

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Brayleigh Pitts

County: Polk

Date of Birth: 11/22/2022

Date of Death: 04/08/2023

Report Number: 2023-115377

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Brayleigh Pitts	4 months old	Child Victim
██████████	3 years old	Sibling
██████████	4 years old	Sibling
██████████	5 years old	Sibling
Sarah Pate	25 years old	Mother
Addie Pitts	27 years old	Father

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On April 8, 2023, the 4-month-old passed away after being found unresponsive by the mother.

According to the family, the following information was provided.

The father works from 5:45 to 6:00 a.m. until approximately 2:00 p.m. and the mother works from approximately 3:30 p.m. until approximately 1:00 to 2:00 a.m. Their work schedules are this way, so the children do not have to attend daycare. None of the children are currently in school.

On April 8, 2023, the children were up and running around when the mother got home from work at approximately 2:00 a.m. and they were awake until approximately 3:00 to 4:00 a.m. The mother fed the baby around this time and then laid her down. The mother recalled staying up until 8:00 a.m. because she had sent a picture of the baby to the 5-year-old at 7:52 a.m. The mother fed the baby, placed her on her chest, and fell asleep. The mother woke up between approximately 11:50 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. She woke up on her right side and noticed that the baby was on her left side. The mother found the baby unresponsive in bed with her. The mother's phone was not charged, so she had to charge it to 5% before calling 911 at 12:22 p.m. The nearest neighbor was only feet away (approximately eight feet). The Polk County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) and Emergency Medical Services responded to the home. The child was transported to Lakeland Regional Medical Center.

On April 8, 2023, Brayleigh Pitts was pronounced deceased at 1:22 p.m.

The home was found to be in disarray and cluttered throughout. The mother consented to a drug screen and was negative. The father consented to a drug screen and was positive for THC.

The mother has a previous child fatality in 2016 where the infant passed away while co-sleeping with the mother and the cause of death was suffocation. There are several similarities between that child's fatality and the current child fatality. In both cases, the mother was home with the children and the father was at work. Law enforcement noted on both cases there was a bassinet and a crib/Pack N' Play observed in the home filled with various household items. Law enforcement also noted that on both cases the mother appeared calm when they arrived, and her timeline of events provided to them was similar on both cases.

The Polk County Sheriff's Office investigated the death of Brayleigh Pitts (2023-14859). The detective filed a complaint affidavit for Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child as to the mother to the State Attorney's Office and at closure their review and determination on the charges is still pending.

The death certificate was received on May 8, 2023, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Vera V. Volnikh, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for Brayleigh Pitts on April 12, 2023. ME# 23-10-FA-243.

Cause of Death: Suffocation Co-Sleeping

Manner of Death: Accident

On June 7, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death and Inadequate Supervision as to Brayleigh Pitts, with Sarah Pate as the caregiver responsible.
- Not Substantiated Findings of Threatened Harm as to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], with Sarah Pate as the caregiver responsible.

Other Children in the Family:

Present danger was identified, and the children were placed in an out of home safety plan. On June 5, 2023, the family agreed to Non-Judicial In-Home Services for the surviving siblings and they will be returning home to the parents as there will be ongoing supervision. [REDACTED] the surviving children to attend daycare, a speech evaluation for all three siblings, a parenting program for the parents, [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]

[REDACTED]



Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

6/9/23
Date



Central Region Director of Child Protection
Stephanie Weis

6/9/23
Date