



# ARIZONA DEPARTMENT of CHILD SAFETY

David Lujan, Director  
Katie Hobbs, Governor

<b>Preliminary Report</b>	<b>Fatality</b>	<b>07/28/2023</b>
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- 1. Victim:** Esmeralda Tavares AKA Ania Gonzales– 1-month-old female
- 2. Date of notification to DCS:** 08/18/2021
- 3. Date of fatality:** 08/18/2021
- 4. Date of determination that the fatality was the result of abuse or neglect\*:** 06/22/23
- 5. County and general location of the residence of the victim:** Pinal County – Casa Grande, AZ
- 6. Alleged perpetrator(s) name, age and city, town or general location:**

Vivian Tavares – age 23 – Casa Grande, AZ  
Arturo Gonzales – age 27 – Casa Grande, AZ

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

On August 18, 2021, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 1-month-old Esmeralda Tavares who was transported to the hospital and was pronounced deceased. Upon investigation, it was determined the child died due to fentanyl intoxication following confirmation by the Maricopa Medical Examiner's report. On June 22, 2023, the Department substantiated the allegations of neglect by the child's parents, Vivian Tavares and Arturo Gonzales.

**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 reports involving Vivian Tavares and Arturo Gonzales:

On January 10, 2019, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by Vivian Tavares. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the case was closed on March 7, 2019. There were no services provided to the family.

On July 15, 2019, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a child by Mr. Gonzales. This investigation was open when the next report was received. On August 12, 2019, a report was received alleging neglect to children by Arturo Gonzales. This report also generated another report for a child living in the home. The allegations were unsubstantiated in the three open reports and the case was closed on September 27, 2019. The family was provided with resources in the community.

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On January 7, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by Vivian Tavares. The investigation was open when the next report was received. On February 1, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by Vivian Tavares. Ultimately, allegations as to both reports were unsubstantiated. The family was referred for in-home services.

On March 17, 2020, a report was received alleging physical abuse and neglect to children by Mr. Gonzales. The investigation was open when the next report was received. On April 1, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to children by Mr. Gonzales. Ultimately, allegations as to both reports were unsubstantiated. The case was closed on April 21, 2020 and no services were provided by the Department.

On March 21, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to children by Vivian Tavares and Arturo Gonzales. The family had agreed to participate in in-home services and the case was pending services when this report was received. One of the children was assessed as safe with their other parent and the other child was taken into DCS custody and an out of home dependency petition was filed with the Pinal County Superior Court. The allegations were substantiated and the family was provided with services.

On June 28, 2021, a report was received alleging neglect to Esmeralda by Vivian Tavares. A safety plan was implemented with a relative making unannounced visits to the home. This investigation was still open the next report was received. On August 15, 2021, a report was received alleging physical abuse and neglect to Esmeralda by Arturo Gonzales. Both investigations were open when the fatality report was received on August 18, 2021. The Department was providing services to the family when the fatality report was received. Ultimately, the allegations to the June 28, 2021 and August 15, 2021 reports were unsubstantiated. The family was participating in services.

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

A joint investigation was conducted with the Casa Grande Police Department.

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

There were no other children in the home at the time of the incident.

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

The Department is providing services to the family.

\*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.