

## Child Fatality Summary

**Child's Name:** James Valiquette

**County:** Pasco

**Date of Birth:** 11/13/2020

**Date of Death:** 1/6/2022

**Report Number:** 2022-005095

### Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
James Valiquette	1 year	Deceased Child
██████████	2 years	Surviving Sibling
Andrea Smarr	25 years	Mother
John Valiquette	24 years	Father

### Circumstances Surrounding Death

On January 6, 2022, an investigation was received regarding the death of 1-year-old James Valiquette, who was found unresponsive in his home. The toddler resided with his older sibling, ██████████ and their parents, Andrea Smarr-25 and John Valiquette-24.

According to the mother, she placed her son in his Pack n' Play to sleep sometime around 10:30 p.m. on the evening of January 5, 2022, and when she checked on him nearly 12 hours later, he had his blanket over his head and he was unresponsive. The mother called 911 and notified the father, who was reportedly not at home. Law enforcement and paramedics responded a short time later and the toddler was pronounced deceased at the scene.

The home conditions were described as hazardous as drug paraphernalia, to include but not limited to straws, lighters, bongs, tinfoil squares, and jars of marijuana were found around the home and within the children's reach. Additionally, the home was cluttered with clothing, household items, children's toys and bottles with curdled milk, and various food items were observed around the home.

Drug use was denied by the mother and she declined to provide a urine sample for a presumptive drug screen. The father refused to avail himself for an interview; however, the mother advised that he had a medical marijuana card and denied that he used any illicit substances.

There was video surveillance in the family's living room and the children's bedroom. The video captured footage of the toddler walking around the living room on the night of

January 5th, and he was seen picking up small pieces of tinfoil and putting them in his mouth, while the father laid passed out on the ground. Around 10:30 p.m. the mother can be seen placing her son in his Pack n' Play, where he remained until she checked on him the next morning. Of note, the squares of tinfoil were tested and the results were positive for fentanyl.

In addition to the information mentioned above, sources familiar with the family expressed concerns for violence between the pair; however, the mother denied those claims and limited additional information was able to be obtained.

Dr. N. Palma with the District Six (Pinellas and Pasco Counties) Medical Examiner's Office conducted an autopsy on the toddler. The cause of death was determined as combined drug toxicity and the manner of death is listed as an accident.

The New Port Richey Police Department conducted the criminal investigation and in March 2022, both of the parents were arrested on manslaughter charges.

Based on the interviews and evidence gathered during the course of the investigation, the Pasco County Sheriff's Office Child Protective Investigations Division closed their investigation with the following findings:

Child	Identified Maltreatment	Finding	Caregiver Responsible
James Valiquette	Death	Verified	Mother/Father
	Environmental Hazards	Verified	Mother/Father
	Inadequate Supervision	Verified	Mother/Father
	Substance Misuse – Illicit Drugs	Verified	Mother/Father
	Household Violence Threatens Child	Not Substantiated	N/A
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

**Other Children in the Family**

Due to the above-mentioned concerns the sibling was removed from the parents then medically evaluated and cleared at a local hospital. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

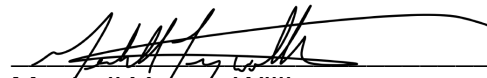
## Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

There are two prior investigations involving the family which reflect a pattern of allegations surrounding marijuana use. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

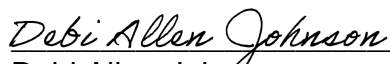
[REDACTED] A second investigation occurred in 2020 after the mother gave birth to her son and they both tested positive for marijuana at delivery. During that investigation, the mother was referred to the Healthy Start Program. Both of the investigations were closed with not substantiated findings.

[REDACTED]

  
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2/14/2023

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Date

  
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02/14/2023

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Date