

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Phoenix Ray

County: Polk

Date of Birth: 11/03/2021

Date of Death: 03/23/2023

Report Number: 2023-097003

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Phoenix Ray	16 months old	Child Victim
██████████	██████████	Sibling
██████████	16 months old	Twin Sibling
██████████	3 years old	Sibling
Ambrishel Dawson	27 years old	Mother
Deldrick Ray, Jr.	20 years old	Father

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On March 23, 2023, the 16-month-old child passed away after being found unresponsive by the parents.

According to the family, the following information was provided.

On March 23, 2023, the family all got up at approximately 7:00 a.m. The mother and father had to be at court for petit theft charges at 9:00 a.m. They dropped the girls off at the godmother's home in Bartow at approximately 8:00 a.m. After court they picked the girls up at approximately 11:00 a.m. and they stopped by Tropical Smoothie. When they got home, they fixed corn dogs because the children were hungry. The twins both ate and then they crawled around the home and played with toys. The parents closed the bedroom door and the bathroom door so they could not crawl in there. The father was playing a video game.

At approximately 1:00 p.m. the mother went to lay down; she was between eight and nine months pregnant and wanted to lay down. The girls were up with the father while he was playing games. The mother did not fall asleep until approximately 2:00 p.m. The father put the twins in their Pack n' Play in the other room and went to lay down as well at 2:00 p.m. The mother and father both fell asleep. The mother woke up at approximately 4:40 p.m. The father had to be at work at 5:00 p.m. When the mother woke up, she did not check on the girls and there was no crying, so she assumed they were sleeping. The door to the room where they were was cracked open.

The father left for work a few minutes after 5:00 p.m. At this time, the mother got up to peek in the room and the twins were both sleeping. There were pillows in the play pen and they were sleeping in their normal positions. Their heads did not look obstructed. The mother did not go into the room. The mother went to lay back down at approximately 5:15 p.m. and fell back to sleep. The mother woke up at approximately 6:41 p.m. when the father called her. The father was leaving work and asked if she wanted food. The mother did not get out of bed. The mother did not hear anyone crying. The father came home with food and the mother ate in the bedroom and the father ate in the front room. The mother did not hear anyone crying and did not check on the girls. She came out of the room after eating, went to the living room with the father and they were on their phones. They did not check on the girls.

The mother next checked on the girls at approximately 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. and the child was laying on the floor. The mother backed out of the room, did not physically check on the child, but told the father the child was on the floor, and not moving. The father went into the room, grabbed the child, started screaming, and the mother called 911 at 8:59 p.m. Dispatch instructed the father on CPR. The child was face down between the closet door that was propped up next to the Pack n' Play and by the pillows to block a hole in the Pack n' Play. The child's neck might have still been inside the Pack n' Play. Her head did not look like it was on the ground. Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services responded to the home.

On March 23, 2023, [REDACTED] was pronounced deceased at 9:39 p.m.

The mother consented to a drug screen and was negative. The father consented to a drug screen and was positive for THC.

The family had one Pack n' Play for the twins that was broken on both sides and the netting had huge holes in it. The parents covered the holes by pushing the bed up against the wall and put the closet door and pillows to cover the other hole. There was a television on the dresser pressed up against the Pack n' Play. The television was turned towards the Pack n' Play. The Pack n' Play had urine-soaked pillows. The home was messy and cluttered. In the parents' bedroom the flat screen television was smashed and had three hit marks on it. The bedframe was destroyed, and the mattress was laying on the floor on top of the broken wooden pieces. The bathroom door had a hole in it. In the closet there was a broken picture on the shelf. The mother and father both admitted to multiple verbal and physical altercations, with only one being documented in September 2022. The twins had not been to the pediatrician since they were three months old.

The Polk County Sheriff's Office investigated the death of [REDACTED] (2023-41025). When the responding Deputy arrived at the home there was a strong odor of marijuana and there were holes in the bathroom door, bedroom door, and three holes in the television along with the glass being shattered. A reenactment was conducted with the mother and the father. The mother showed the baby face down halfway out of the Pack n' Play through the hole in the side and the father showed the baby face down all the

way out of the Pack n' Play. In both histories provided by the parents the child was unresponsive, and the twin sister was waking up in the same Pack n' Play alongside the child. No arrests were made, nor charges filed.

The death certificate was received on May 31, 2023, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Vera V. Volnikh, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for [REDACTED] on May 22, 2023. ME# 23-10-FA-205.

Cause of Death: Positional Asphyxia Entrapment

Manner of Death: Accident

On June 19, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Inadequate Supervision, and Environmental Hazards as to Phoenix Ray, with Ambrishel Dawson and Deldrick Ray as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Threatened Harm and Household Violence Threatens Child as to Phoenix Ray, with Ambrishel Dawson and Deldrick Ray as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Inadequate Supervision and Household Violence Threatens Child as to [REDACTED] with Ambrishel Dawson and Deldrick Ray as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Environmental Hazards as to [REDACTED], with Ambrishel Dawson and Deldrick Ray as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Threatened Harm as to [REDACTED], with Ambrishel Dawson and Deldrick Ray as the caregivers responsible.

Other Children in the Family:

Present Danger was identified and an out of home safety plan was implemented. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family

The family did not have any open services.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

[REDACTED]



Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

6/23/23

Date



Central Region Director of Child Protection
Stephanie Weis

6/23/23

Date