Child Fatality Report Release of Information to the Public

Person ID: 63176323

County of Child's Residence: ORANGE

Gender: Female

Age: 17 Year(s) 0 Month(s)

Date of Death: 01/01/2024

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: Lewis,Ja'Niya D

Current Report(s) of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 01/01/2024

Summary of Allegation(s)/Investigation:

On January 1, 2024, the Department received a report stating the deceased child's father unlawfully entered the home of the child's stepmother and opened fire, killing the deceased child, the stepmother, and the maternal step-grandfather before killing himself. The child's three surviving siblings were in the home and witnessed the event and are being forensically interviewed.

The Department determined the deceased child, her siblings, and her step-mother were not residing with the father and the siblings reported incidents of physical violence against the step-mother by the father. The family was residing with the step-mother's parents and her adult brother, the children's uncle. The siblings were forensically interviewed and all indicated the deceased child's father busted into the home and shot their mother, their sister, their grandfather and them himself. The adult uncle barricaded himself and the three siblings in a bedroom. The grandmother was willing and able to care for the siblings as they had been residing in her home at the time of the incident. No legal intervention was needed. The children were engaged in counseling upon the close of the case.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the deceased child's father committed physical abuse of the deceased child, which led to her death.

The Department confirmed the deceased child's father committed neglectful supervision of the three surviving siblings.

The Department confirmed the deceased child's father committed emotional abuse of the three surviving siblings.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Structured Decision Making Safety Assessments:
1.) 01/18/2024: Safety Assessment - Initial: Safe
2.) 01/24/2024: Safety Assessment - Case Closure: Safe

Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: Moderate

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

The family acceptted services and referrals offered.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The grandmother is seeking custody of the surviving siblings through a private attorney.

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:

The deceased child was in foster care from 5/13/2014 until 10/19/2015 when Permanent Managing Conservatorship was given to the child's father. She was placed with her father on 8/19/2014 and remained there at the time the legal case was dismissed.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 04/14/2014

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report stating the deceased child (age 7) and her sibling went home to an empty house. There was no adult present. It is unknown how long the children had to wait inside the home until someone came and got them. The children's mother is currently living in a hotel due to being wanted by the police so is passing the children off on different people.

The Department determined the mother was abandoning the children and leaving them with inappropriate caregivers. The mother also tested positive for cocaine and methamphetamines. The child and her two younger siblings were removed and placed with family members.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the mother committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child and her younger sister.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Removal/Subcare

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Basic Needs Support

Other Services:

The family was offered and accepted services through the Conservatorship case.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The Department sought and was granted Temporary Managing Conservatorship of the child and her two younger siblings. The child was eventually placed into the care of her father and granted Permanent Managing Conservatorship. The child's sister was adopted by a paternal aunt and her brother was placed with fictive kin who were given Permanent Managing Conservatorship. The mother did not participate in services and relinquished her parental rights.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 03/04/2010

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report after a juvenile probation officer went the home of a client and found the deceased child (age 3) and her two younger siblings (ages 4 months and 1-year-old) alone in the living room while his client had been sleeping in his room. The infant was on the edge of the couch and could have easily

fallen. The infant's father was supposed to be caring for the children but was not around, the children's mother was at work, and the maternal grandmother was asleep in another room.

The Department determined the deceased child's mother and the father of the infant sibling were positive for cocaine and were caring for the children when under the influence.

Investigation Findings:

The Department confirmed the mother and the infant siblings father committed neglectful supervision of all three children.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Safety Assessment: Safe/No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Assessment: Risk Finding - Risk Indicated

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Family Preservation

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation,Basic Needs Support

Other Services:

The family agreed to court ordered services.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

The mother and father of the infant sibling were not cooperative so the Department sought and was granted court ordered participation in services. The children were voluntarily placed in three different Parental Child Safety Placements that ended during the Family Based Safety Services case with the placements continuing to care for the children at various time to support the mother. The mother successfully completed individual counseling and parent skills training and utilized community resources in getting clothing and beds for her children. She also has several family members and a family friend she can use as a support system.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 05/11/2011

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report that the deceased child's mother is using drugs again and leaving her three children under the supervision of the youngest child's father who has mental health issues, possibly schizophrenic, and does not take his medications. He was determined to be inappropriate to supervise children during the last case with the Department and has long history of drug use and violent behaviors. The youngest child has been seen with bruises and scratches.

The Department determined through collaterals that the youngest child's father did not have contact with the children. The deceased child did not make an outcry and provided no indication that her younger siblings' father had been in the home. All the children were observed without injuries and the mother tested negative for drugs.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm the mother committed neglectful supervision of her three children.

The Department did not confirm the youngest child's father committed neglectful supervision of the three

children.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Safety Assessment: Safe/No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Assessment: Risk Finding - No Significant Factors

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

No services or referrals provided.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 04/26/2013

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report that a month ago, the deceased child stated that she saw her mother break down a cigarette and put green stuff in the cigarette. The child called the substance "weed". The child also stated that when her mother put the substance in an ashtray and stepped away, her 3-year-old sibling picked it up and ate it. It is unknown what the effect was on the sibling or when the incident happened.

The Department determined that the mother was negative for drugs and the child made no outcry of any abuse or neglect in the home and did not know what marijuana was. The other three children in the home were observed and no concerns were noted. The mother had support from her family.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm the mother committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child and her three younger siblings.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Safety Assessment: Safe/No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Assessment: Risk Finding - Not applicable

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close - Abbreviated INV

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

The mother accepted services offered.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 05/07/2013

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report that the deceased child's mother was having a sexual relationship with a 15-year-old paramour. The relationship started several months prior to the report and there were concerns of sexual abuse. There were also concerns the mother and her paramour were smoking marijuana around the children and were living in a shack that was unkept and unclean.

The Department determined the deceased child did not make an outcry of any abuse or neglect and the alleged paramour only came over to the home with her mother's 'sister' and friends. The mother denied being in a relationship with the 15-year-old and denied using marijuana or other drugs. The 15-year-old also denied the relationship and collaterals confirmed this.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm the mother committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child and her three younger siblings.

The Department did not confirm the mother committed sexual abuse of the deceased child and her three younger siblings.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Safety Assessment: Not applicable
Risk Assessment: Risk Finding - Not applicable

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close - Abbreviated INV

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

No services or referrals provided.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 09/09/2013

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report that the mother was abusing marijuana, ecstasy, and every other drug on a daily basis while the deceased child and her younger siblings were present. The mother is also leaving drugs accessible to the children. There is no food in the home and there are men in and out of the house. The mother also leaves the deceased child in charge of the younger children while she goes out "clubbing."

The Department determined the mother was negative on an instant read drug screen and there was sufficient food observed in the home. The mother denied leaving her children home alone and stated her next-door neighbor would watch them. The children denied being left alone and were observed with no injuries. Collaterals reported that they did care for the children if the mother wasn't there. The home was observed with no concerns noted however the Department did assist with some extra food supplies.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm the mother committed neglectful supervision of the deceased child and her three younger siblings.

The Department did not confirm the mother committed physical neglect of the deceased child and her three younger siblings.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:
Safety Assessment: Safe/No Safety Plan Needed
Risk Assessment: Risk Finding - Not applicable

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Case Action:

Close - Abbreviated INV

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Counseling and Evaluation

Other Services:

The mother accepted the services offered.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 08/14/2015

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

The Department received a report that the deceased child was residing with her father and his paramour, the child's step-mother. It was reported, the child spent a lot of time in a woman's home, including living there, and this woman had a 12-year-old son. The deceased child reported that when she lived with this woman, the 12-year-old son sexually assaulted her.

The Department determined that the deceased child made a sexual abuse outcry against the 12-year-old, who was the son of the fictive kinship placement where she resided prior to being placed into her father's home. The child also stated she had been touched by other children and teenagers and admitted to sexually acting out with other children including her younger siblings. The child was still in the care of the Department and had no contact with the prior placement or her son.

Investigation Findings:

The Department did not confirm two unrelated minors committed sexual abuse of the deceased child as they were not caregivers and the concerns were a law enforcement matter.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Structured Decision Making Safety Assessments:
1.) 08/19/2015: Structured Decision Making Safety Assessment - Initial: Safe
2.) 08/21/2015: Structured Decision Making Safety Assessment - Case Closure: Safe

Risk Assessment Final Risk Level: Risk Assessment not required by Policy.

Case Action:

Close - Abbreviated INV

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Other Services:

No services or referrals provided as services were already in place as part of the on-going Conservatorship case.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

Other Previous Report of Abuse/Neglect:

Intake Date(s): 03/11/2011

Summary of Previous Allegation(s)/Investigation:

he Department received a report indicating the deceased child was observed walking unsupervised and somewhat lost in an apartment complex that is not her residence. The child was said to have been returned to her mother's care the previous Friday.

The Department determined the reported did not have any first hand knowledge of any incident. Based on the information from the Family Based Safety Services case that closed four days prior, this report was closed without assignment.

Investigation Findings:

Not applicable.

Safety and Risk Assessment Factors Identified:

Risk Assessment: Not applicable.

Case Action:

Closed without assignment.

Services and Referrals Provided to the Family:

Not applicable.

Other Services:

Not applicable.

Other Actions Taken to Mitigate Risk:

Not applicable.

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.