

Preliminary Report	Near Fatality	02/24/2023
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- 1. Near Fatality Victim:** 3-year-old female
- 2. Date of notification to DCS:** 12/12/2021
- 3. Date of near fatality:** 12/12/2021
- 4. Date of determination that the near fatality was the result of abuse or neglect*:** 04/22/2022
- 5. County and general location of the residence of the victim:** Coconino County- Flagstaff, AZ
- 6. Alleged perpetrator(s) name, age and city, town or general location:**

Heidi Balda – age 42 – Flagstaff, AZ
Ronald Smith – age 48 – Flagstaff, AZ

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

On December 12, 2021, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding a three-year-old female who was taken to the hospital after being found unresponsive at home. Upon evaluation, the child was determined to be in critical condition as result of carbon monoxide exposure. On December 15, 2021 the Department filed a dependency petition with the Coconino County Superior Court. On April 22, 2022 the court ruled the parents, Heidi Balda and Ronald Smith, neglected to provide a safe and stable home environment, and proper supervision for the near fatality victim.

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):**

There has been no prior DCS reports involving Heidi Balda, Ronald Smith, and/or the near fatality victim.

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

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

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

Upon release from the hospital, the child was placed in licensed foster care. In July 2022, the child was transitioned to an unlicensed kinship caregiver. 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:

The Department is providing services to the family.

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*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.