

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Amari Williams

County: Duval

Date of Birth: January 2, 2019

Date of Death: April 3, 2022

Report Number: 2022-102259

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Amari Williams	3	Deceased Child
Celena Sibley	36	Mother
Reginald Williams	32	Father
Alexander Sibley	36	Maternal Uncle
Carla Bridges	62	Maternal Grandmother

1. Circumstances Surrounding Death

On April 3, 2022, 3-year-old Amari shot himself in his home while under the supervision of his maternal grandmother and maternal great-aunt while his mother was in the shower. The grandmother screamed and the mother immediately ran out and saw the child on the floor. She called 911 and attempted cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) until Law Enforcement (LE) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrived. Upon arrival, despite life-saving efforts, EMS pronounced him deceased at 12:49 pm.

On 4/3/22, the mother was planning to take the child shopping. The mother asked the grandmother and aunt to watch the child while she took a shower and got ready. The grandmother and aunt stated that he was playing with toys and when he walked down the hallway, they thought he was going to his room. They then heard a loud pop and found the child in the uncle's bedroom laying on the floor, bleeding. A gun was lying in front of him.

The family believes the child went into the uncle's room to get some candy which was kept in a drawer that also contained a loaded Smith and Wesson .40 caliber handgun. The uncle stated he found the gun in the front yard in February and left it in the dresser. The mother and father denied knowing that the uncle had a gun in the home. The grandmother initially stated to law enforcement that she knew the uncle had the gun but later denied this. The paternal grandfather, who lives across the street with the father, stated he witnessed the uncle shooting a gun on New Year's Eve but was unsure if this was the same gun. The uncle denies telling anyone about the gun.

All household members, except for the uncle who refused, were drug screened and were negative for all substances.

The uncle has an extensive criminal history including a felony conviction for trafficking cocaine. As a convicted felon he could not possess a gun.

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office opened an investigation which was closed as a "case cleared by arrest". The uncle was arrested and charged with Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and Culpable negligence (firearm/children).

The Medical Examiner completed an autopsy and determined the cause of death as a gunshot wound to the head with perforation of the skull and brain. The manner of death was an accident.

The First Coast Child Protection Team (CPT) completed a medical records review on August 16, 2022, and had positive findings for fatal neglect stating, "Loaded handgun left within reach. It was in a drawer with candy reportedly - creating an additional risk."

Based on the information obtained during the investigation, DCF Duval County Child Protective Investigations closed the investigation on September 23, 2022, with verified findings of death due to neglect as a result of inadequate supervision by the uncle.

The family was offered grief counseling but did not engage in services.

Other Children in the Family

The child had no siblings at the time of his death.

2. Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

The family has no priors with the department.



Melissa Stanley, MSMFT, MBA, CPP
Child Fatality Prevention Specialist

5/25/23

Date



Melissa Walker
NER Program Manager

5/26/23

Date