

Summary Report	Fatality	09/10/2025
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1. Victim: Parker Scholtes – 2-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 July 9, 2024, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 2-year-old Parker Scholtes, who was found unresponsive after father left the child sleeping in a vehicle in the family's driveway. Parker was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased. On August 1, 2024, the father, Christopher Scholtes, was indicted by a Pima County Grand Jury on charges of first-degree murder and child abuse in relation to Parker's death. On August 20, 2025, the Department substantiated the allegations of neglect to Parker by the father, Christopher Scholtes.

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:

There has been no prior DCS involvement regarding Parker Scholtes.

The child's father, Christopher Scholtes, and his mother were involved in the following prior reports:

On June 28, 2014, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On January 23, 2017, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On September 26, 2017, a report was received alleging neglect, physical abuse, and emotional abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes, and neglect to the child by their stepmother. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On February 11, 2019, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On December 12, 2019, a report was received alleging emotional abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On April 21, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes, and their stepmother. The DCS investigation did not result in evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On September 15, 2020, a report was received alleging emotional abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes, and their stepmother. The allegations were unsubstantiated. This investigation was still in progress when the next report was received.

On November 30, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect and emotional abuse to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes, and their stepmother. The allegations were unsubstantiated. This investigation was still in progress when the next report was received.

On December 1, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their father, Christopher Scholtes. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The child transitioned to their mother's care, the family was provided with in-home services, and the case was closed in April 2021.

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 report regarding the fatality resulted in the indictment of the child's father, Lance Savard, on charges of first-degree murder and child abuse in relation to Parker's death. Following an assessment of child safety, the siblings in the home were assessed as safe in their mother's care. The allegations of neglect to Parker by his father, Lance Savard, were substantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

A subsequent report was received on June 27, 2025, with allegations of neglect and physical abuse to a sibling by their father and stepmother. The report also includes an allegation of

sexual abuse to the sibling by the father, Lance Savard, that was alleged to have occurred in 2020. The investigation resulted in the removal of one child from the father's home, but the other siblings were determined to not be in present danger and remained in the home. The case remains open, and the Department is providing services to the child.

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 Marana Police Department. The child's father, Christopher Scholtes, was indicted on charges including first degree murder and child abuse in relation to Parker's death. Following an assessment of child safety, the siblings in the home were assessed as safe in their mother's care. The allegations of neglect to Parker by his father, Lance Savard, were substantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

A subsequent report was received on June 27, 2025, with allegations of neglect and physical abuse to a sibling by their father and stepmother. The report also includes an allegation of sexual abuse to the sibling by the father, Lance Savard, that was alleged to have occurred in 2020. The investigation resulted in the removal of one child from the father's home, but the other siblings were determined to not be in present danger and remained in the home. The case remains open, and the Department is providing services to the child.

The Department reminds all caregivers to always double check for children in cars.

For more information, please visit the DCS website at: <https://dcs.az.gov/news/double-check>.

Additionally, in accordance with A.R.S. § 8-469, cases with prior involvement with the Department within 3 years of the critical incident are reviewed by a multidisciplinary team (MDT). The team selects cases that present opportunities for systemic learning or that

demonstrate opportunities for systemic change. The Department uses the aggregate data gathered through the MDT reviews to assess and guide future changes and/or recommendations to policies, practices, rules, or statutes to improve the quality of outcomes for children and families receiving services from the department. Findings from these reviews are compiled into an annual report which is shared on the DCS website. The target date for release of the next report is December 1, 2025.