March of 2012 and named the child's mother and maternal grandmother as the perpetrators. Emergency responders were contacted by the grandmother due to the child being unresponsive due to possibly ingesting the grandmother's medication. The grandmother was prescribed three different medications including Soma, Clonazepam and Neurontin, which were kept in containers that were not child proof. The investigation determined that the child did ingest some of the grandmother's medication. The child has two younger siblings. All three children have been removed from the care of the mother and placed into foster care. The siblings had remained in the home at the start of the investigation. However, the safety plan was violated and the siblings, along with the child, were placed into foster care as a result. There is a criminal investigation pending. The county agency had received a prior referral in February of 2011 regarding inappropriate discipline by the mother towards the child. The county agency reviewed appropriate disciplinary procedures with the mother and also offered agency services to the family. However, services were never implemented as the family was supposed to be moving to another county.

Butler County

3.) A four-month-old male child nearly died on Feb. 11, 2012. Butler County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in April 2012 and named the child's babysitter as the perpetrator of physical abuse. The child had suffered abusive head trauma. Specifically, the child had a subdural hematoma, retinal hemorrhaging, and seizures. The child was in the care of his babysitter the morning the injuries were sustained. The babysitter admitted that she attempted to force feed the child his bottle and that the child had difficulty breathing afterwards. The babysitter denied shaking the child but did state that she requested a teenage household member assist her in performing CPR on the child. There was a language barrier related to this case as the family speaks Vietnamese. It was initially reported that the mother

stated she was home alone with the child and was the sole caretaker of child at the time of the incident. Based on this information, child was placed into foster care after he was discharged from the hospital. Through multiple interviews and the use of interpreters, it was later determined that the child was in the care of the babysitter at the time of the incident, and the child was then returned to his mother. The family has been accepted for services. Case Management Services, Crisis In-Home Stabilization Services, and Early Intervention Services are currently working with the family. The results of the criminal investigation are pending at this time.

Centre County

4.) A two-month-old male child nearly died on Jan. 11, 2012 due to physical injuries. Centre County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in February 2012 and named both parents as perpetrators. The parents noticed that the child was not eating and was “twitching.” The parents took the child to his primary care physician, who directed the parents to take the child to the hospital. The child was then life-lighted to Geisinger Medical Center and admitted to the Pediatric Care Intensive Unit. The child was found to have a skull fracture, subdural hemorrhage, retinol hemorrhage, a fractured clavicle bone, fractured ribs, and a black eye. It was determined that the child suffered brain damage caused by oxygen deprivation, which may lead to serious future impairments. The parents were the only caretakers for the child. The parents did not have any explanation for the child’s injuries and denied harming the child. The doctor stated that the child’s injuries were caused by chronic abuse. When the child was discharged from the hospital, he was placed in foster care. On February 2, 2012 the child was adjudicated as a dependent and abused child and he was court ordered to remain in foster care. The child’s parents have supervised visitation with the child. Centre County Children and Youth Services conducted this investigation in collaboration with the Penn State University Police. Reunification services are being provided to the family. The child remains in foster care with the next permanency review scheduled for July 2012. The criminal investigation is continuing at this time. The father has a prior criminal history and was incarcerated shortly after this incident due to unrelated charges. The father remains at this time in the Centre County Jail. This is the only child in the family, and Centre County Children and Youth Services had no previous involvement with this family.

Chester County

5.) A four-month-old male child nearly died on Feb. 18, 2012. Chester County Department of Children, Youth, and Families substantiated the report in April 2012 and named both the mother and father as perpetrators of physical abuse. On the date of incident, the father had called EMS to the home due to the child not breathing. The father reported that this was the second time in a week that the child had stopped breathing. The father also stated that he did not get medical attention for the child after the first incident. The child was taken to the hospital where he was diagnosed with a skull fracture, brain bleeding, cerebral hemorrhage, cerebral contusion, subdural hematoma, liver laceration, healing bilateral rib fractures, bruising to the torso, fluid around the spine, and retinal hemorrhages. The parents, who were both caring for the child when the injuries would have occurred, could not provide an explanation for

how the child sustained such serious injuries. There were additional concerns that at the time of the incident, the home was cluttered with beer cans and smelled like alcohol. The child has since been released from hospital and is currently being cared for in a rehabilitation hospital. It is planned that the child will reside with his maternal grandmother upon discharge. There were three siblings residing with the child at the time of the incident; two older sisters, ages 3 years and 2 years, and an older brother, age 17 months. The older sisters are currently residing with the biological father of the 3 year old. The older brother is currently residing with the maternal grandmother. The family has been accepted for In-Home Services to address drug and alcohol and potential mental health concerns for the parents; however, the parents are currently non-complaint with the agency and services have not yet begun. The mother currently has supervised visits with the children in their respective homes. The father is not currently visiting with his children. A prior referral to the county had been made in 2011 due to concerns with the older brother, who was born prematurely. The family was accepted for services at that time to assist the family in caring for the older brother who had special health needs. The services to the family for this referral were closed in September 2011.

Dauphin County

6.) A ten-month-old male child nearly died on Jan. 6, 2012 due to physical injuries. Dauphin County Children and Youth Services substantiated the report in March 2012 and named mother and mother's paramour as the perpetrators. The child was taken to hospital by ambulance after experiencing a seizure while in the care of his mother. The hospital discovered that the child had old and new acute head trauma, including bilateral subdural hemorrhages, ecchymosis under the right eye, and bruising on both ears. The child also had ecchymosis on the tip of the penis, multiple bilateral fractures of varying ages on both legs, fractures of the right radius/ulna, and edema of the stomach and bowels. The mother and her paramour admitted to being the sole caretakers for the child during the time period in which the injuries occurred. Both denied causing the injuries to the child and blamed the child's four-year-old sibling for the child's injuries. Medical professionals reported it is not possible for a four-year-old to have caused injuries of this magnitude. In addition, the child's siblings witnessed the paramour harming the child and said that their mother was aware of the abuse. The three siblings initially stayed with the maternal grandmother; however, the grandmother returned the siblings to the mother despite clear instructions not to do so. Subsequently, the siblings were placed together in a non-kinship foster home. The child's condition is currently stable, but medically complex. The child has severely diminished brain functioning and profound developmental delays. The child has had numerous hospitalizations since his initial release for various complications and receives 16 hours a day of nursing care at his foster home. The child's father is in Mexico and has requested that his rights be terminated and that child be available for adoption by his foster mother. Following this incident, the mother was arrested on a bench warrant, unrelated to the abuse, and placed in Dauphin County Prison. This family was known to Dauphin County. Four referrals were made to the county since 2010, regarding guns in the home, a baby born addicted to opiates, and medical neglect. The family was accepted for services in August 2011. The family was receiving intensive in-home services from Justice

Works as of October 2011 and was continuing to receive services at the time of the incident. A criminal investigation into the child's death is ongoing.

Montgomery County

7.) A six-year-old male child nearly died on March 13, 2012, due to medical neglect. Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth substantiated the report in April of 2012, and named the child's mother and father as the perpetrators of medical neglect. The child was previously diagnosed with Kawasaki Disease. His parents were attempting to treat the child's condition through natural methods, and were failing to take the child to scheduled medical appointments. When the child was finally seen by a doctor, he was severely malnourished and could not extend his arms and legs due to muscle contractions. The child was diagnosed with an enlarged liver and failure to thrive. Medical professionals determined the child would likely have died if he was not hospitalized when he was. The child is currently hospitalized, as his body is still not properly absorbing protein. The county agency was not previously involved with this family. The child's 17-year-old sister was evaluated and determined to be healthy; she currently resides with the parents. A criminal investigation is ongoing.