# Child Fatality Report Release of Information to the Public

**Person ID:** 103611260

**County of Child's Residence:** CALHOUN

**Gender:** Male

**Age:** 2 Year(s) 0 Month(s)

**Date of Death:** 07/25/2022

On the date of the fatality, the child was not in DFPS conservatorship and was living with the child's parent, a managing conservator, a legal guardian or other person entititled to the child's possession.

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**Child's Name:** Pickett,Wyatt

**Current Report(s) of Abuse/Neglect:**

**Intake Date(s):** 07/25/2022

**Summary of Allegation(s)/Investigation:**

The Department received a report notifying it of a fatal event after law enforcement responded to the father's home for an unresponsive child. The young child was covered in bruises and pronounced deceased at the scene. The bruises were black in color and were on his legs, stomach, top of his head and right cheek. There were big bruises on the top of the child's head. The child had reportedly been sleeping since 6:30am. The father claimed that the child fell off the slide at a playground and the child was fine afterwards. The father did not seek medical attention. The father tried to wake up the child around 3:00pm and the child was unresponsive, prompting the father to call law enforcement.

The Department's investigation determined that the deceased child and twin sibling resided with their father and his paramour. The mother was in jail and was not a caregiver to her four children. The two older siblings were in the care of other relative caregivers. The deceased child had been in the care of his father and paramour when he became unresponsive. The child sustained numerous bruises to his torso, face, arms, legs, back and head. The medical examiner found a large internal wound/ injury to the base of the skull that was not visible on exterior examination. There was bleeding to the area and it was believed to have been caused by an unknown object that was hard, wide and with a smooth surface. The deceased child had dark bruising to his lower abdomen as a result of physical trauma. The father declined to be interviewed and made no admissions of abuse or neglect. The paramour

also declined to be interviewed by the fatality investigators but gave a statement to law enforcement confirming the abuse she witnessed the father inflicting on the child prior to his passing. The child had been suffering from his injuries and the father and paramour failed to seek medical treatment and the child subsequently died from his injuries. The twin sibling was susceptible of being seriously injured if he remained in the care of his father and was removed from his parents to ensure his immediate safety. The twin sibling was placed in a foster home and the father did not have access to the child. The mother was having supervised visitation with the twin sibling after she was discharged from jail, and she was receptive to participating in the services offered to address her substance abuse issues.

The law enforcement investigation was pending at the time the Department's investigation closed. Law Enforcement arrested the father and paramour, and a protective order was issued preventing them from having contact with the surviving twin sibling.

The medical examiner conducted an autopsy, but the final results were not available when the Department completed its investigation. The preliminary results indicate the manner of death was a homicide and the cause of death as blunt force trauma.

**Investigation Findings:**

The Department confirmed allegations that the deceased child's father committed Physical Abuse and Medical Neglect of the deceased child, which led to the child's death. The Department also confirmed that the father's paramour committed medical neglect of the deceased child which led to the child's death. The deceased child had sustained numerous injuries to include a large wound to the base of the skull, bruising to the lower abdomen and multiple bruises to his facial area consistent with blunt force trauma. The father and his paramour were aware that the deceased child was injured and made no attempt to seek the needed medical care. The deceased child had been in the care of the father and his paramour prior to his passing, and both failed to provide the needed supervision and were not protective. The Department confirmed the allegations of Neglectful Supervision of the twin sibling by his father. The deceased child's sibling was present when the deceased child was being physically abused by his father and the sibling did not have the capacity to protect or remove himself from the dangerous situation. Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified: 07/25/2022 - Safety Assessment - Initial - Unsafe 09/16/2022 - Safety Assessment - Case Closure - Unsafe 09/19/2022 - Risk Assessment -- High

**Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:**

**Case Action:**

Removal/Subcare

**Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:**

Counseling and Evaluation

**Other Services:**

The parents were provided with grief counseling resources and will be offered services through the Conservatorship program.

**Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:**

The deceased child's sibling was removed and the father and his paramour did not have access to him. A protective order was issued to prevent the father from contacting the sibling. The older siblings of the deceased child remained in the care of other family members who were willing to be protective.

**If one or more children were previously removed from the home, for each conservatorship episode, summarize dates of conservatorship and type of placement at the end of conservatorship:**

## Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

**Intake Date(s):** 08/04/2021

**Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:**

The Department received a report notifying it of concerns that the deceased child's father was using drugs and resided with the deceased child's mother who has a history of drug use. The father is using methamphetamines when he has the children in his care including the half-sibling on the weekends. The father does not have money to purchase basic items for the children.

The Department's investigation determined the deceased child and three siblings resided with their mother and deceased child's father. The father and mother have history of substance abuse, but denied any recent drug use and father was not willing to submit to a drug screening. The older siblings did not make any disclosures of abuse or neglect. There were extended relatives available to offer support to the family and the relatives were willing to help monitor. The twin siblings missed the annual well-child exams and an appointment was made for them to see their pediatrician. The deceased child and twin sibling were not participating in any services offered by Early Childhood Intervention as the mother did not see the need for services. The case was closed with relatives continuing to help monitor.

**Investigation Findings:**

The Department refuted the allegations that the deceased child's mother and father committed Neglectful Supervision of the deceased child, twin sibling and half-sibling. The father's child from a previous relationship and older siblings did not make any disclosures of abuse or neglect. The father declined to complete any drug tests and denied any recent drug use. The mother denied any drug use.

Safety and Risk Factors Identified:
08/06/2021 - Safety Assessment - Initial - Safe
09/03/2021 - Risk Assessment -- High

**Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:**

**Case Action:**

Close

**Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:**

**Other Services:**

The parents were provided with community resources and services.

**Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:**

The relatives were wiling to continue to offer support and monitor the family to report concerns in the future.

## Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

**Intake Date(s):** 10/25/2021, 12/09/2021

**Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:**

The Department received multiple intakes that were merged into a single investigation notifying it of the deceased child's mother using drugs and alcohol. The mother had the sibling pee in a cup then she used the specimen to pass a drug test at work for herself and coworker. The mother reportedly allowed the sibling to drink vodka and wine because the mother was also intoxicated. The mother is sending the sibling to North Dakota. The sibling is exhausted from taking care of the deceased child and siblings. The mother does not purchase food for the children, and they wear the same clothes for days. There were concerns that the deceased child's mother and father were engaging in a verbal altercation and father threatened the mother with a knife. The mother contacted law enforcement and father fled the scene. The children were with the paternal grandparents at the time. There were concerns for the father caring for the children given his violent behaviors. The children were sent to the father's home earlier in the week when the mother was being evicted from the home.

The Department's investigation determined the deceased child resides with his four siblings, mother and father. The oldest sibling reported that the mother and her stepfather engage in physical altercations and are using drugs. The sibling disclosed that her mother used her urine to pass a drug test at work. She has witnessed the parents use marijuana in the children's presence. The deceased child's father left the home following the physical altercation with the mother. The deceased child and twin sibling were found in the father's home after he separated from the mother. The father of the third sibling picked up his child and was no longer in the mother's care. The maternal grandmother picked up the oldest sibling and moved out of state to ensure her safety. The deceased child's father tested positive for methamphetamines and amphetamines. The collaterals contacted expressed concerns with the deceased child's father being violent. A safety plan was implemented for the deceased child and twin sibling to be in the home of the paternal grandmother with the father. The mother and deceased child's father were not willing to cooperate or participate in services offered to address the substance abuse and family violence concerns. The legal intervention was denied, and the case was closed with the deceased child and twin sibling remaining with the paternal grandmother and father and siblings with other relative caregivers.

**Investigation Findings:**

The Department confirmed allegations that the deceased child's mother and father committed Neglectful Supervision of the deceased child and siblings. The mother and father were using drugs and engaging in physical altercations.

The Department confirmed allegations that the deceased child's mother committed Physical Abuse of the sibling. The sibling disclosed that the mother allowed her to consume alcohol when the mother is intoxicated.

Safety and Risk Factors Identified:
10/27/2021 - Safety Assessment - Initial - Safe
12/10/2021 - Safety Assessment - Reassessment - Safe with plan
01/19/2022 - Safety Assessment-Reassessment - Unsafe
01/19/2022 - Safety Assessment - Case Closure -- Safe

**Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:**

**Case Action:**

Fam refusal/No legal interven poss-Close

**Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:**

Counseling and Evaluation

**Other Services:**

The parents declined the services offered to address concerns related to substance abuse and family violence.

**Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:**

The deceased child and twin sibling remained in the home of the paternal grandmother and father. The grandmother agreed to continue to monitor and report concerns. The two other siblings remained in the care of relatives who agreed to be protective.

## Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

**Intake Date(s):** 08/22/2018

**Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:**

The Department received a report notifying it of concerns the deceased child's father's paramour not feeding her own children. The children have physical disabilities and developmental delays. The father's paramour has had multiple tumultuous relationships and moves around frequently. The mother is not feeding the children and she has been educated on the children's feeding by medical staff. The mother is pregnant and plans to give the unborn child up for adoption.

The Department's investigation determined the deceased child's father's paramour has three children. Her two youngest children were referred to Early Childhood Intervention and their services are pending a transfer to their mother's new address. The children had developmental delays and are attending medical appointments. The maternal grandmother has custody of her oldest child and mother has supervised visitation. The children's father visits monthly and had no concerns. There were no concerns noted with the young children or home environment. The medical staff confirmed the mother's compliance with the children's medical care. The mother was given community resources available in her area. The case was closed with relatives continuing to offer support and help monitor.

**Investigation Findings:**

The Department refuted the allegations that the deceased child's father' paramour committed Medical Neglect of her own two children. The children were receiving the needed medical care and were referred to services with the Early Childhood Intervention program.

Safety and Risk Factors Identified:
08/29/2013 - Safety Assessment - Safe
09/18/2013 - Risk Assessment - Factors Controlled

**Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:**

**Case Action:**

Close

**Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:**

**Other Services:**

The mother was connected with services offered by the Early Chidhood Intervention program and other community resources.

**Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:**

The children remained in the care of their mother and relatives were willing to continue to monitor to report concerns as they are identified. One sibling remained in the care of the maternal grandmother as she was her legal guardian.

## Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

**Intake Date(s):**

**Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:**

**Investigation Findings:**

**Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:**

**Case Action:**

**Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:**

**Other Services:**

**Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:**

Note: This report was prepared on 03/03/2023 and does not include corrections or updates, if any, that may be subsequently made to DFPS data on or after the date this report was prepared.