

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Michael Bragg

County: Osceola

Date of Birth: 09/18/2018

Date of Death: 03/09/2023

Report Number: 2023-085228

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Michael Bragg	4 years old	Child Victim
Kemaris Washington	22 years old	Stepmother
Michael Bragg	32 years old	Father

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On March 13, 2023, a report was received indicating the 4-year-old child passed away after being brought to the Emergency Room on March 9, 2023, by the father and stepmother with a gunshot wound to the head.

According to law enforcement and the child protective investigator, the following information was provided.

The stepmother and father's histories were inconsistent. The stepmother said the father had been drinking but she had not, and the father said the stepmother had been drinking and he had not. The two indicated they were watching horror movies on the stepmother's phone and had the speaker right by their heads. They both stated they did not hear a gun shot. The stepmother indicated she woke up and found blood, realized it was the child's and they took him to the hospital. According to the detective, the stepmother did call 911; the call lasted for 26 seconds, and the stepmother must have set the phone down as the father could be heard mumbling in the background, and then the call ended. On the way to the hospital the father told the stepmother to stop at a liquor store so he could get a lighter to smoke a cigarette on their way to the hospital. They stopped for 3 minutes and 6 seconds. The parents drove the child to HCA Florida Osceola Hospital.

On March 9, 2023, Michael Bragg was pronounced deceased at 9:59 a.m.

The stepmother consented to a drug screen and tested positive for THC and Alcohol. The father consented to a drug screen, which was monitored via camera by a correctional officer, but after several minutes he stated he could not urinate. Law Enforcement found marijuana on scene that was packaged for sale.

The Kissimmee Police Department investigated the death of Michael Bragg (23-002160). Law Enforcement found a 9mm and 40 caliber handguns in the home hidden in a suitcase. The 40 caliber was the gun used. The father indicated the guns were owned by his brother and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) continues to research ownership. Ballistics have been sent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)..

The detective advised most of the information gathered by the child protective investigator was accurate; however, they found additional information subsequent to commencement. They had the Medical Examiner test for gun-shot residue (GSR) on the child. They did not test the adults because it is not admissible in court. There were two guns in the home, the 9mm and a 40 caliber which was the one used. It is likely the child shot himself. Bruising, or lack of, suggested it would be likely the child was either sitting or kneeling and he had bruising on the right eye which may have been kick back from the gun; however, they are not able to prove or disprove that the adults did or did not pull the trigger. The bullet wound was directly between the child's eyes. The gun would have had to be 2-3 inches from his face based on stippling. The 40 caliber was found in a suitcase. The caregivers attempted to hide the firearm after the fact. The 9mm was initially in the car but they took it inside and hid it in the suitcase as well. It is still unclear who owns the gun; however, they listened to jail calls between the father and his brother to see who owned it. However, the gun had definitely been in the house for a while because the stepmother had pictures with the gun dating back to at least January 2023.

On March 9, 2023, Michael Bragg was arrested and charged with Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. On March 20, 2023, the father was charged with Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child. During the week of March 27 to March 31, 2023, charges were filed with the State Attorney's Office for the stepmother for Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child.

The death certificate was received on March 29, 2023, and indicated District 25 Medical Examiner Chantel Y. Njiwaji, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for Michael Bragg on March 17, 2023. ME# 23-25-00518.

Cause of Death: Gunshot Wound of the Head

Manner of Death: Undetermined

On April 27, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Inadequate Supervision, Physical Injury, Substance Misuse - Alcohol, and Substance Misuse - Illicit Drugs as to Michael Bragg, with the father Michael Bragg and the stepmother Kemaris Washington as the caregivers responsible.

Other Children in the Family:

The decedent's biological mother was referred to grief counseling.

Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family

The family did not have any open services.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

The family does not have any prior abuse report history.



Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

5/5/23
Date



Central Region Director of Child Protection
Stephanie Weis

5/5/23
Date