



Summary Report	Fatality	6/16/16
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1. Victim: Cameron Patterson – 2 1/2 -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 August 10, 2015, the Department of Child Safety received a report stating 911 received a phone call regarding a child not breathing. Paramedics responded and pronounced Cameron deceased at 4:51AM. It is estimated that he was deceased approximately an hour prior to the 911 call due to being cold to the touch and rigor mortis. The Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office determined Cameron's cause of death was from complications of blunt trauma to the head and torso. The manner of death was determined to be a homicide. The Department of Child Safety determined that the mother, Zerian Clark, abused or failed to protect Cameron from abuse that lead to his death. It was also determined that mother's boyfriend, Jiree Tate, abused or failed to protect Cameron from abuse that lead to his death.

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:

Although no services were being provided to the family by the Department of Child Safety at the time of the incident, the family was being investigated for an open report from October 9, 2014. The last contact with the mother was on October 20, 2014.

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, the child's father, and the child's mother, Zerian Clark, were subjects of the October 9, 2014 report.

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 following report involves Cameron Patterson, his father and his mother, Zerian Clark:

On October 9, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report alleging neglect to Cameron Patterson by his mother, Zerian Clark, and his father. The report alleged that Cameron Patterson witnessed a domestic violence altercation between his mother and father. Initial contact was made with Cameron's mother on October 20, 2014. Multiple attempts were made to meet with the family there after; however, the Department was unable to make contact with the family. The allegations of neglect were ultimately substantiated by the Department. The case was open when the fatality report was received.

The following two reports involve Cameron's father and half siblings:



On April 15, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report alleging neglect to Cameron's half sibling by the child's mother and father to Cameron and half sibling. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and substantiated the allegations of neglect. The case remained open and the Department was providing services to the family when the following report was received.

On November 3, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report alleging neglect to one of Cameron's half sibling's by the child's mother and father to Cameron and half sibling. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and substantiated the allegation of neglect. The Department is providing services to the family.

The following report involves Jiree Tate:

On January 14, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report alleging physical abuse by Jiree Tate toward a prior girlfriend's child. The allegation was unsubstantiated. The Department provided the family with information on available community resources and the case was closed on June 18, 2015.

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 DCS investigation of the fatality report found a sibling to be unsafe in the home. The sibling was removed and initially placed in a DCS licensed foster home. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. The sibling was placed back in the home with the mother and services were provided to the family.

A subsequent report was received on December 10, 2015, regarding allegations of neglect to a half sibling by mother, Zerian Clark, and biological father, Jiree Tate. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. The half sibling remains in the home with Cameron's sibling and their mother, Zerian Clark, and services continue to be provided 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:

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Phoenix Police Department. The Department of Child Safety determined that the mother, Zerian Clark, and mother's boyfriend, Jiree Tate, abused or failed to protect Cameron from abuse that led to his death. The Department filed dependency petitions with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court regarding Cameron's sibling and half sibling. The children remain in home with their mother, Zerian Clark, and the Department continues to provide services to the family.

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.

This case was 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 is using 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 will be compiled into an annual report to be shared on the DCS website. The target date for release of this report is September 1, 2016.

For more information regarding the Department of Child Safety's Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016, please visit the DCS website at: <https://dcs.az.gov/news/dcs-strategic-plan>.