

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Ezekiel Cotto-Saintfleur

County: Polk

Date of Birth: 04/29/2022

Date of Death: 03/08/2024

Report Number: 2024-083057

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Ezekiel Cotto-Saintfleur	22 months old	Child Victim
Iliana Cotto	21 years old	Mother
Bobby Curry	20 years old	Mother's Paramour

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On March 9, 2024, a report was received indicating this 22-month-old child passed away on March 8, 2024, after suffering apparent abusive head trauma on March 5, 2024.

According to the family and law enforcement, the following information was provided. The mother and child resided with the mother's paramour.

On March 5, 2024, the mother was at work and her paramour was home with the child. The paramour dropped the mother off at work at approximately 10:00 a.m. According to the paramour, once they got back home the paramour put the child down for a nap and the child woke up at approximately 11:00 a.m., having wet the bed. The paramour cleaned the child up. At approximately 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. the paramour gave the child a shower and then he took one himself. They were drying off when the dog came into the bathroom. The paramour pushed the dog away several times, then the dog barked, and jumped at the child causing him to hit his head on the bathtub. The paramour put the dog in another room. The child was crying, became very tense, but was still breathing. Within an hour the child's condition worsened and he became more tense. The paramour called the mother, who informed the paramour to splash water on the child, which had no effect, so she instructed him to call 911, which he did at 8:07 p.m. Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services responded to the home. The child was transported to Lakeland Regional Medical Center and then transferred to Tampa General Hospital.

Upon arrival at the hospital, the child was found to have a recent brain bleed as well as an older brain bleed that was at least eight hours old. The doctors stated that the child was in cardiac arrest for at least 40 minutes prior to any life saving measures being conducted.

On March 8, 2024, the child was pronounced deceased at 5:03 p.m.

The mother denied that she had ever seen the paramour being abusive to the child and stated that he had only recently begun watching the child.

The paramour consented to a drug screen and was negative for all substances. The mother consented to a drug screen and was positive for THC.

The Child Protection Team completed a medical exam, and the child was diagnosed with diffuse brain swelling, acute and subacute subdural brain bleeds with a midline shift of 6mm, a right mandible fracture, extensive bilateral retinal hemorrhages through multiple layers with a retinal detachment of the right eye, and two minor healing abrasions to the mid-forehead.

On March 11, 2024, the detective contacted the Child Protective Investigator and indicated the autopsy was completed that day and that the child's death had been ruled a homicide.

The Lakeland Police Department investigated the death of the child (2024-22582). On March 15, 2024, the paramour was arrested and charged with Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child and Aggravated Child Abuse.

The death certificate was received on March 27, 2024, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Stephen J. Nelson, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for the child on March 14, 2024. ME# 24-10-FA-136.

Cause of Death: Blunt Force Head Trauma Battery

Manner of Death: Homicide

On June 20, 2024, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Inadequate Supervision, Bone Fracture, Internal Injuries, and Physical Injury as to the child, with the paramour as the caregiver responsible.

Other Children in the Family:

There are no other children in the care of the mother or the paramour. Grief counseling information was provided to the mother.

Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family

The family did not have any open services.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

The mother and child do not have any prior abuse report history.

[REDACTED]



Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

6/28/24

Date

Stephanie Weis

6/28/24

Date