Child Fatality Report Release of Information to the Public

Person ID: 105861354

County of Child's Residence: TARRANT

Gender: Female

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

Date of Death: 05/16/2024

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: Nix,Arabella A

Current Report(s) of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 05/16/2024, 05/16/2024 - two reports merged into single investigation

Summary of Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received two reports with concerns the deceased child was taken to the hospital with cardiopulmonary resuscitation in progress and pronounced deceased at the hospital. The deceased child was covered in bruises and marks in different stages of healing. The deceased child was observed to be thin and the cause of death was unknown. The deceased child was in the care of her legal guardians, the paternal aunt and the aunt's paramour.

The Department's investigation determined the paternal aunt and the aunt's paramour were the deceased child's sole caregivers. During the investigation information was obtained from the family, law enforcement, and medical. Medical staff reported the deceased child's weight at her death was 22 pounds and her blood glucose when emergency medical services arrived at home was 23. The normal blood glucose range is 74-127. The child's hemoglobin was 6.2 and the normal range is 12-15. The child had an emaciated appearance with sagging skin and very little subcutaneous fat/tissue. The malnutrition was evidenced by the sagging skin, development of extensive body hair, and her emaciated appearance. The blood glucose of 23 is evidence of acute lack of food in the time leading up to death. The anemia was likely a combination of poor nutrition and bleeding from her various physical injuries. Medical staff reported at the time of the child's death, there was no clear cause of sudden death, but based on her appearance, however, she showed clear signs of ongoing neglect and physical abuse. The child had a history of not gaining weight and the deceased child's caregivers were previously told to seek on going medical care. The caregivers did not seek medical care. The child presented at the hospital with red bruising to the pinna, red bruise to the inside of her upper lip, red bruising to the inside of her lower lip, red bruising to the right eye area, and numerous

loop pattern and linear bruises to arms, legs, chest, and back. The medical staff reported the child was physically abused on many occasions and chronically neglected both physically (food withheld) and medically (not keeping medical recommendations). The aunt's paramour initially stated all marks on the child were caused by the child being clumsy and falling a lot but later admitted to law enforcement to causing the marks on the child's body and claimed it was discipline. Based on the information obtained, the caregivers were aware of prior recommendations to seek a higher level of medical care for the child regarding her medical needs and the caregivers failed to seek medical care for the child.

The Medical Examiner completed an autopsy and the results were pending at the time the Department's investigation was closed.

Law enforcement conducted an investigation that was pending at the time the Department's investigation was closed, however the aunt and the aunt's paramour were arrested for injury to a child with serious bodily injury.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the deceased child's aunt and the aunt's paramour committed physical neglect to the deceased child, which led to her death.

The Department confirmed the deceased child's aunt and the aunt's paramour committed physical abuse to the deceased child.

The Department confirmed the deceased child's aunt and the aunt's paramour committed medical neglect to the deceased child.

Safety and Risk Assessment not required per policy as only child died.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Only child died

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

The family did not agree to services.

No Service Referrals and deceased child was an only child.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable as only child died.

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:

Not applicable.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 07/15/2023, 07/18/2023 - two reports merged into a single investigation

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received two reports with concerns the deceased child had been placed with her paternal aunt about a year and a half to two years ago by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services . The child's mother lived in Illinois and the father recently moved to Texas. The father is a child molester. It is unknown if the father is a registered sex offender. There was also a sexual abuse investigation in Illinois where father inappropriately sexually touched his oldest daughter when she was 13 years old. There were reported concerns the father had unsupervised access to the child. The child has not made an outcry of sexual abuse. The child's attitude and behavior is changing. The child will use the bathroom on herself only when she is around other people. The child knows how to talk but doesn't want to talk. The child will bang her head on the floor and is having outbursts for no reasons. The mother has asked the aunt to seek medical attention for the child and the aunt is refusing. The child doesn't go out like a normal child. The aunt is refusing to put the child in school because the aunt doesn't want the child in school. The father's family will say whatever to protect each other.

The Department's investigation determined the deceased child's aunt and the deceased child's father denied the concerns and denied the father had unsupervised access to the child. The aunt reported there were concerns with the child gaining weight throughout her childhood, and they are working on following up with a nutritionist. The aunt denied the child had any medical issues.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm the deceased child's paternal aunt and father committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child.

The Department did not confirm the deceased child's paternal aunt committed medical neglectful of the deceased child.

The Department did not confirm the deceased child's father committed sexual abuse of the deceased child.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Paternal aunt's household
07/18/2023: Safety Assessment - Initial: Safe

Biological father's household:
07/18/2023: Safety Assessment - Initial: Safe
Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: Moderate

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

No services or referrals were provided.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 3/13/2020

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services received a report after the deceased child's father assaulted the deceased child's mother while holding the deceased child, causing the mother to drop the child. The child hit her head on the ground and began shaking and vomiting. The parents admitted to marijuana use and the mother suffered from mental health issues and had been hospitalized several times. The child was removed and placed into care on 3/13/2020.

Investigation Findings:

The father had an adjudicated hearing that resulted in a neglect finding.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: Information not available.

Case Action:

Removal/Subcare

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

The mother and father were offered services. The mother and father completed parental capacity assessments and the results indicated that the deceased child would be at significant and imminent harm if returned to her parent's and reunification was not recommended. The mother moved to Illinois, continued to use marijuana daily, and was not addressing her mental health. The father also completed a sex offender assessment due to a substantiated case from a 2019 investigation regarding abuse towards another of his biological children and he was not recommended to be a primary caregiver. The mother did not complete domestic violence classes however the father did complete a Batterers Intervention Program.

Other Services:

Not applicable

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The Department was asked by Kentucky to evaluate and provide supervision through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). Although there were initial concerns regarding a 2019 domestic violence incident between the aunt and her paramour, the home study was approved and the deceased child was placed with the paternal aunt on 4/18/2022. The Department monitored placement until legal guardianship was appointed to the paternal aunt on 6/14/2023 by the State of Kentucky. The ICPC case was closed 8/24/23.

Note: This report was prepared on 05/12/2026 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.