



<b>Summary Report</b>	<b>Fatality</b>	<b>03/23/2022</b>
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**1. Victim:** Chaskah Davis Smith – 11-year-old male

**2. Was the child residing in the child's home or in an out-of-home placement at the time of the fatality?**

The child was residing in his home when the following incident occurred:

On January 30, 2022, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 11-year-old Chaskah Davis Smith, who had been transported to the hospital and pronounced deceased. Upon examination, there were multiple non-accidental injuries found. The child's maternal grandmother, Stephanie Davis, and her husband, Thomas Desharnais, were both arrested for one count of first degree murder and one count of child abuse.

**3. If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in the child's home, the following information will be provided:**

**a. Services being provided to the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect at the time of the incident and the date of the last contact before the incident between the entity providing services and the person receiving services:**

There were no services being provided to the family by the Department of Child Safety at the time of the incident.

**b. Was the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect the subject of a report for investigation at the time of the incident?**

No.

**c. All involvement of the child's parents and of the person suspected of the abuse or neglect in a situation for which a report for investigation was made or in services provided pursuant to this chapter in the five years preceding the incident:**

DCS received the following prior report involving Stephanie Davis and Thomas Desharnais:

On March 22, 2017, a report was received alleging physical abuse to Chaskah Davis Smith by Stephanie Davis. The allegation was unsubstantiated. The family was not provided any services and the case was closed on April 14, 2017.

On May 15, 2017, a report was received alleging physical abuse to Chaskah Davis Smith by Stephanie Davis, Thomas Desharnais and another adult. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with resources available in the community and the case was closed on July 17, 2017.

On August 31, 2017, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a child by Thomas Desharnais. The allegation was unsubstantiated. The family was not provided any services and the case was closed on September 18, 2017.



**d. Any investigation pursuant to a report for investigation concerning the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect or services provided to the child or the child's family since the date of the incident involving the fatality:**

The investigation of the fatality report resulted in the arrest of both Stephanie Davis and Thomas Desharnais for first degree murder and child abuse. A sibling was taken into custody and placed in foster care. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court on February 2, 2022. Services are being provided to the sibling. There were no subsequent reports received involving this family.

**4. If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in an out-of-home placement, the following information will be provided:**

**a. Licensing Agency:**

N/A

**b. Licensing history of the out-of-home placement, including the type of license held by the operator of the placement and the period for which the placement has been licensed:**

N/A

**c. Summary of all violations by the licensee:**

N/A

**d. Any other actions by the licensee or an employee of the licensee that constitute a substantial failure to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of a child.**

N/A

**5. Actions taken by the Department in response to the case including any changes to policy or practice and/or recommendations for further changes in policies, practices, rules or statutes:**

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Scottsdale Police Department. The investigation of the fatality report resulted in the arrest of both Stephanie Davis and Thomas Desharnais for first degree murder and child abuse. A sibling was taken into custody and placed in foster care. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court on February 2, 2022. Services are being provided to the sibling. There were no subsequent reports received involving this family.

Additionally, in accordance with the DCS Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16), multidisciplinary team (MDT) reviews of fatality and near fatality cases were implemented during the first quarter of FY16. The MDT reviews of fatality and near fatality cases, especially those with prior DCS involvement, are a key feature of the Strategic Plan and support the objective of increasing the accuracy of safety and risk assessments in investigations.

Cases are reviewed by the MDT in order to identify any systemic factors, both internal and external to the Department that may have had an impact. The Department uses the aggregate data gathered through all of the MDT reviews to assess and guide future changes and/or recommendations to policies, practices, rules or statutes. Findings from these reviews are



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DEPARTMENT  
*of* CHILD SAFETY

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Mike Faust, Director  
Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

compiled into an annual report to be shared on the DCS website. The target date for release of the next report is December 1, 2022.

For more information regarding the Department of Child Safety's Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016, please visit the DCS website.