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| Summary Report | Fatality | 5/23/18 |
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1. **Victim:** Bentley Rice – 2-month-old male

2. **Was the child residing in the child's home or in an out-of-home placement at the time of the fatality?**

The child was residing in his home when the following incident occurred:

On January 8, 2016, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 2-month-old Bentley Rice who had been transported to the hospital in extremely critical condition. Bentley was determined to be suffering from head trauma and was later pronounced deceased. The Maricopa Medical Examiner's Office ruled the cause of death as blunt force trauma of the head and the manner of death as homicide. The Medical Examiner's report noted that, "The exact mechanism of injury was unknown, but most likely involved blunt force trauma inflicted by another person or persons." No arrests have been made in connection to the fatality.

3. **If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in the child's home, the following information will be provided:**

a. **Services being provided to the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect at the time of the incident and the date of the last contact before the incident between the entity providing services and the person receiving services:**

On October 25, 2015, a report was received alleging neglect to Bentley by his mother. An investigation was initiated and the mother began participating in preliminary services. The last date of contact between the service provider and the mother was on January 4, 2016.

b. **Was the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect the subject of a report for investigation at the time of the incident?**

The child and his mother were subjects of a report received on October 25, 2015.

c. **All involvement of the child's parents and of the person suspected of the abuse or neglect in a situation for which a report for investigation was made or in services provided pursuant to this chapter in the five years preceding the incident:**

DCS has received the following prior reports involving the child's mother:

On October 6, 2012, a report was received alleging neglect to a sibling by the mother. The parents were enrolled for parenting classes in the community and were provided with information on additional community resources. The allegation was substantiated and the case was closed.

On June 25, 2014, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a sibling by the mother. An investigation was initiated and in progress when a subsequent report was received. The allegation was later substantiated.

On August 15, 2014, a report was received alleging neglect to a sibling by the mother and the sibling's father. The allegation pertaining to the mother was substantiated and the case was closed.



On October 25, 2015, a report was received alleging neglect to Bentley by his mother. An investigation was initiated and the mother began participating in preliminary services. The investigation was still in progress when fatality report was received. The allegation was later substantiated.

d. Any investigation pursuant to a report for investigation concerning the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect or services provided to the child or the child's family since the date of the incident involving the fatality:

Upon receiving the report of the fatality, a joint investigation was initiated between DCS and the Phoenix Police Department. A sibling visiting the home at the time of the incident was assessed as safe with the other parent. Subsequent reports received after the fatality resulted in the following investigations and actions:

On June 9, 2016, a report was received alleging neglect to a sibling by the mother and the sibling's father. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and provided services to the family. The sibling was assessed as safe in the care of the father. The allegations pertaining to the parents were substantiated.

On January 25, 2017, a report was received alleging neglect to a sibling born after the fatality to Bentley's parents. The child was placed with a relative and the Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. Services are being provided to the family. The allegations pertaining to the parents were substantiated.

On March 7, 2018, reports were received alleging neglect to Bentley's siblings by their parents as well as physical abuse to one of the siblings by the mother. The siblings were each assessed as safe with their caregivers and the Department is providing services to the family.

4. If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in an out-of-home placement, the following information will be provided:

a. Licensing Agency:

N/A

b. Licensing history of the out-of-home placement, including the type of license held by the operator of the placement and the period for which the placement has been licensed:

N/A

c. Summary of all violations by the licensee:

N/A

d. Any other actions by the licensee or an employee of the licensee that constitute a substantial failure to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of a child.

N/A

5. Actions taken by the Department in response to the case including any changes to policy or practice and/or recommendations for further changes in policies, practices, rules or statutes:



Arizona Department of Child Safety

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Phoenix Police Department. A sibling visiting the home at the time of the incident was assessed as safe with the other parent.

Additionally, in accordance with the DCS Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16), multidisciplinary team (MDT) reviews of fatality and near fatality cases were implemented during the first quarter of FY16. The MDT reviews of fatality and near fatality cases, especially those with prior DCS involvement, are a key feature of the Strategic Plan and support the objective of increasing the accuracy of safety and risk assessments in investigations.

Cases are reviewed by the MDT in order to identify any systemic factors, both internal and external to the Department that may have had an impact. The Department uses the aggregate data gathered through all of the MDT reviews to assess and guide future changes and/or recommendations to policies, practices, rules or statutes. Findings from these reviews are compiled into an annual report to be shared on the DCS website. The target date for release of the next report is December 1, 2018.

For more information regarding the Department of Child Safety's Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016, please visit the DCS website.