

Preliminary Report	Fatality	06/26/2024
---------------------------	-----------------	-------------------

- 1. Victim:** Emmanuel Bear-Hawk Diaz – newborn male
- 2. Date of notification to DCS:** 11/28/22
- 3. Date of fatality:** 11/28/22
- 4. Date of determination that the fatality was the result of abuse or neglect*:** 6/26/24
- 5. County and general location of the residence of the victim:** Maricopa County – Gila Bend, AZ
- 6. Alleged perpetrator(s) name, age and city, town or general location:**

Syndi Valdez– age 32 – Gila Bend, AZ

7. Circumstances of the fatality that indicate it was the result of abuse or neglect:

On November 28, 2022, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the home birth of Emmanuel Diaz, who was unresponsive after birth. The child was transported to the hospital and pronounced deceased shortly after arrival. The Maricopa County Medical Examiner concluded that methamphetamine exposure from maternal methamphetamine use was a contributory cause of death. On June 19, 2024, the Department substantiated the allegation of neglect as to Syndi Valdez.

8. Whether DCS has received any reports or past cases, of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child or the current alleged perpetrator(s):**

DCS received the following prior report involving Syndi Valdez:

On October 9, 2018, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Syndi Valdez. The allegation was substantiated. The family was initially referred for in-home services with a safety plan in place. Ultimately, the child and siblings were taken into DCS custody and a dependency petition was filed. Ms. Valdez did not complete reunification services and parental rights were terminated. The dependency matter was ongoing at the time of the next report.

On April 13, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by the mother, Syndi Valdez. The child was taken into custody and a dependency petition was filed regarding this child. The allegations were substantiated. Ms. Valdez did not complete reunification services. Parental rights were terminated and the case was closed in November 2021.

9. Actions taken by DCS in response to the fatality:

A joint investigation was conducted with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

10. Actions taken regarding the child and/or other children in the home:

There were no other children in the home.

11. Whether the agency is or intends to provide direct services or service referrals to the family:

There were no services provided by the Department.

*The determination that a fatality or near fatality is the result of abuse, abandonment or neglect is based one or more of the following criteria: (1) The perpetrator(s) arrest related to the incident, (2) Substantiated finding(s) linking the alleged perpetrator(s) action(s) to the fatality or near fatality and/or (3) Results of the Medical Examiner's report.

** Information released after July 3, 2015 provides reports, or any current or past cases, of abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child or the alleged perpetrator pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-807.01(A)(1)(e).
Posted information may be updated as new information becomes available.