Child Fatality Report Release of Information to the Public

Person ID: 115667034

County of Child's Residence: PRESIDIO

Gender: Female

Age: 1 Year(s) 8 Month(s)

Date of Death: 12/11/2024

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: Stephens,Aaliyah

Current Report(s) of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 12/11/2024

Summary of Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report of a fatal event after law enforcement officials responded to a 911 call stating the deceased child was unresponsive. Upon their arrival, law enforcement officials were met outside the home by the mother who stated her baby was deceased. The deceased child's mother explained the child had multiple medical conditions and was fed through a tube, which the child removed in September and there was no follow up with the doctor. The deceased child was observed to be malnourished with visible bones.

The Department's investigation determined that the child was born with intestinal issues and had a colostomy bag since she was 1 month old. The child was then given a Gastrojejunostomy tube (GJ tube) for feedings after her colostomy reversal failed in January of 2024. The mother reported her daughter pulled the tube out in September of 2024 and she opted to cure it herself with instructions from Google. The mother reported on the Monday prior to the death, the deceased child was feeling sick and lost her appetite. She had a cold, stuffy nose, vomiting and did not want to eat. She gave her water and Pedialyte to keep her hydrated, but she continued to refuse food. She tried feeding her soft foods, but the deceased child continued to vomit. The mother considered taking her to the doctor but opted against this due to her prior bad experiences. The mother reported the day of the incident, she gave the child sips of Pedialyte and snacks. The child continued to refuse food, and they went back to bed. The mother reports she woke up around noon and found her daughter unresponsive. She picked her up and found she was not breathing. She then told her family the child was dead and asked someone called 911. The mother stated emergency medical services attempted to revive the child but were unsuccessful. The mother admitted she was educated by medical staff on proper care of the feeding tube and told to take the child back in the event it came out but refused to seek medical

care when the child removed it. She was told by multiple family members to take the deceased child back to the doctor when the tube came out, but she refused. The father admitted he was aware the feeding tube came out and his wife refused to seek medical care, however he did not seek medical care either and left the responsibility to the mother. The mother admitted she stopped feeding formula to the child. The father was aware of this and made no attempts to intervene. The child's older sibling, age 13, remained in the home as there were no concerns with his care.

The child was determined to be malnourished at the time of death and the child's gastroenterologist stated the child could have survived if the parents would have continued to feed her formula. It was reported GJ tube required surgical reinsertion as the child required hourly feedings of 50ml of formula, 20 hours per day and the feedings provided by the mother were not sufficient. The child was last seen by her physician in May 2024 and had weighed 17.8 pounds upon her discharge from the hospital in April 2024.

The medical examiner completed an autopsy, but final results were not available when the Department's investigation closed due to the ongoing criminal investigation. The preliminary results found the child was extremely underweight and weighed 14 pounds at her autopsy. She had severe colitis caused by malnourishment and the cause of death would be due to medical conditions exacerbated by medical neglect as the parents did not seek medical care when the feeding tube was pulled out. There was extreme leakage from the feedings through the mouth as they would go through the body and drain out of the GJ tube hole and the bandage around it was dirty and stuck to the child's skin.

Law enforcement conducted an investigation that was still ongoing when the Department closed its investigation.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the mother and father committed medical neglect and physical neglect of the deceased child, which led to her death.

The Department confirmed the mother and father committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Structured Decision Making Safety Assessments:
1.) 12/16/2024: Safety Assessment - Initial: Safe
2.) 01/28/2025: Safety Assessment - Reassessment: Safe

Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: Very High

Case Action:

Family Preservation

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

Counseling and Psychological Assessment, Substance Abuse Assessment, Medical Evaluation

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The family accepted services and referrals offered and the case was transferred to Family-Based Safety Services.

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.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s):

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

Investigation Findings:

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Note: This report was prepared on 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.