

**Florida Department of Children and Families
Child Fatality Summary C-17 2022**

Child's Name: Zackeri Blessing

County: Broward

Date of Birth: 07/28/2019

Date of Death: 08/20/2022

Family Composition Chart

Report Number: 2022-250417

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Zackeri Blessing	3 years	Decedent
██████████	7 weeks	Half-sibling
██████████	8 years	Half-sibling
Shalaya Rahman	27 years	Mother

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On 08/20/2022, the Department received a report stating that a 3-year-old toddler was found unresponsive in the lake behind the family home. A neighbor found the toddler, retrieved him and initiated resuscitation efforts. Emergency medical services arrived at the scene and took over resuscitation efforts; however, the toddler was pronounced deceased upon his arrival at Broward Health Coral Springs Medical Center at 7:05 pm.

The mother provided conflicting statements about the facts in the hour leading up to the death of the toddler. The mother at first stated that she was home and unloading groceries when the toddler left the home undetected; however, it was later discovered that the mother was not home when the incident occurred. The mother was seen on surveillance camera at a nearby Home Depot, purchasing door alarms so that the toddler couldn't leave the home undetected. The mother and infant were at the Home Depot when the incident occurred. The mother left the toddler and 8-year-old child home alone.

In the moments leading up to the incident, the toddler left the home undetected and unsupervised. He was found floating in the lake, behind the family home, by a neighbor. The neighbor retrieved the child and attempted CPR. Other witnesses contacted 911. Emergency medical services arrived at the scene and transported the toddler to the hospital.

During the incident, the mother arrived home and checked around the house for the toddler, but didn't find him. Then, the mother asked the older sibling if she locked the door and she said, "No." So, the mother went outside and saw a neighbor doing CPR on a child. The mother started yelling, "That's my baby."

After the incident, it was determined that the toddler was able to open the front door and leave the home undetected. The only other opening in the 2nd floor apartment home is the sliding glass door that leads to the balcony. The toddler had no visible signs that he had fallen from the 2nd story balcony.

The family had moved into the apartment just three to four weeks prior to the incident. Neighbors said that they had not previously seen the children outside unsupervised.

The mother tested negative for all drugs.

The Broward County Medical Examiner's office completed an autopsy. The cause of death was determined to be "drowning" and the manner as an "accident."

The Coconut Creek Police Department has jurisdiction over this case. The criminal investigation revealed that a crime had possibly occurred, so the detective sent the packet to the State Attorney's Office and it was later determined that no charges would be filed.

Based on the information indicated above, the report was closed with "verified" findings for the death and inadequate supervision maltreatments, and "no indicators" of threatened harm.

Other Children in the Family

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The family remains in California.

Current Agency Involvement with Family

At the time of the incident, there was an open DCF investigation that was received on 08/11/2022 with allegations of household violence threatens child. The mother's male friend assaulted her and the newborn child. The mother sustained injuries that included a fractured arm. The mother's male friend threw a cell phone out of anger which hit the newborn in the head; the newborn was examined by emergency medical services and was cleared.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Signature Page:

Tausha Schreiber

Tausha Schreiber, Child Fatality Prevention Specialist

11/03/2023

Date



Denise Foster, Region Program Manager

11/03/2023

Date