

## Child Fatality Summary

**Child's Name:** Bryson Pulgarin

**County:** Highlands

**Date of Birth:** 04/18/2017

**Date of Death:** 09/30/2022

**Report Number:** 2022-298610

### Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Bryson Pulgarin	5 years old	Child Victim
[REDACTED]	4 months old	Half-Sibling by mother
[REDACTED]	6 years old	Sibling
[REDACTED]	8 years old	Sibling
Henry Stegman	29 years old	Mother's Paramour/Father of [REDACTED]
Tobi McCaffery	28 years old	Mother

### Circumstances Surrounding Death

On September 30, 2022, the 5-year-old child passed away after becoming unresponsive while with the mother's paramour, and multiple histories were provided as to the circumstances.

According to the family, the following information was provided.

On September 30, 2022, at approximately 1:30 p.m. the child told the mother that his stomach hurt. The mother provided the child Ibuprofen before leaving for work at approximately 2:00 p.m., leaving the child in the care of her paramour. According to the paramour, shortly after the mother left the child stated that he was tired and wanted to take a nap. He was laying down on the couch and asked for a drink. The paramour got him a glass of Sprite and water and walked out of the room to get diapers and wipes for the infant. After a few minutes he looked back at the child and noticed he could see the whites of his eyes. He picked the child up and asked if he was okay and the child faintly responded, "Yes". The stepfather then called the mother to tell her he needed to take the child to the hospital and the mother requested a Facetime video. The paramour attempted this but it would not go through, so he called 911 at 2:29 p.m. and completed CPR until Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services arrived. The child was transported to the hospital.

The Charge Nurse at the hospital and indicated the child had the following injuries:

- Bruising in linear fashion was observed on the child's groin.
- Bruising was observed up and down his spine.

- Bruising on the hip looked like an abrasion but it was not an actual abrasion – like little red dots.
- Bruising on the child's head was linear above his right eyebrow and he had a little bit of a black eye.
- Bruising was observed on the left side of his chest - bottom of rib cage inch long and it was squarish in nature.
- Bruising was on his buttocks – both buttocks and his whole back from lower back up to his neck.

On September 30, 2022, Bryson Pulgarin was pronounced deceased at 3:41 p.m.

The mother and paramour indicated that the child was seen by his primary care physician in July or August of this year for bruising easily and red dots on his face. He had elevated liver enzymes and was referred to Nemours for Gastroenterologist, Hematologist, and a Hepatologist. There was an appointment set for Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.

The mother and paramour consented to drug screens and were negative.

On November 12, 2022, the mother and paramour got into an argument. The paramour left and went to his grandfather's home, and he somehow obtained his firearm. The paramour then went to the father of the older children's home. The paramour then shot and killed the other father as well as his (the other father's) paramour, who was transported to the hospital in critical condition. The mother's paramour then turned the gun on himself and committed suicide.

The Highlands County Sheriff's Office investigated the death of Bryson Pulgarin (HCSO22OFF152095). Their case was closed after the mother's paramour committed suicide and no charges were filed against the mother.

The death certificate was received on December 21, 2022, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Stephan J. Nelson, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for Bryson Pulgarin on December 14, 2022. ME# 22-FA-10-627.

Cause of Death: Blunt Force Abdominal Trauma Assault

Manner of Death: Homicide

On February 2, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Physical Injury, Internal Injuries, and Inadequate Supervision as to Bryson Pulgarin, with Henry Stegman as the caregiver responsible.
- Verified Findings of Threatened Harm as to [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

**Other Children in the Family:**

Grief counseling information was provided to the family.

[Redacted]


**Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family**

The family did not have any open services.


**Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family**

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

  
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Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist  
Kirby Morgan

\_\_\_\_\_  
2/10/23  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Central Region Director of Child Protection  
Stephanie Weis

\_\_\_\_\_  
02/10/2023  
Date