Critical Incident Review Team Final Report

Oregon Department of Human Services
CHILD WELFARE

A Critical Incident Review Team is convened by the Department Director when the Department becomes aware of a critical incident resulting in a child fatality that was reasonably believed to be the result of abuse and the child, child's sibling or another child living in the household with the child has had contact with the Department (ODHS). The reviews are called by the Department Director to quickly analyze ODHS actions in relation to the critical incident and to ensure the safety and well-being of all children within the custody of ODHS or during a child protective services assessment. The CIRT must complete a final report which serves to provide an overview of the critical incident, relevant Department history, and may include recommendations regarding actions that should be implemented to increase child safety. Reports must not contain any confidential information or records that may not be disclosed to members of the public. *The CIRT report is created at a specific time as required by statute and does not account for events occurring after the posting of the report*. Versions of all final reports are posted on the ODHS website.

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<tr><td>Date of CIRT meetings:

March 14, 2024
April 29, 2024</td><td>Number of participants:
21
33</td><td>Members of the public?
0
5</td></tr>
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Level 3 - Restricted

Description of the critical incident and Department contacts regarding the critical incident:

Date of report: February 14, 2024 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Neglect, Threat of Harm	**Disposition(s):** Founded

On February 14, 2024, ODHS received a report alleging neglect and threat of harm to the child (16 years old), and neglect and threat of harm to the child's younger siblings (14 and 10 years old). It was reported the child went into cardiac arrest at 6:05 a.m., was not breathing, and it appeared the child had overdosed from the use of fentanyl. The child had a friend over who discovered them not breathing and alerted the child's parents who were sleeping at the time. The child had experienced two accidental overdoses in the past and had used numerous substances including marijuana, alcohol, methamphetamine, and fentanyl.

When law enforcement arrived, marijuana was observed to be all over the living area of the garage, where the child and their parents were living. There were bongs, marijuana, and paraphernalia next to the parents, all within reach of the children. It is believed marijuana use was normal for the family, and adults in the home also drank alcohol.

The child had recently moved in with a relative to get away from people they used substances with. The child had experienced an overdose recently and their mother stayed up all night with them because she thought they were going to overdose again. When the child overdosed in the past, the family had found blue pills along with foil, and it is believed they smoked this substance.

The friend who was present with the child had fentanyl on their person and was arrested the same morning.

A second reporter stated the child moved in with a relative approximately one year ago and their younger siblings followed a few months later. A couple of months after, both parents were struggling with houselessness, and they moved in with the relative as well. It was reported the parents had

been using substances and the relative was in the process of evicting them. The reporter was concerned the child was using with their parents the evening before they died.

It was reported the father had been domestically violent with the mother in the past and continued to be controlling. The father would not allow the mother to have a phone and controlled all the money. The mother had recently talked about leaving the father, but the reporter believes she is afraid of him. It was reported both parents struggle with anxiety and depression.

On February 14, 2024, law enforcement responded to the residence of the relative at 6:05 a.m. They had been told by the relative the child was clearly deceased, appeared purple and was bleeding from their mouth. Law enforcement observed the garage area had been turned into a living space and was divided by sheets hanging from the roof. They observed marijuana and marijuana paraphernalia strewn around the garage as well as empty liquor bottles. The child was pronounced deceased at 6:11 a.m. and law enforcement indicated it appeared to be an overdose. They did not immediately see any blue pills, foil, or other drug tools, with exception of a bong. Law enforcement noted this was unusual as they usually see other signs of drug use in the vicinity. Law enforcement spoke to a younger sibling who said they last observed the child alive around midnight when they were lying in bed. The child asked them if they were sleeping upstairs, they told them they were, and the child told the sibling to have a good night. The sibling said they were woken up at around 6 a.m. and could hear people saying the child was not breathing and was dead. The sibling indicated not knowing the child's friend, and thought they were someone the child knew from the past.

Law enforcement spoke to the mother who had the child's cell phone and turned it over to them. The mother said the child had overdosed six months ago and was transported to the hospital. The mother thought the child was doing better but was concerned in the past several days as they appeared to be showing signs of using fentanyl and appeared tired. The mother stayed up all night with the child and woke them up every time they fell asleep. On the night before the child passed, the mother observed the child texting someone in the garage around midnight. The mother fell asleep and

woke up in the middle of the night when the child and their friend were in the garage and the child said the friend was leaving. The mother was awoken again around 6 a.m. by the friend saying something was wrong with the child and they were not waking up.

Law enforcement spoke with the father, and he believed the friend had given fentanyl to the child. The father last saw the child on the bed asleep, and the friend was on the other end of the bed sitting up. The father had not wanted the friend to stay the night, and the child had asked the mother if they could. The father said the child pleaded with the mother saying the friend did not have a place to stay that night. The father went to sleep and in the morning the friend came into the room saying the child was not breathing. The father observed the child lying on the floor in the fetal position. The father said the child had previously overdosed and he was able to intervene as he could smell it, but this time there was no odor. The father had not believed the child was continuing to use fentanyl and believed they were doing better.

Law enforcement spoke to the relative, and they last saw the child at 11 p.m. the previous night when they asked if their friend could stay over. The relative said no since it was a school night and gave the child $20 as they were doing an activity with a friend after school. The relative advised they went upstairs with the siblings, and then heard screaming and banging on their door the following morning.

Law enforcement contacted the Medical Examiner's Office and they responded to the location. Law enforcement had seized substances and paraphernalia from the friend's backpack. The sibling told law enforcement the child had a fanny pack with a red and white stripe, where any substances would be. Law enforcement found the bag and inside was foil and what appeared to be about five blue pills.

On February 14, 2024, a CPS caseworker had contact with law enforcement who reported there was nothing suspicious about the child's death and no criminal charges would be filed.

On February 14, 2024, a CPS caseworker contacted the parents at the home of the relative. The parents would not allow the caseworker inside and the parents were observed to have a blue residue on the corner of their

mouths and their tongues. They both denied recently using substances but admitted to wanting to use.

The caseworker spoke to the relative, and they had not wanted the parents staying at their house, as they believed the parents were using substances. They indicated filing for an eviction after they asked them to leave, and they refused. At the time of this report, the eviction notice had not been served.

The relative reported the evening prior to the child's death they made dinner, the family was hanging out and then they went to bed about 10:30 p.m. The relative said around 11:30 p.m., the child came upstairs and said the relative had left their clothes in the dryer and they needed to use it to get their clothes ready for school the next morning. The relative said the day prior the child was in good spirits, and they did not think the child had been under the influence of any substances in the recent past.

At the conclusion of this contact, a safety plan was put in place to have the siblings stay with a relative.

On February 14, 2024, the CPS caseworker had contact with the child's community service provider. The service provider reported working with the child for the past several months. It was reported the child had been residing with the relative and they were participating in services but were not attending regularly. The service provider reported the child was attending school but felt like the school wasn't supporting their individual education plan. A meeting had recently been set up with the school so the child would be provided with appropriate supports. The service provider had recently learned about the mother trying to separate from the father.

On February 15, 2024, a CPS caseworker spoke to the parents at a motel they were staying at, along with a service provider who specialized in substance use services/supports. The parents reported they had used methamphetamine the night prior and the caseworker stated their intention was helping the parents access services to assist with their substance use. The parents both stated they will do whatever it takes, but it was difficult to gather information for either one of them due to their emotional state. While the caseworker was present, the mortuary also called to report the child was there and asked if the family was wanting to have a viewing, which created more emotions for the mother. The mother said they had no money and weren't sure how they were going to pay for the child to be cremated.

The caseworker let the mother know they would look for resources to assist and provided the mother a list of grief counselors. The mother stated she was having a hard time processing what has happening, as she thought the child had been doing better and she didn't want to think about them being alone at the mortuary.

The father said the child was doing well until they turned 13 and their peer group changed. The father said the child never used methamphetamine despite being advised it was in previous reports with ODHS and law enforcement that the child admitted to using the substance. The father indicated this was not true and said the child was just talking. The father denied the 14-year-old sibling was using any substances and said he did not think they would start.

On February 15, 2024, a CPS caseworker spoke with a service provider who indicated the mother had recently said she was struggling to maintain her sobriety. The mother was provided a track phone so she could access services.

On February 16, 2024, a CPS caseworker spoke with the relative again. The relative reported they could tell when the parents were under the influence, due to their behaviors and appearance. The relative reported the parents had been sick three days prior to the child passing, because of withdrawing from substances. The relative said it was obvious when the child was using substances and they did not think the child had been using. The relative did not believe the parents would have been using with the child but also stated when they were in the garage, they were not sure what they were doing.

The CPS caseworker spoke to another relative who reported being afraid of the parents, stating they are both capable of physical damage. The relative believed the child was being used to get substances for their parents and was also concerned about the 14-year-old sibling. The relative was concerned because there was a recent social media post of the 14-year-old sibling smoking marijuana.

The CPS caseworker spoke to another relative who reported the child reached out to them about three weeks ago asking if they could come and live with them. The relative told the child they could, and the child stated

they wanted to finish school first and then move in. The relative reported the children and the relative taking care of them had been doing fine until the parents moved in.

On February 21, 2024, the CPS caseworker spoke to a community provider and reviewed service records for the child. The child was not regularly attending services and had reported using marijuana but no other substances. The service provider was trying to reach out to the family to assist further prior to the child's death but was not getting a response.

On March 12, 2024, the CPS caseworker spoke to the mother, and she expressed feeling selfish as she wanted the child close and did not send them to formal treatment. The mother said last year she was aware of the 14-year-old sibling smoking marijuana, and she provided them more freedom to do this. The mother said she took the child to their urine analysis testing and the last one they submitted was in January 2024. The child had been worried because they had consumed alcohol and marijuana and the mother told them to just admit to the service provider what they had used. The mother said she never checked in with the child's service providers to make sure they were going but also the child had not signed a release of information. The mother looked for treatment options for the child prior to them living with a relative and said she called several places and was told the child did not qualify due to not having a criminal history or there were waitlists.

The mother described a time in July 2023 when the child had overdosed on fentanyl. The child had turned blue, and they threw them in the shower. The mother said law enforcement came and reflected they told them the child had only been using alcohol. The mother said she wished she would have been honest with law enforcement so they could have gotten help for the child.

The mother said the child overdosed in August 2023 and was seen at a hospital, but the social worker never met with them. The mother said she was grateful she still had the child after the overdose, but wished she would have asked for more help and asked the child more questions. The mother said she did not feel like any of the systems involved needed improvement, but she wished fentanyl was off the streets and there was more accountability.

During the CPS assessment, the caseworker struggled to get some information from the parents due to their high emotions and active substance use. The caseworker was not able to understand what a typical day would look like in their household and the level of care the relative was providing for the children. The relative was working full-time, did not have a power of attorney, and was not able to access any medical, treatment or school information. Due to the child's age, they would have needed to sign a release of information for their family members to obtain their records from service providers and usually the county will not provide information to the youth's biological family without a release of information.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of neglect to the child by both parents was founded. While toxicology continues to be pending, the child appeared to die from a fentanyl overdose. The parents were aware of the child's substance use issues and prior overdoses and did not seek additional supports.

The assessment was founded for threat of harm and neglect to the siblings. The parents admitted to using methamphetamine and there was marijuana within reach of both children. The parents knew a younger sibling was experimenting with marijuana but did not prevent them from doing so.

The siblings were placed in an out-of-home safety plan at the conclusion of the CPS assessment.

Description of relevant prior Department reports regarding the child's mother and father.

Date of report: July 1, 2011 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Threat of harm, Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On July 1, 2011, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm and neglect to the child (2) and half-sibling (11) and sibling (1) by the mother. The reporter was concerned the mother was using methamphetamine and had sores on her face and arms. The mother was often late to appointments, looked disheveled, and appeared depressed. There was

also concern the child had 10 teeth pulled and the others were so decayed they needed to be capped. The child also had a burn on their neck and the mother said they had run into a cigarette. The child looked dirty, and their feet were black.

A welfare check was conducted by law enforcement and reported the home was messy but there were no safety concerns. It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: August 01, 2011 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm, Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On August 1, 2011, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm and neglect to the child (3) and the half-sibling (11) and sibling (1) by the mother. It was reported the sibling was observed playing in the street and when a neighbor stopped traffic passing the half-sibling brought them inside.

A welfare check was completed by law enforcement and the mother said the family was going to the park and she went back to get some forgotten items and the children got away for a second. Law enforcement said the home was cluttered but there were resources to care for the children present. It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: September 21, 2011 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm	**Disposition(s):** Unable to Determine

On September 21, 2011, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the half-sibling (11) by the child's father. It was reported the half-sibling witnessed the father and the mother fighting. The half-sibling observed the

father poke the mother on the side of her head and slap her when she tried to get him to stop. There was history of the father shooting a hole in the wall in their home.

A second reporter contacted ODHS and said the mother had been using methamphetamine and had sores on her arms and face. The sibling had a yeast infection behind their ear in the prior month and it was not healing.

A CPS caseworker spoke to the reporting party who was concerned about both parents' substance use. It was reported the mother appeared intoxicated, slurred her speech, and slept a lot. The father was reported to have an addiction to prescription medication and was physically assaultive to family members. He recently shot a hole in the home and hit the children if they were crying. The child was reported to have rotting teeth.

A CPS caseworker interviewed the half-sibling at school. The half-sibling said when they got in trouble, they were grounded from watching TV and the other children in the home received a time out. They denied physical discipline was used by either parent. The half-sibling described the father and mother as yelling and screaming at each other at least once per day and things would get knocked over sometimes. They said a week prior the father had slapped the mother and said they were going to a shelter that helped women. The half-sibling said they felt safe in the home and the father was nice, but their voice could be scary sometimes. The half-sibling was unsure what drugs were but knew what alcohol was and said their father drank it sometimes. The half-sibling was not worried and felt they could speak with their mother if they felt unsafe.

A CPS caseworker interviewed the mother who said that she and the father had relationship issues. She said they had participated in counseling after breaking up for a couple of years, but recently had gotten back together and lived with relatives. Due to their arguing, the father had moved out of the house and visited regularly. The mother said the father had hit her physically in the head once, but it did not hurt. She did say she had utilized domestic violence grants to help her move. The mother indicated she used to have an addiction to opiates after having chronic back pain and was utilizing medication management. She said she experimented with methamphetamine during her teen years.

The CPS caseworker spoke to a relative collateral who said the father had moved out of the home and the mother was doing great and looking for her own apartment. The relative did not suspect substance use by the parents but said they both struggle with anxiety. The relative did not believe there was domestic violence in the relationship but had heard arguing in the past.

The father was interviewed by a CPS caseworker and denied any domestic violence. He said the incident in question was a time when he was waking the mother up and patted her on the head. He said they argued a lot, but walked away from each other, and they were working on the relationship. The father said he had a history of opiate addiction and was utilizing medication management. The father denied using physical discipline with the children.

The half-sibling's father was interviewed and stated wanting the half-sibling to live with him due to the mother's residential instability. The half-sibling's father said the mother never used substances when they were together, but she had recently lost a lot of weight, so there were concerns she may have been using substances. The half-sibling's father denied any substance use with exception of drinking a few beers occasionally. The half-sibling's father said he had regular visitation with the half-sibling and talked to them on the phone daily.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of threat of harm were unable to be determined. There were some concerns about verbal and physical violence perpetrated by the father in which the mother was thinking about accessing a shelter for safety. The half-sibling, who witnessed the domestic violence, indicated feeling safe in the home and was not afraid of the father.

Date of report: August 14, 2012 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm	**Disposition(s):** Unable to Determine

On August 14, 2012, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the child (4) and sibling (2) by the father. It was reported there was an incident

of domestic violence, and the mother was observed to have injuries on her face and several other parts of her body. The mother found out the father was seeing another woman and she confronted them together. The father told the mother he no longer wanted to be in the relationship and pushed her making her hit her chin and face on the pavement. The child and sibling both observed the incident. At the time of the incident the mother was six months pregnant.

On August 16, 2012, a CPS caseworker interviewed the mother, and she indicated the father had been arrested but all the charges were dropped. The mother was living with family members and wanted to file for a divorce. The mother reported prior to the current incident of domestic violence there had been one other in the past where the father hit her on the side of the head. The current incident began due to the father coming home with another woman when the mother and he were trying to work on their relationship. The father left with the woman after the mother would not allow the child and sibling to go with them. A little later the father came back because he thought the mother had taken their phone. There was a tussle over the mother's purse, and she felt like they were both angry and out of control. The father pushed her, and she scraped her hands and knees. The mother said they have been in marriage counseling for a year since the last incident of physical violence. She believed the father was a very nice guy, but she could not trust him. The caseworker discussed concern the mother may be minimizing the domestic violence and the mother agreed the father could benefit from anger management. She also said both children were at a friend's home during the incident of DV but did come home and see the father being arrested.

The father's older children with another partner were interviewed and indicated being exposed to domestic violence perpetrated by the father to the mother. One of the half-siblings described getting in between one of their fights and the father picked them up and threw them across the room. The children said they were afraid of their father because he fights all day with the mother. The father's ex-partner reported when they were married the father would punch holes in the wall and throw them across the room. The children were exposed to this and needed counseling.

On August 24, 2012, the father was interviewed and acknowledged what happened when he brought another woman home. He said he pushed the mother down after things got out of control and he was trying to diffuse the situation. The father said this was the first time he had been physical, and the first time being arrested. The father denied ever punching holes in the wall or ever threatening harm in any of their relationships. The father was focused on their past divorce and how difficult it was for him.

On September 28, 2012, a CPS caseworker conducted another home visit with the mother and father, as they had moved back in together with the child and sibling. ODHS had received another report the couple had been using methamphetamine. When asked about the substance use, both parents denied using substances and the father said he continues to take medication for mental health symptoms. Both said they used methamphetamine in high school but had not used since then. The mother reported being six months pregnant and had considered having the baby adopted by a family member. The CPS caseworker did not observe any obvious signs of substance use in the home or concerns of how the parents interacted with the children.

During the CPS assessment there were several relative collaterals contacted, and one indicated they did not have any concerns about domestic violence or substance use in the home. The relative stated they were in the home often and saw the family daily. Another collateral had concerns about the parents' substance use and especially the mother being pregnant and using methamphetamine.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, another report was assigned and the disposition for the concerns of threat of harm, domestic violence will be addressed in the assessment dated October 23, 2012.

Date of report: October 23, 2012 **Assignment decision:** Within 5 Days	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm, Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Founded

On October 23, 2012, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm and neglect to the child (5), and sibling (2) by the parents. It was reported both parents were using methamphetamine and the mother was eight months pregnant. The parents were leaving the children with a neighbor who was manufacturing methamphetamine in the home. The child had been heard expressing wanting to die because they were so unhappy, and the younger sibling's teeth were damaged, and needed immediate dental care.

On October 31, 2012, a CPS caseworker spoke to the mother about the reported concerns. The mother denied she had been using substances, said the report was due to the father's ex-partner making reports and she agreed to a urine analysis. The mother reported she had continued to participate in medication assisted treatment and was last seen for a prenatal appointment in the prior month. At the end of the conversation, the mother and the father were asked do a urine analysis but declined saying they were busy.

On the same day, the CPS caseworker did an unannounced home visit along with the Addiction Recovery Team caseworker to offer the family urine analysis testing and to confirm child safety. Both parents were in the home with the children and relatives who they lived with. The parents were initially very upset about ODHS contact and denied substance use. The ART caseworker was able to take the parents to a private room and speak with them further. The parents admitted to the ART caseworker they had been using methamphetamine for the past three months and it started when the father lost his job. They said when using, they left the children in the care of the relatives who worked alternate schedules, always leaving someone home with the children. The relatives indicated believing the parents may have been using but were not sure. The grandparents agreed to a safety plan saying if they saw signs of substance use, they would care for the children. The mother was told about the risks of using substances while she was pregnant and how this could impact ODHS involvement. The parents agreed to participate with the services moving forward.

On November 7, 2012, a CPS caseworker talked to a relative who was managing the safety plan. The relative indicated the parents had continued to use substances and were involved in an argument where the mother threatened to leave with the children while under the influence of

methamphetamine. The relative said the fighting between the parents scared the children and believed the parents needed services and should be out of the home.

The ODHS caseworker continued to offer ART services to both parents and talked to the mother about being in a safe setting free of substance use, considering she was pregnant. The mother indicated they were still considering adoption for their unborn child. The parents indicated they would benefit from anger management and help with communication. Throughout the CPS assessment the mother was struggling to make her scheduled prenatal appointments and presented as depressed.

During the CPS assessment, the half-sibling was observed to be behind in their verbal skills and in need of a dental assessment. The condition of their teeth were likely causing them significant pain.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of threat of harm from the August 14, 2012, report were founded. The children were witness to the domestic violence incident where the mother was pushed and injured. The children were impacted by the incident as they were upset and crying and had been exposed to prior domestic violence per collateral information.

The allegation of neglect was founded as both parents were using methamphetamine for the previous three months and engaged in regular arguing, which scared the children. The half-sibling had dental issues that needed immediate treatment.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment the children were placed out of the home in a safety plan.

Date of report: November 24, 2012 **Assignment decision:** Within 5 Days	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Founded

On November 24, 2012, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to newborn sibling. It was reported the mother gave birth to the sibling and tested positive for several substances including methamphetamine. She admitted to using with the father due to stress ODHS had caused from making a safety plan with her other children. There was also concern about domestic violence perpetrated by the father, and the mother minimizing her current substance use.

A CPS worker contacted medical providers who indicated the sibling had been transported to the intensive care because he was being monitored for withdrawal of substances. They were on a ventilator, received breathing treatments and would be hospitalized for at least a few weeks. The sibling tested positive for amphetamines, benzodiazepines, and opiates, while the mother tested positive for amphetamines. The mother said she used substances in the week prior to the birth as she was very stressed about her other children being away from her. She was also prescribed medication from her primary care provider, which contributed to the sibling's withdrawal symptoms.

The parents expressed they had considered a private adoption for the sibling with a relative but had changed their minds. They both were seeking community services to assist with their substance use disorder.

During the CPS assessment, when the sibling was in the hospital, there was concern the parents were sporadically visiting. They would call and check on the sibling but struggled with illness and transportation at the time.

The father was assaulted by a friend associated with his substance use during the CPS assessment. The friend had experienced a feeling of betrayal and believed both parents were talking to police as they were separating from the lifestyle.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of neglect to the sibling were founded. The parents said they were using methamphetamine right before the birth of the sibling who tested positive for several harmful substances and was showing signs of withdrawal. Both parents had a pattern of using methamphetamine, which impacted their judgement around verbal arguments that scared the other two children.

The sibling was placed in an out-of-home safety plan at the conclusion of the assessment.

Date of report: September 18, 2013 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On September 18, 2013, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the child (6) and sibling (3) by mother. It was reported the mother had relapsed on methamphetamine. The mother was receiving in-home services and there was no information her relapse impacted the safety of the children.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. ODHS had an open case with the family at the time of the report.

Date of report: September 23, 2013 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Founded

On September 23, 2013, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the child (6), and siblings (3) (0) by the mother. It was reported the mother gave birth to the sibling, and both the mother and the baby tested positive for methamphetamine. It was reported the father of was incarcerated at the time.

On September 24, 2013, a CPS caseworker conducted face-to-face contact at the hospital the mother and sibling were at the time. A physician was first consulted and said the sibling and mother tested positive for methamphetamine, but otherwise there had not been any concerning behaviors observed. The mother said she had a relapse and reported feeling very overwhelmed, depressed, and isolated. She explained methamphetamine gave her energy and helped her to escape her thoughts. The mother denied purchasing or using the methamphetamine in

the presence of the children and said she slept a lot when relatives were watching the children. She felt very guilty about her use and did not get what she expected from using for a few days. The mother expressed her current living condition was unhealthy and would be moving to be around relatives.

A safety plan was made for the mother and the children to reside with relatives to ensure there was a person monitoring safety. The mother agreed to participate in a substance use evaluation and work with contracted services already in place through ODHS. The mother had the child engaged in ongoing counseling. The relatives agreed to the plan and felt comfortable in their ability to know when the mother was using substances to provide safety for the children. The mother was engaged in mental health treatment and had begun taking prescription medication.

At time of the report, the father was incarcerated. The mother expressed the desire to continue her relationship with the father and had regular visits and contact.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of neglect to the child and sibling were founded. The mother had a relapse and used methamphetamine three days before the sibling's birth and the child tested positive for the substance.

Date of report: November 21, 2013 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On November 21, 2013, ODHS received a report alleging neglect the child (6), and siblings (3) and (0) by the mother. It was reported the child was displaying behaviors including cussing and writing the word sex on the chalkboard. It was reported the child had recently touched another child's genitals on the school bus, but it was unclear if it was over or under the clothing. There was another incident where the child was in the school bathroom with another child, and they unzipped their pants and showed each other their genitals. It was reported there was a meeting to address

the behavior with the mother, but she did not seem to be concerned about it.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. The case was open to ODHS at the time of this report.

Date of report: February 13, 2014 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Physical Abuse	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On February 13, 2014, ODHS received a report alleging physical abuse to the half-sibling (9) by the father. It was reported the half-sibling disclosed within the last three years the father threw the child across the room and the child hit their head on the TV. The child ’s head was sore after the incident.

It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. There was an open case with ODHS at the time of the report.

Date of report: March 11, 2014 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Unfounded

On March 11, 2014, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the child (6) and siblings (4) (0) by the mother. It was reported the mother left the children unsupervised outside, and they were verbally aggressive with other children. The children also were left in the bathtub at night and the mother did not supervise them. The mother left the sibling on the couch unsupervised and there was concern they could have rolled off.

It was reported the mother was using methamphetamine and there were people frequenting the home who were also using substances. The mother

would go into the bedroom when she was using substances but slept a lot when she was coming down. Sometimes she slept so hard, the children could not wake her up.

On March 12, 2014, a CPS caseworker had face-to-face contact with the family. The mother reported she did have a history of methamphetamine use and she had a relapse six months prior, which ODHS was aware of. She reported attending meetings and had family support to help prevent further relapses. The mother reported she has been free of substances since the relapse and has no intentions of using again. As for the children playing outside, she reported she allowed the child and sibling to play on the grass behind her apartment and she kept the windows and doors open so she could supervise them while caring for her baby. The mother stated she was weak in discipline and setting appropriate structure and boundaries. She said she had an in-home service in the past, which was helpful in those areas and asked for similar services to be started.

The mother said the child had struggled with mental health issues but there was not a formal diagnosis. The child did have trouble focusing and had a lot of energy. All the children had medical and dental providers to meet their needs.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of neglect were unfounded. There was no information found the mother was using substances or not providing adequate supervision to the children.

Date of report: April 22, 2014 **Assignment decision:** Within 5 Days	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm, Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Opened in Error

On April 22, 2014, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm and neglect to the child (6) and the siblings (4) (0) by the mother. It was reported law enforcement responded to a call regarding the sibling being out in the neighborhood by themself. The mother said she thought the sibling was at the dinner table and did not realize they had gotten out of the

house. The sibling said they went to their friend's house and understood they had made a mistake.

A collateral contact was made with a service provider who was providing intensive in-home support services to the family. The mother had requested assistance and support with seeking resources where she had relocated. The service provider had recent contact, was scheduled to be in the home and would address the concerns of the sibling being out on the street unsupervised. The service provider reported the sibling was a very busy child and the mother was struggling with some behavioral acting out by the older two children.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegation of neglect and threat of harm were opened in error. The CPS caseworker spoke to a collateral contact who is working with the family, and it was determined a field assessment was not warranted as ODHS had an open case with the family.

Date of report: May 14, 2014 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Founded

On May 14, 2014, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the child (6) and the siblings (4) (0) by the mother. It was reported the children were home with the mother, and law enforcement responded to the home to contact a roommate. In the home they found the mother to be in possession of methamphetamine and she admitted to relapsing.

On May 14, 2014, a CPS caseworker had contact with the mother and the three children prior to her being arrested. The mother said she had relapsed and showed ODHS and law enforcement where they could find the methamphetamine. The substance was found to be in reach of the child and half-sibling within the apartment. During the contact the mother was very agitated, which could have a been a result of her being under the influence of methamphetamine combined with ODHS presence. The mother was struggling financially and had allowed a person to rent a room

in the home she was staying. The person was using and selling heroin and had numerous friends frequenting the home who were also using substances. There was no information the roommate had provided any direct care for the children. There did not appear to be any obvious impacts to the children with exception to potentially being able to access their mother's substances.

The CPS caseworker spoke to a provider who was working with the family prior to the mother's arrest. They had last seen the mother three days prior to the arrest and said the mother had been struggling financially. The roommate the mother had allowed to move in was not paying rent and she was trying to get them to move out. The father who was incarcerated at the time was calling the mother throughout the day and demanding things from her such as money and assistance. This was causing stress for the mother, and she threatened to file for full custody of the children due to the father's behavior.

The mother had been accessing other services to support her recovery prior to her arrest. The children were also involved in numerous services and getting their health and dental needs met.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment the allegation of neglect was founded, as the mother was using substances, the children were exposed to unsafe individuals and methamphetamine and paraphernalia were within their reach. The children were placed in an out-of-home safety plan due to the safety concerns and there being a no-contact order placed between the mother and children because of her criminal charges. ODHS had an open case with the family at the time of the report.

Date of report: September 28, 2014 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Physical Abuse	**Disposition(s):** Unfounded

On September 28, 2014, ODHS received a report alleging physical abuse to the sibling (1) by the mother. The sibling was observed to have a two-inch goose egg on their forehead and bruise on the side of their head.

This occurred when the mother was having a visit with all three of her children at a relative's home. The mother said the sibling fell on the concrete outside the relative's home causing the injury.

The CPS caseworker spoke to medical providers who stated there were concerns the injuries on the sibling's face did not match the explanations the mother provided. Medical staff were concerned they had no other injuries besides on their head and if he had fallen, he would have other injuries on their hands and knees.

On September 30, 2014, a CPS caseworker spoke to the mother. She indicated being present when the injury to the sibling happened. The child was riding their bike and accidently clipped the sibling with a peg, and it caused the sibling to spin around and hit their head on the ground. The sibling had just learned to walk, was unstable and the mother said they had fallen on their head a couple days prior.

The two half-siblings were interviewed during the CPS assessment, and both confirmed the same information that the sibling had been hit by a peg on the child's bike. There was also a neighbor interviewed who was present who said the same thing. The relatives who lived in the home indicated they did not see the incident but observed the sibling to be falling down all weekend as they had just learned to walk and was unsteady often.

The caseworker spoke to the medical provider after interviewing the mother, the children and collaterals and relayed the information. Based on the information, the medical provider felt comfortable the injuries to the sibling were caused by an accident. The sibling also had a full skeletal survey and nothing concerning was identified during the exam.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment, the allegations of physical abuse were unfounded. There was information gathered during the CPS assessment confirming the injury was the result of an accident. ODHS had an open case with the family at the time of the report.

Date of report: June 17, 2015 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Physical Abuse	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On June 17, 2015, ODHS received a report alleging physical abuse to the child (7) by the father. It was reported the child had a visit with their mother and father over the past weekend and disclosed the father spanked them, causing pain. There was no injury observed at the time of the report. The child also disclosed their father had threatened to hit the mother's head on the concrete if she left him and reporter was concerned the children heard this statement.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. There was an open case with ODHS at the time of the report.

Date of report: October 8, 2016 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Neglect	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On October 8, 2016, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the sibling (3) by the father. It was reported an older sibling (6) was displaying violent behaviors in the home and at school. In the home the older sibling had to be closely supervised, and all the knives in the home had to be hidden. The older sibling had recently pushed the younger sibling down the stairs when the mother turned her back. The older sibling was making threats to kill their family and children at school consistently. The child was reportedly not at risk as they could defend themselves from the sibling. At the time of the report the parents were accessing services for the older sibling to manage their behaviors.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: September 13, 2018 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On September 13, 2018, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the child (11) and siblings (8) and (4) by the father. It was reported the father was being investigated by CPS for sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect regarding another half-sibling (13), who lived with the father's ex-partner. At the time all the allegations being investigated were unfounded.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: June 28, 2020 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Threat of Harm	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On June 28, 2020, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the child (12) by the father. It was reported the child was expelled from school sometime during the school year. The child was expelled for having controlled substances and said they were given to him by their father. It was reported neither the child nor the father had had any charges related to substances.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: July 6, 2023 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Not Applicable	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On July 6, 2023, ODHS received a report with concern about the child (15) who lived in the home with their parents. On July 4, 2023, law enforcement was contacted to check on the welfare of the child due to a report they were turning blue, and their father was not concerned about it. It was reported the child used fentanyl at the time of the report. When law enforcement arrived at the home, the father was out in the front yard and

stated the child was fine. The father eventually had the child come outside so law enforcement could speak with them. The child appeared sweaty and said they had just taken a shower. The child admitted to taking three shots of alcohol and said they had been sleeping. The child appeared lethargic, was slow to answer questions, but said they felt safe. After a few minutes of the child speaking to law enforcement, the father said the child was done talking and told them to go back into the residence. Law enforcement tried to talk to the father further and he asked them if they had a warrant. Law enforcement recognized a male sitting in a parked car in the driveway and the male was known to be related to drug and criminal activity.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: August 24, 2023 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Not Applicable	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On August 24, 2023, ODHS received a report with concerns about the child (15), who overdosed due to ingesting substances. The child was observed to be unresponsive, not breathing and did not have a pulse. The child was administered Narcan by medical personnel and was revived immediately. The child reported they used fentanyl, oxycontin, methamphetamine and alcohol and would have all those substances in their system. The child was treated at the emergency room but only tested positive for alcohol and cannabis. Medical personnel believed they may have ingested Kratom or something similar.

The child disclosed using alcohol several days a week to the point of blackout. The child said they used fentanyl every day but last used two months ago and said they can get substances anywhere in the community. The child said they had used marijuana since the fifth grade, nicotine since eighth grade and the mother confirmed this was true. The child denied getting substances from their parents.

The reporter was concerned about past suicidal ideation expressed by the child in 2022 due to their girlfriend breaking up with them and their best friend moving away. The child also had a troubling relationship with their father due to the father being domestically violent with their mother. The child expressed their father was always leaving the family behind but there was no current domestic violence.

The mother appeared to have poor hygiene and her hands presented as someone who used substances. She appeared to be concerned, was trying to gain stability for her children and requested resources. The family lived in a RV with no running water, and they were financially insecure. The mother expressed fearing the child would die from their substance use.

The child was reported to be on probation and was court ordered to complete treatment beginning August 31, 2023. There were no service referrals made by the current medical team.

It was determined the report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Description of relevant prior Department third-party reports, where the child was named as a victim.

Date of report: April 27, 2023 **Assignment decision:** Closed at Screening	**Allegation(s):** Not Applicable	**Disposition(s):** Not Applicable

On April 27, 2023, ODHS received a report alleging sexual abuse to three youth including the child (15) by third party perpetrator. It was reported the alleged perpetrator provided alcohol, marijuana, extasy, cocaine, mushrooms and prescription medication to the youth and then sexually abused the youth.

It was determined the information in this report would be closed at screening. The information in the report was assessed in the report was assigned to OTIS on April 26, 2023.

Date of report: April 26, 2023 **Assignment decision:** Within 24 Hours	**Allegation(s):** Sexual Abuse	**Disposition(s):** Unable to Determine

On April 26, 2023, ODHS received report alleging sexual abuse to the child (15) by a third-party perpetrator, identified by a friend's mother. It was reported the friend's mother was sexually abusing three youth including the child. The abuse involved the friend's mother giving the youth prescription medications which were not prescribed, then kissing and fondling them in their private areas. The abuse being reported had happened in the recent past. This report was assigned to OTIS for investigation to assess the third-party abuse.

On May 4, 2023, the child was interviewed at the police department. They indicated they used to go over to their friend's home and the friend's mother was there. The child said there was one evening they hung out in the friend's mother's bedroom, and everyone thought it was weird, but they did not think anything of it. The door was shut, but not because they wanted privacy. The child said they were in the room for 10-15 minutes and the friend's mother's baby was in the room as well. There was a movie playing the child and the friend's mother were talking while the child played with the baby. The child said there had been an ongoing joke between them and their friends they were going to hook up with the friend's mom and then they went in, and the door was closed their friends thought it was happening. The child denied anything inappropriate happened and said it would be rape by the friend's mother if something had happened. The child denied they had knowledge or observed the friend's mom being inappropriate with the other youth in the home. They also denied the friend's mom gave them or any of the other youth any prescription medications or any other substances.

The child's mother talked to law enforcement and said she had heard the friend's mother had propositioned the child in the past. The child told their mother it was nothing, but the mother said the friend's mother manipulates teenagers and was a terrible person.

Another youth disclosed the friend's mother would convince the youth they had mental health issues and needed to take medications. They had a big duffel bag full of medication bottles and would give them to the youth, despite them wanting to confirm they needed permission from a doctor. The friend's mother started giving the medication to them and it made them feel drowsy, dizzy, and sick. The youth said on one occasion, they gave them way too much medication and they fell asleep. When the youth woke up the friend's mother was touching and kissing them inappropriately and they felt powerless to do anything. The youth said the friend's mother would provide all the youth in the home alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and mushrooms. They would tell the youth not to say anything about the substances being provided or about the touching saying if they did something bad would happen. This youth was scheduled to have a forensic interview but did not agree to be seen due to the past trauma with ODHS and being interviewed in this setting prior.

A third youth was interviewed and described the friend's mother's home as a hang out spot and youth would stay there for weeks, describing it as safe. The youth said the friend's mother became weird after a while and started getting a little too close and kissed them on the face. The youth said it may have been because they were intoxicated and would start acting all loving towards youth. This youth said they saw the friend's mother kiss another youth on the face and lips and said it was like a little peck. The friend's mother was also wobbling around as if they were intoxicated. This youth said the friend's mother only kissed them one time and after asked why they had done it. The friend's mother told them they thought it was okay. The youth said it was very weird, but it was never brought up again. This youth denied they had ever been given substances but said they were given a prescription medication once. It made the youth's body go numb for a couple hours and it felt like a happy feeling. The youth said they took pills from the friend's mom approximately seven times.

On July 19, 2023, the friend's mother was interviewed by law enforcement. They reported taking medications that were prescribed to them. They denied giving any children their medication but said one of the youths had prescribed medication in the lockbox. They denied ever giving medication to a youth that was not prescribed. The friend's mother did say the youth would

sometimes come into their room and sit on the bed but with the door open. They said they would hug the children denied kissing them. They did not recall any youth falling asleep on their bed.

The friend's mother said the child's father had texted them as there was a rumor, they were giving the child substances and that they had tried to give the child oral sex. They stated the child was having a hard time and they did talk in their bedroom, and they did not see a problem with that.

At the conclusion of the CPS assessment the allegation of sexual abuse to the child was unfounded. The child denied any sexual contact had occurred between them and the friend's mother.

Description of concerns regarding actions taken or not taken by the Department or law enforcement agencies in response to the critical incident or events that led to the critical incident:

The CIRT identified further exploration and conversation is warranted regarding youth non-fatal overdose reports that are closed at screening. The CIRT has reviewed multiple cases in the past two years involving fatal youth overdose and recognizes the complexity of youth substance use, lack of available resources including detox and treatment, and need for further exploration about how to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

The Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH) received reports regarding the child experiencing two past non-fatal overdoses prior to their death that were closed at screening. The CIRT identified situations when closed at screening reports may be missed opportunities to assist families with accessing youth prevention, intervention, and recovery services.

The CIRT also recognized there is no current process in place regarding the sharing of information with other youth serving agencies when ODHS does not have an open case, or a report received by the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline is closed at screening. In this case, there were three other agencies serving the child, but they did not have a full scope of the family condition regarding the parents' current or past substance use and how that may have impacted the child. Sharing of critical information could allow other youth and family serving organizations opportunity to provide the

most appropriate service provisions and to identify protective factors for the youth.

Recommendations for improvement in the administration and oversight of the child welfare system that are specific to the critical incident and any historical information reviewed by the team:

The Child Fatality Prevention Review Program (CFPRP) has explored Improvement Opportunity (IO) themes annually for the past three years to inform system improvement though Safe Systems Mapping. The purpose of Safe Systems Mapping is to discuss in a group of experienced professionals and people with lived expertise, their perceptions of what factors influence IOs. In Safe Systems Mapping, these IOs are evaluated at all levels of the system, from the local team level to the legislative/government level. Every participant has an equal voice in the process and all perspectives are valuable to understanding more clearly how the system is operating and what gets in the way of successful work with children and families. ODHS has completed three rounds of Safe System Mapping, which have resulted in recommendations for system improvement both internally and externally.

It is recommended that a Safe System Mapping team be initiated to explore youth substance use and the challenges and barriers to this population accessing services to aid in the prevention of non-fatal and fatal overdoses, in particular when fentanyl use is occurring. The beginning stages of the system improvement mapping should occur no later than October 2024.