

Summary Report	Near Fatality	03/31/2023
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1. Victim: two-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 near fatality?

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

On August 19, 2021, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding a two-month-old male who was taken to his primary care physician due to abnormal breathing and fussiness. The child was transferred to the hospital. Upon evaluation, the child was determined to be in critical condition with multiple fractures. On August 26, 2021, a dependency petition was filed with the Navajo County Superior Court. On April 27, 2022, the court found the mother, Alysha Wood, physically abused the child and/or neglected to protect the child from physical abuse. On February 18, 2022, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse against the other caregiver, Isaiah Whitaker.

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 near fatality incident, the family was being investigated for an open report dated June 24, 2021. The last date of contact between the Department and the family was on June 25, 2021.

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 near fatality victim and his mother were subjects of the June 24, 2021 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:

There were no prior DCS reports involving Isaiah Whitaker.

The child's mother, Alysha Wood, was involved in the following prior report:

On June 24, 2021, the Department of Child Safety received a report alleging neglect of the child by the mother, Alysha Wood. An investigation was initiated and still in progress when the near fatality incident occurred. The allegation was substantiated and the family is receiving services.

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 near fatality:

The investigation of the near fatality report resulted in the child being placed in foster care after his release from the hospital. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Navajo County Superior Court on August 26, 2021 and is providing services to the family. On April 27, 2022, the court found the mother, Alysha Wood, physically abused the child and/or neglected to protect the child from physical abuse. On February 18, 2022, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse against the other caregiver, Isaiah Whitaker.

A subsequent report involving Alysha Wood, Isaiah Whitaker, and a sibling was received on June 14, 2022 alleging neglect. The sibling was assessed to be unsafe in the home, resulting in a dependency petition being filed with the Navajo County Superior Court and the sibling was placed in out-of-home care.

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 Show Low Police Department. Upon release from the hospital, the near fatality victim was placed in foster care. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Navajo County Superior Court on August 26, 2021, and is providing services to the family. On April 27, 2022, the court found the mother, Alysha Wood, physically abused the child and/or neglected to protect the child from physical abuse. On February 18, 2022,

the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse against the other caregiver, Isaiah Whitaker. A subsequent report involving Alysha Wood, Isaiah Whitaker, and a sibling was received on June 14, 2022 alleging neglect. The sibling was assessed to be unsafe in the home, resulting in a dependency petition being filed with the Navajo County Superior Court and the sibling was placed in out-of-home care.

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, 2023.