Indiana: 2023 Annual Report of Child Abuse & Neglect Fatalities in Indiana

The Annual Report of Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities in Indiana is the state's official record of child deaths determined by the Indiana Department of Child Services to have been caused by caregiver maltreatment or neglect.

Victim: 9-year-old boy

DCS involvement at time of fatal event: No open DCS involvement

Number of previous unsubstantiated assessments for victim: 1, in Indiana

Number of previous substantiated assessments for victim: 2, in Illinois

Perpetrator: Mother

Perpetrator history of substantiated assessments: 4, in Illinois

Circumstances: A 9-year-old boy died from complications of cerebral palsy. He lived with his moth-er, siblings and mother's boyfriend. On the day of the fatality, the family had spent the day at home, and the child had been sitting on the couch. The child was diagnosed with cerebral palsy and was immobile, nonverbal and incontinent. At some point, the mother checked on the child and found him deceased, approximately four hours after she last fed him. The mother had been advised to feed the child a prescription high-calorie formula via his feeding tube every three hours during the day. The child was observed to be very malnourished. The mother stated she gave the child one bottle of over-the-counter formula with each feeding, even though the child's medical coverage would pay for the prescription formula and deliver it to the home. Upon review of the child's medical records, the mother had disclosed to the doctor, five months earlier, that she had been giving the child the incorrect formula and the doctor told the mother the child needed the prescribed formula because the child was missing out on hundreds of calories a day. The child lost several pounds in the months prior to his death. The mother did not comply with sending the child to school, taking him to therapies and giving him his prescribed medications. The mother failed to comply with recommendations from the child's medical providers, resulting in the child's death.