

Summary Report	Fatality	11/06/2024
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1. Victim: Braecius Nunez 10-year-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 May 22, 2023, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 10-year-old Braecius Nunez and his sibling, who had been involved in a wrong way motor vehicle crash and were not properly restrained. Braecius was transported to the hospital by EMS where he was pronounced deceased. The Department substantiated the allegation of neglect by the mother, Lora Nunez, who was under the influence of alcohol and did not ensure the child was properly restrained in the vehicle when it was being operated by another adult.

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:

There were no services being provided to the family by the Department of Child Safety at the time of the incident.

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?

No.

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:

The child's mother, Lora Nunez, was involved in the following prior report:

On July 25, 2018, a report was received alleging neglect to Braecius Nunez and their sibling by the mother, Lora Nunez, and father. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family participated in in-home services and the case was closed.

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:

The report regarding Braecius was investigated and the case was closed. The allegation of neglect to Braecius by the mother, Lora Nunez, was substantiated. No subsequent reports of abuse or neglect were received regarding 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:

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Upon release from the hospital, the near fatality victim was assessed as safe in the care of the mother, Lora Nunez. There were no other children in the home. The allegation of neglect to Braecius by the mother, Lora Nunez, was substantiated.

The Department reminds all caregivers to always properly restrain children in vehicles.

For additional information please visit the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Office of Injury Prevention: A Safe Ride home at:

<http://www.azdhs.gov/prevention/womens-childrens-health/injury-prevention/index.php#safe-ride-home>

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 fatality and near fatality cases with prior DCS involvement, which are a key feature of the Strategic Plan and supports 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, 2024.