Child Fatality Report Release of Information to the Public

Person ID: 77552117

County of Child's Residence: NOLAN

Gender: Male

Age: 13 Year(s) 4 Month(s)

Date of Death: 06/05/2022

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.

Child's Name: Tedrow,Benjamin

Current Report(s) of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 06/05/2022

Summary of Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report of a fatal event after Law Enforcement responded to a 911 call and found a deceased child. Deceased Child was determined to have passed away several hours prior. It was reported Deceased Child had a seizure condition, but had not had a seizure in about a year.

The Department's investigation determined Deceased Child had previously been diagnosed with epilepsy. Deceased Child's Mother reported to the Department she chose not to give Deceased Child his medication because Mother's sister took the same medication and said the medication had bad side effects. She said her sister's seizures increased due to the medication. Mother also admitted, that to her knowledge, Deceased Child last had a seizure approximately one month before his death. Deceased Child's Primary Care Doctor told the Department Mother reported to him that she was not giving Deceased Child his medication back in 2019 and said this was because his seizures were inconsistent and she was worried about side effects. The Primary Care Doctor strongly encouraged Mother to give Deceased Child his medication and also referred Deceased Child for an EEG, which Mother never took Deceased Child to receive, despite the test being rescheduled twice. It doesn't appear Deceased Child had received medical care since 2019.

A Medical Examiner listed the cause of death as seizure disorder and the manner of death as natural.

Law Enforcement responded to the Death, but closed their investigation as unfounded when the manner of death was determined to be natural.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the Deceased Child's Mother committed Medical Neglect of the Deceased Child which led to his Death. Mother failed to provide Deceased Child with seizure medications, despite knowing he had been diagnosed with epilepsy and had suffered a seizure a month prior. She also failed to follow up with EEG testing and further medical care for Deceased Child's seizure disorder, even though his Primary Care Physician had referred her to testing twice.

The Department did not confirm that Mother had Neglectfully Supervised the Deceased Child as Mother and Deceased Child both tested negative for drugs and alcohol.

1.) 06/05/2022: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe with a Plan
2.) 08/01/2022: Safety Assessment: Reassessment- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: High

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

Deceased Child's surviving sibling was referred for a medical appointment, as he had also not been seen by a doctor since 2019. However, he has no record of previously diagnosed illness or disease.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Surviving Sibling and Mother were both referred to Counseling Services. Surviving Sibling was referred for a medical checkup, despite not having any previously diagnosed illness or disease, but because he had not seen a doctor since 2019. Mother and surviving sibling both have strong family support, and are residing with family members.

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:

NA

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 07/03/2012

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging physical abuse of Deceased Child and Deceased Child's Older Surviving Sibling by Deceased Child's Mother due to the two children being seen with bruising. The report also alleged Medical Neglect of Deceased Child and his Older sibling due to Mother failing to take them to received necessary dental work. Finally, the report alleged Neglectful Supervision of Deceased Child and his Younger Surviving sibling due to Mother allegedly using marijuana while being their only caregiver.

The Department's investigation determined that the children did not have any injuries and did not make any outcry of physical abuse when interviewed. Mother submitted to an instant drug test and was negative for all illegal substances. She made the children a dental appointment immediately when advised to do so.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm that Mother had physically abused Deceased Child and his Older sibling due to the children having no injuries and making no outcry of physical abuse.
The Department did not confirm neglectful supervision of the Deceased Child and his younger sibling due to mother tested negative for all illegal substances.
The Department did not confirm Medical Neglect of Deceased Child and his older sibling due to Mother immediately scheduling them a dental appointment.

Safety Decision- Safe/ No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Finding- Factors Controlled

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close - Abbreviated INV

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

All the children were scheduled for dental appointments.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Mother agreed not to use the current babysitter because Older sibling said that she smelled marijuana at the babysitters home.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 12/10/2014, 01/22/2015 Two intakes were merged into a single investigation

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging physical abuse of Deceased Child and his Younger Surviving sibling due Deceased Child's Mother and Deceased Child's Mother's Paramour smoking marijuana around the children and Paramour allegedly blowing marijuana smoke in the youngest sibling's face. Later, the Department received a report that alleged Medical Neglect of Deceased Child because he was saying he could not see at all out of one eye, but Mother had failed to take him to see a doctor.

The Department's investigation determined that the children had no knowledge of drug or alcohol use in the home and made no outcry of abuse and neglect when interviewed. Mother completed an instant drug test and was negative for all illegal substances. Paramour left the home the same weekend the report was received and refused to cooperate with the investigation. Mother had to change Deceased Child's Medicaid in order to get him in to see a local Optometrist. The Investigator assisted her in doing that. Medicaid reported that Mother could schedule an appointment as soon as the change took effect, which would be 30-45 day.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm that Mother Medically Neglected Deceased Child. The delay in medical care was because the Mother had to change the Child's Medicaid.

The Department did not confirm physical abuse of Younger sibling by Mother since Mother tested negative for all illegal substances.

The Department was unable to determine if Younger sibling was physically abused by Paramour because Paramour did not cooperate with the investigation.

Safety Decision: Safe/ No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Finding: No Significant Factors

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

Mother was drug tested and tested negative for all illegal substances.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Investigator allowed Mother to use his phone so she could change Deceased Child's Medicaid so that he would be able to see a local Optometrist.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 01/12/2016

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child's Mother's Paramour had previously sexually abused one of Deceased Child's Older surviving siblings and had previously physically abused Deceased child, yet Mother was allowing Paramour back around the children.

The Department's investigation determined that the Mother had allowed her Paramour to return to their home after he got out of prison, however, he assaulted Mother and had been removed from the home again prior to

this report. Mother and Paramour both reported they would not get back together again. The children did not make any outcry of current abuse or neglect, however, due to the risk in the case and Mother allowing Paramour back previously, the family was referred for Family Based Safety Services.

The Family Based Safety Services case was open for seven months. During that time, Mother demonstrated that she would not allow Paramour back into the home. She also successfully completed counseling services.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm that Mother had Neglectfully Supervised the children because the children made no outcries of current abuse or neglect.
The Department did not confirm that Mother's Paramour had physically abused Deceased Child because the Deceased child, the Deceased child's Mother, and Paramour all denied the allegations.
The Department did not confirm that the Mother's Paramour had sexually abused Deceased Child or his older siblings because the children did not make any outcry of sexual abuse.

1.) 01/13/2016: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe with a plan
2.) 03/08/2016: Safety Assessment: Closing- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: High

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Family Preservation

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation,Parent/Caregiver Training,Basic Needs Support

Other Services:

Mother completed counseling services in her Family Based Safety Services Stage.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Mother established a support system of friends and family who helped with transporting the children to appointments and took the family to the food pantry when needed. All children were up to date on medical and dental checkups when the Family Based Safety Services stage closed.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 02/20/2016

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child's Mother's Paramour had shown up to the home because he wanted the children to tell him "Happy Father's Day." Paramour then tried to take Deceased Child's Youngest sibling with him because that was "his child." Mother and Deceased Child's Oldest Sibling engaged in a physical altercation with Paramour to prevent him from taking the Youngest Sibling. Paramour was arrested for Child Endangerment.

The Department's investigation determined that Mother had allowed Paramour into the home on several occasions while the children were present, despite having an active protective order against Paramour and also being told by the Housing Authority where the family lived, that Paramour would be trespassing on the property and his presence could cause the family to be evicted. When the children were forensically interviewed they stated that Paramour had come over uninvited and tried to take the Youngest Sibling. Paramour pushed the Oldest Sibling down and stomped on her foot when she tried to stop Paramour from tugging on the Youngest

Sibling trying to get him away from Mother. The children also stated that there had been a similar incident recently. Mother and Paramour both admitted that the previous incident occurred following a birthday party one day prior which Paramour and been invited into the home for. Mother invited Paramour into the home again the day following the party, which was when the incident occurred.

The family was already involved in an open Family Based Safety Service stage when this incident occurred. The Family Based Safety Services worker was already transporting Mother for counseling sessions related to domestic violence, but said she would refer Paramour to parenting classes, counseling, and to a Batterers Intervention and Prevention Program.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed that Mother neglectfully Supervised the children by allowing Paramour to enter the home repeatedly despite the previous incidents of domestic violence and despite the protective order that was in place.
The Department confirmed that the Mother's Paramour Neglectfully Supervised the Youngest Sibling. The Mother's Paramour attempted to take the young child from the residence.
The Department confirmed that the Mother's Paramour Physically Abused the Oldest Sibling by pushing her to the ground and stomping on her foot when she tried to prevent Paramour from taking the Youngest Sibling from the residence.

1.) 06/21/2016: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe with a Plan
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: Very High

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Family Preservation

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Parent/Caregiver Training

Other Services:

Family Based Safety Service was providing Mother with counseling to address domestic violence.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Family Based Safety Services agreed to continue working with Mother and agreed to refer Paramour to counseling, parenting classes and a Batterers Intervention and Prevention Program.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 09/20/2018, 10/04/2018 Two intakes were merged into a single investigation.

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child had been physically abused by Deceased Child's Oldest Sister due to Deceased Child being seen with scratches and bruises and saying his Oldest Sister did it. Later, a second intake was received, which alleged Neglectful Supervision of Deceased Child because there were concerns that Deceased Child's Mother was leaving him home alone for several days at a time without proper supervision.

The Department's investigation determined that the fighting between Deceased Child and his Oldest sister (who was 17 at the time) was normal sibling fighting. Deceased child told the Investigator that the scratches were caused by his cat, but did say his sister stepped on his leg because he was pestering her. Deceased Child then

told his MHMR caseworker that his Oldest Sister squeezed his face because Deceased child threw a pen at her, and that the scratches occurred as a result of the squeezing. Mother admitted that Deceased Child's Oldest sister had scratched him because Deceased Child threw a pen at her. Mother said it was a one time incident and not an ongoing issue.

Regarding being left home alone, the Older Sisters (who were 17 and 14) said that Mother did sometimes leave them in charge of Deceased Child and the Deceased Child's Youngest sibling, but that they had a phone and knew what to do in an emergency. They also reported that Deceased Child and the Youngest Sibling were never left home alone together, there was always an older sibling or Mother present.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm that Mother Neglectfully Supervised the Deceased Child as there was always and appropriate caregiver at home with Deceased Child when Mother was not home.
The Department did not confirm that Deceased Child was physically abused by his Oldest Sister. According to statements made by the siblings and several collaterals, it was a mutual sibling issue and it was a one time issue.

1.) 10/05/2018: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: High

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

The family was referred to a local agency that works with parent/ child and sibling conflict.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Deceased Child was also being seen at school by MHMR and was receiving Medication to treat behavioral issues through MHMR.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 03/08/2019

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child had been locked out of his home and had to call a neighbor for help. It also alleged that a few days prior, the neighbor had to call for an ambulance because Deceased Child was having a seizure. The report alleged that Deceased Child's Mother was not home for either of these incidents and that she frequently left the children home alone for days at a time.

The Department's investigation determined that the children were not left alone for days at a time. All of the children, when interviewed, stated that the Deceased Child's Oldest sibling living in the home (soon to turn 15) watches the children while Mother works. She has a phone and knows what to do in an emergency. All of the children stated that Mother returns home every evening after work. Mother provided the same information.

Investigation Findings:

The Department was not able to confirm that Mother Neglectfully Supervised Deceased Child or his Younger sibling because their Older Sibling watches them while Mother works, and Mother returns home every night after her shift.

1.) 03/11/2019: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe
2.) 04/24/2019: Safety Assessment: Reassessment- Safe
3.) 04/25/2019: Safety Assessment: Case Closure- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: High

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Parent/Caregiver Training

Other Services:

The family is working with MHMR.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Mother was aware of the services offered through MHMR and a local resource for parent/ child and sibling relations.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 01/03/2019, 01/08/2019, 02/08/2019 Three intakes were merged to form one Alternative

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received three intakes alleging that Deceased Child had been seen at school with a suspicious wound and that he appeared dirty and unkept, there were allegations that Deceased Child and Deceased Child's Younger sibling were being left alone for long periods of time with only Deceased Child's Older Sister as a caregiver, and the final intake alleged physical abuse of Deceased Child by Deceased Child's Maternal Grandfather.

The Department's Alternative Response case determined Deceased Child had many behavioral issues and the school had trouble getting in touch with Deceased child's Mother when needed. Mother also seemed to be missing MHMR appointments for Deceased Child. Mother agreed that Deceased Child had been having more behavioral issues recently and said she would bring this up at his next MHMR appointment, which she said she was trying to schedule. Mother and all the children denied Mother leaving the kids home alone. Maternal Grandfather was reported to be at the home until the Older Sister got home, and Mother was home a short time after that. The Older Sister had a phone to use in case of emergency. All of the children denied that Maternal Grandfather ever physically disciplined them.

Investigation Findings:

Not Applicable in an Alternative Response Case.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: 1.) 01/08/2019: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe
2.) 02/13/2019: Safety Assessment: Reassessment- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: High

Case Action:

Close- No Danger Indicators/ CPS Decision

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

The family was referred to a counseling program that specializes in parent/ child and sibling conflict and come to the home to counseling the family ,and they were referred to a mentoring program for Deceased Child and his younger sibling.

Other Services:

The family was referred to a counseling program and a mentor program.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Referrals were made. The family has support close by from the Maternal Grandfather and cousin.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 10/02/2019

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report with concerns that Deceased Child's Mother's Paramour had hit Deceased Child in the face.

The Department's Alternative Response case found Deceased Child was living with Mother, Mother's Paramour, Deceased Child's Mother's Cousin and Deceased Child's Younger sibling. Deceased Child's older sibling had started running away and was seldom home. The family members denied that Mother's Paramour had hit Deceased Child. Mother's Paramour did admit to "popping" Deceased Child on the head, but denied he did so with a closed fist, and denied he had ever punched or slapped the children. The Older sibling was interviewed and said she did not like Mother's Paramour because he is a drunk. The Older Sibling did decide to return to the home.

Investigation Findings:

Not Applicable in an Alternative Response case.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: 1.) 10/03/2019: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Finding: High

Case Action:

Close- No Danger Indicators/ CPS Decision

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

The family was referred to a local counseling service that specifically works with parent/ child and sibling conflict.

Other Services:

Counseling

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The family was referred to counseling. Mother also reported that Deceased Child had gotten back involved with MHMR and was again taking medication to address behavioral mental health issues.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 08/15/2020

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child had threatened to kill himself, alleging that Deceased Child's Mother gives him wine coolers, and alleging that Deceased Child dislikes Deceased Child's Mother's new Paramour because he is mean and has hit Deceased Child before. There were also concerns with a mark on Deceased Child's arm.

The Alternative Response case found that the mark on Deceased Child's arm was a burn from frying bacon. The Deceased Child was interviewed and did not make an outcry of physical abuse. He stated he burned his arm (above the wrist) from cooking bacon.

Deceased Child, Mother, and Deceased Child's Younger sibling were living with Mother's Paramour, but neither child had any concerns with the home and neither child made any outcry regarding this Paramour. Deceased Child was interviewed and expressed no intent to harm himself.

Investigation Findings:

Not Applicable in an Alternative Response case.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: 1.) 09/03/2020: Safety Assessment: Initial- Safe
Risk Assessment not completed

Case Action:

Close- No Danger Indicators/ CPS Decision

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

No service or referrals made

Other Services:

Not Applicable

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The children made no outcries. No services or referrals were made.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 10/28/2002

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report alleging that Deceased Child's Mother had Deceased Child's Oldest Sister (then approximately five months old) were living in a filthy home and that other home members were known to have molested children.

The Department's Investigation determined that the home was very dirty and completely inappropriate for the Oldest Sister to be living in. Deceased Child's Maternal Uncle was living in the home and was a registered sex offender, but he was not a caregiver to the Oldest Sister. There was no evidence that anyone had sexually abused the Oldest Sister.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did confirm that Mother physically neglected the Oldest Sister due to the conditions of the home.
The Department did not confirm that the Maternal Uncle sexually abused the Oldest sister as he was not a caregiver, and there was no evidence of sexual abuse.
The Department did not confirm that Mother Neglectfully Supervised the Oldest Sister as Mother was her caregiver and did not allow Oldest Sister to be exposed to anyone inappropriate.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: Safety Assessment- Not Applicable
Risk Factors Controlled

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Mother was given information for government resources.

Other Services:

Not Applicable

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Mother and Oldest Sister moved out of state in order to have appropriate housing.

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.