

<b>Summary Report</b>	<b>Fatality</b>	<b>06/04/2025</b>
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**1. Victim:** Travis Carter Jr. – 6-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 August 8, 2024, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 6-month-old Travis Carter Jr., who died from drug exposure to fentanyl. The child was found unresponsive in a motor vehicle and was pronounced deceased at the scene. Later, the medical examiner determined that the cause of death was exposure to drugs due to fentanyl toxicity. On April 30, 2025, Aleesia Phillips pleaded guilty to misconduct involving weapons and child abuse charges related to Travis' death in Yavapai County Superior Court. Aleesia Phillips was sentenced to a one-year prison sentence followed by a lifetime of supervised probation.

**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 prior to the August 8, 2024, fatality incident, the family was being investigated for two open reports dated July 1, 2024, and August 5, 2024. The last date of contact between the Department and the family was on August 7, 2024.

**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 parents, Travis Carter Jr., and siblings were subjects of the July 1, 2024, report. The parents and siblings were subjects of the August 5, 2024, 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 child's parents, Aleesia Phillips and father, were involved in the following reports in the five years preceding the near fatality incident:

On December 4, 2022, a report was received alleging physical abuse to children by Aleesia Phillips. The allegations were unsubstantiated as to Aleesia Phillips. The case was being transferred to voluntary in-home services when a second report came in on January 31, 2023.

On January 31, 2023, a report was received alleging neglect and physical abuse to children by Aleesia Phillips. The allegations of physical abuse were unsubstantiated and the allegations of neglect were substantiated as to Aleesia Phillips. The family was provided with voluntary in-home services. The in-home case was closed on May 31, 2023.

On February 2, 2024, a report was received alleging neglect to Travis Carter Jr. by Aleesia Phillips. The allegation of neglect was unsubstantiated as to Aleesia Phillips. The family was provided with information on services available in the community. The case was still open when a second report came in on March 6, 2024.

On March 6, 2024, a report was received alleging neglect and physical abuse to Travis Carter Jr. and siblings by Aleesia Phillips and another adult. The allegations of neglect and physical abuse were unsubstantiated to Aleesia Phillips and another adult. The Department offered the family an Arizona Families First referral, which they declined. The case was closed on March 28, 2024.

On July 1, 2024, a report was received alleging neglect to Travis Carter Jr. and siblings by Aleesia Phillips and another adult. The investigation case was still open when a second report was received on August 5, 2024.

On August 5, 2024, a report was received alleged neglect to children by Aleesia Phillips and another adult. The investigation was open when the fatality report was received. Following the report of the fatality, a dependency petition was filed with the Yavapai County Superior Court and the allegations of neglect are proposed to substantiate as to Aleesia Phillips and another adult. The investigation case was closed on September 6, 2024.

**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 investigation of the fatality resulted in the child's mother, Aleesia Phillips, being arrested and charged for misconduct involving weapons and child abuse related to Travis's death. A sibling had been placed with a fictive kin caregiver and the Department filed a dependency petition with the Yavapai County Superior Court. The other sibling in the home was assessed as safe with their other parent. Services are being provided to the family. 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 Yavapai County Sheriff's Office. The child's mother, Aleesia Phillips, was arrested and charged for misconduct involving weapons and child abuse related to Travis's death. The Department removed a sibling from the home and filed a dependency petition with the Yavapai County Superior Court. The other sibling in the home was assessed as safe with their other parent. Services are being provided to the family. No subsequent reports of abuse or neglect were received regarding 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 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, 2025.