

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Stephen L. Rodda

County: Polk

Date of Birth: 10/12/2006

Date of Death: 09/04/2023

Report Number: 2023-277824

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Stephen L. Rodda	16 years old	Child Victim
[REDACTED]	15 years old	Sibling (Lives with Mother)
Stephen T. Rodda	37 years old	Father
Stephanie Rodda	36 year old	Mother
Thomas Rodda	65 years old	Paternal Grandfather
Kimberly Rodda	62 years old	Paternal Grandmother

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On September 4, 2023, the 16-year-old was murdered by his father with what is suspected to have been an angle grinder.

According to the Polk County Sheriff's Office, the following information was provided.

The 16-year-old decedent had moved into his grandparents' home approximately two months prior, to help the grandfather out as the grandmother was in rehabilitation for an injury. The decedent's father had successively lived in multiple states for brief periods at a time before returning to Florida approximately a month prior.

On September 4, 2023, the grandfather went to visit the grandmother at 8:00 a.m. Upon his return at approximately 11:00 a.m., he was met outside by the father who advised him not to enter the home as he had killed someone, and that he may need to call the police. The grandfather entered the home and saw his grandson deceased in the dining area of his home. The grandfather called 911 at 11:17 a.m., the father fled, but was apprehended approximately a mile away from the home. Law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services responded to the home.

On September 4, 2023, Stephen L. Rodda was pronounced deceased on scene by EMS personnel at 11:25 a.m.

After he was apprehended, the father advised law enforcement that they probably need to read him his rights. The father used an angle grinder as the weapon. It was indicated that the father had previously been diagnosed with schizophrenia and was

unmedicated. The father expressed that he has rewritten the bible, owns the NFL, and was the governor of Texas.

The Polk County Sheriff's Office investigated the death of Stephen L. Rodda (2021-36130). On September 4, 2023, Stephen T. Rodda was arrested and charged with First Degree Murder and Aggravated Child Abuse by Aggravated Battery. On October 4, 2023, a Notice of Intent to Seek (the) Death Penalty and Disclosure of Aggravating Factors was filed.

The death certificate was received on September 12, 2023, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Stephen J. Nelson, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for Stephen L. Rodda on September 5, 2023. ME# 23-10-FA-619.

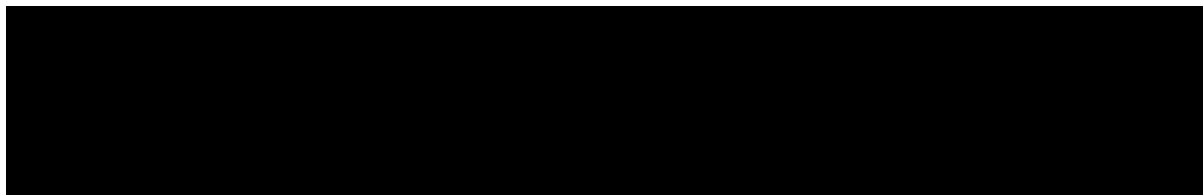
Cause of Death: Multiple Blunt Force Traumatic Injuries Battery

Manner of Death: Homicide

On November 1, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Physical Injury, Internal Injuries, and Bone Fracture as to Stephen L. Rodda, with Stephane T. Rodda as the caregiver responsible.

Other Children in the Family:



Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family

The family did not have any open services.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family





Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

11/6/23

Date



Central Region Director of Child Protection
Stephanie Weis

11/6/23

Date