



Report Identification Number: SY-22-007

Prepared by: New York State Office of Children & Family Services

Issue Date: Jul 19, 2022

This report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns:

- A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
- The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
- The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
- The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child’s family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child’s death; whether the child or the child’s family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child’s death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child’s death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child’s household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate of the State of New York.

This report may **only** be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. **It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child’s siblings or other children in the household.**

OCFS’ review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS’ assessment and the performance of these agencies.



Abbreviations

Relationships		
BM-Biological Mother	SM-Subject Mother	SC-Subject Child
BF-Biological Father	SF-Subject Father	OC-Other Child
MGM-Maternal Grand Mother	MGF-Maternal Grand Father	FF-Foster Father
PGM-Paternal Grand Mother	PGF-Paternal Grand Father	DCP-Day Care Provider
MGGM-Maternal Great Grand Mother	MGGF-Maternal Great Grand Father	PGGF-Paternal Great Grand Father
PGGM-Paternal Great Grand Mother	MA/MU-Maternal Aunt/Maternal Uncle	PA/PU-Paternal Aunt/Paternal Uncle
FM-Foster Mother	SS-Surviving Sibling	PS-Parent Sub
CH/CHN-Child/Children	OA-Other Adult	
Contacts		
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner
Dr.-Doctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother
CPS-Child Protective Services		
Allegations		
FX-Fractures	II-Internal Injuries	L/B/W-Lacerations/Bruises/Welts
S/D/S-Swelling/Dislocation/Sprains	C/T/S-Choking/Twisting/Shaking	B/S-Burns/Scalding
P/Nx-Poisoning/ Noxious Substance	XCP-Excessive Corporal Punishment	PD/AM-Parent's Drug Alcohol Misuse
CD/A-Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	LMC-Lack of Medical Care	EdN-Educational Neglect
EN-Emotional Neglect	SA-Sexual Abuse	M/FTTH-Malnutrition/Failure-to-thrive
IF/C/S-Inadequate Food/ Clothing/ Shelter	IG-Inadequate Guardianship	LS-Lack of Supervision
Ab-Abandonment	OTH/COI-Other	
Miscellaneous		
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence
LDSS-Local Department of Social Service	ACS-Administration for Children's Services	NYPD-New York City Police Department
PPRS-Purchased Preventive Rehabilitative Services	TANF-Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	FC-Foster Care
MH-Mental Health	ER-Emergency Room	COS-Court Ordered Services
OP-Order of Protection	RAP-Risk Assessment Profile	FASP-Family Assessment Plan
FAR-Family Assessment Response	Hx-History	Tx-Treatment
CAC-Child Advocacy Center	PIP-Program Improvement Plan	yo- year(s) old
CPR-Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	ASTO-Allowing Sex Abuse to Occur	



Case Information

Report Type: Child Deceased
Age: 1 year(s)

Jurisdiction: Jefferson
Gender: Male

Date of Death: 02/11/2022
Initial Date OCFS Notified: 02/11/2022

Presenting Information

Jefferson County Department of Social Services (JCDSS) received a report from the SCR alleging that on 2/11/22, the father was co-sleeping with the 17-month-old subject child, in a king size bed. When the father woke at 6AM, he observed the child to be cold and rigor mortis had set in. The mother was sleeping with the sibling in her room and was aware the father was co-sleeping with the subject child. Additionally, the child presented with a 1-1 1/2 inch contusion above his right eye due to hitting his head on the coffee table while playing on 2/10/22.

Executive Summary

This report concerns the death of the 1-year-old male subject child that occurred on 2/11/22. At the time of the subject child's death, he resided at home with his mother, father, and 3-year-old sibling.

The investigation revealed the day leading up to the child's death was uneventful. The child presented with a bruise on his forehead, as he had been playing with model cars the day prior and fell onto one. The family reported the child did not have an appetite at dinnertime and had a slight fever. The father gave him a child's dosage of Motrin prior to placing the child to sleep in the parents' bed with him while the mother slept in bed with the sibling. The father reported he woke around 6AM on 2/11/22, and found the subject child face down with his left cheek on the bed facing away from him. The father placed a hand on the child and found him to be cold to the touch. The father attempted CPR and called 911. First responders arrived and transported the child to the hospital where he was pronounced dead at 6:52AM.

The final autopsy report was received and revealed the diagnosis to be sudden death associated with an unsafe sleep environment. The autopsy further reported the subject child was found face down after co-sleeping with the parent in an adult bed. There was evidence of an acute viral illness and recent clinical history of fever. Specifically, the medical examiner detailed, "although the sleeping environment (with parent in adult bed) raises the possibility of accidental suffocation/overlying, this cannot be established nor refuted with scientific certainty. Therefore, given the circumstances surrounding the death as currently known, the manner of death is best classified as undetermined."

JCDSS provided the parents with information for grief and mental health counseling. JCDSS spoke with family members and collateral sources, which included law enforcement, medical staff, and the medical examiner. JCDSS found credible evidence to substantiate the allegations of IG against the father regarding the subject child. JCDSS determined the father was aware of safe sleep practice and was aware of the harm associated with co-sleeping. Despite that knowledge, the father chose to sleep in bed with the child. JCDSS unsubstantiated the allegations of DOA/Fatality. No further service needs were identified, and the investigation closed after all casework activity was complete. JCDSS conducted a thorough investigation in accordance with multidisciplinary standards and recorded casework activity and required assessments timely and accurately.

Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

Safety Assessment:



- Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:
 - Approved Initial Safety Assessment? Yes
 - Safety assessment due at the time of determination? Yes
- Was the safety decision on the approved Initial Safety Assessment appropriate? Yes

Determination:

- Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations as well as any others identified in the course of the investigation? Yes, sufficient information was gathered to determine all allegations.
- Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate appropriate? Yes

Explain:

Casework activity was commensurate with case circumstances.

Was the decision to close the case appropriate? Yes

Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant statutory or regulatory requirements? Yes

Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation? Yes, the case record has detail of the consultation.

Explain:

JCDSS appropriately substantiated the allegations given the facts and circumstances of the investigation. Once case objectives were met, the investigation was closed.

Required Actions Related to the Fatality

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? Yes No

Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities

Incident Information

Date of Death: 02/11/2022

Time of Death: 06:52 AM

Time of fatal incident, if different than time of death: Unknown

County where fatality incident occurred: Jefferson

Was 911 or local emergency number called? Yes

Time of Call: 06:33 AM

Did EMS respond to the scene? Yes

At time of incident leading to death, had child used alcohol or drugs? No

**Child's activity at time of incident:**

- Sleeping
- Working
- Driving / Vehicle occupant
- Playing
- Eating
- Unknown
- Other

Did child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes

How long before incident was the child last seen by caretaker? 9 Hours

At time of incident was supervisor impaired? Not impaired.

At time of incident supervisor was:

- Distracted
- Absent
- Asleep
- Other:

Total number of deaths at incident event:

Children ages 0-18: 1

Adults: 0

Household Composition at time of Fatality

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	Alleged Victim	Male	1 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	Alleged Perpetrator	Male	25 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	23 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	3 Year(s)

LDSS Response

On 2/11/22, JCDSS received the SCR fatality report regarding the subject child. Upon receipt of the fatality report, JCDSS initiated their investigation within 24 hours and coordinated efforts with their MDT. JCDSS reviewed CPS history which revealed that neither the parents, subject child, nor sibling were known to the system.

JCDSS interviewed the parents at the hospital upon receipt of the report on 2/11/22. The mother and father reported the subject child was sleeping in the adult-sized bed with the father while the mother slept in the sibling's bed with her. The parents reported the mother was sleeping in the sibling's room as the sibling was sick with an upper respiratory infection. Medical personnel at the hospital confirmed the sibling was treated for the infection in the days leading up to the subject child's death. The father reported the subject child did not want to eat his dinner on 2/10/22, but was otherwise behaving normal. The subject child was given a children's dose of Motrin as he had a fever of 101, and was placed to sleep in bed with the father. The father woke around 6AM and noticed the child was face down on the bed and had his buttocks up in the air. The father placed his hand on the child's hand and found him cold to the touch and unresponsive. The father attempted CPR but reported the child was already stiff and cold. He called 911 and first responders arrived and transported the child to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Medical records revealed the subject child was born on 9/30/20 via a natural birth and there were no complications during the mother's pregnancy nor during the delivery. The child was up to date with well-child visits and described in the records as a normal, healthy child. There were no concerns noted during any appointments. Medical records regarding the sibling were received and there were no concerns documented.



The sibling was assessed to be safe in the care of her parents. No safety concerns were revealed for the sibling, as the unsafe situation was isolated to the circumstances of the subject child's vulnerability. The sibling was interviewed and reported her brother was "in the sky now and is a little angel." The sibling had no further information to provide about the subject child's death and presented as developmentally on target.

Law enforcement advised JCDSS of their interviews with the family. Law enforcement corroborated the parents' account of the incident. Law enforcement determined there was no criminality or foul play suspected in the death and closed their investigation. The appropriate fatality-related services were offered, and the case was closed upon sufficiently gathering information to determine the investigation.

Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Undetermined

Primary Cause of Death: Undetermined if injury or medical cause

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Medical Examiner

Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

Was the fatality investigation conducted by a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)? Yes

Comments: JCDSS adhered to previously approved protocols for joint investigations by coordinating efforts with law enforcement and notifying the DA's office of the death.

Was the fatality referred to an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team? Yes

SCR Fatality Report Summary

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome
060401 - Deceased Child, Male, 1 Yrs	060402 - Father, Male, 25 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Unsubstantiated
060401 - Deceased Child, Male, 1 Yrs	060403 - Mother, Female, 23 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Unsubstantiated
060401 - Deceased Child, Male, 1 Yrs	060402 - Father, Male, 25 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated
060401 - Deceased Child, Male, 1 Yrs	060403 - Mother, Female, 23 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated

CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alleged subject(s) interviewed face-to-face?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All 'other persons named' interviewed face-to-face?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with source?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was a death-scene investigation performed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there discussion with all parties (youth, other household members, and staff) who were present that day (if nonverbal, observation and comments in case notes)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional information:

Relevant collateral sources with interviewed. Notes were entered contemporaneously to their event dates.

Fatality Safety Assessment Activities
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	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there an adequate assessment of impending or immediate danger to surviving siblings/other children in the household named in the report:				
Within 24 hours?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At 7 days?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At 30 days?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the protective factors in this case require the LDSS to file a petition in Family Court at any time during or after the investigation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Child Fatality Report

Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Explain:
 JCDSS provided community-based bereavement and mental health service referrals to the family. A behavioral health specialist provides support to the family and works with the surviving sibling.

Placement Activities in Response to the Fatality Investigation

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed or placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were there surviving children in the household that were removed either as a result of this fatality report / investigation or for reasons unrelated to this fatality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explain as necessary:
 There was no removal regarding the surviving sibling.

Legal Activity Related to the Fatality

Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity.

Services Provided to the Family in Response to the Fatality

Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Not Offered	Needed but Unavailable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funeral arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homemaking Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic Violence Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol/Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intensive case management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Family or others as safety resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Additional information, if necessary:
 JCDSS provided community-based referrals for grief and mental health counseling to the family. The family was receptive to services and began working with providers immediately. At the time of case closure, the family was actively involved with services.

Were services provided to siblings or other children in the household to address any immediate needs and support their well-being in response to the fatality? Yes

Explain:
 JCDSS provided community-based referrals to the family. The family was engaged in services at the time of case closure.

Were services provided to parent(s) and other care givers to address any immediate needs related to the fatality? Yes

Explain:
 JCDSS provided community-based referrals for grief counseling to the family. The family was engaged in services at the time of case closure.

History Prior to the Fatality

Child Information

- Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment? No
- Was the child ever placed outside of the home prior to the death? No
- Were there any siblings ever placed outside of the home prior to this child's death? No
- Was the child acutely ill during the two weeks before death? Yes

CPS - Investigative History Three Years Prior to the Fatality

There is no CPS investigative history in NYS within three years prior to the fatality.

CPS - Investigative History More Than Three Years Prior to the Fatality

There was no CPS investigative history more than three years prior to the fatality.

Known CPS History Outside of NYS

There was no known history outside of New York State.



Legal History Within Three Years Prior to the Fatality

Was there any legal activity within three years prior to the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity.

Recommended Action(s)

Are there any recommended actions for local or state administrative or policy changes? Yes No

Are there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review? Yes No