



Information for Release		2/23/2015
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Date of the notification to DCS: 9/1/2014

Near Fatality

Date of fatality or near fatality: 9/1/2014

Child's name: Cloud

Age at time of incident: 2 years

Alleged perpetrator(s) name and age:

Megan Gerhart – age 23
Robert Hollenbaugh – age 33

City, town or general location of residence of the child and alleged perpetrator(s):

Sierra Vista, AZ

Circumstances of the fatality or near fatality that indicate it was the result of abuse or neglect:

On September 1, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding two-year-old Cloud who was observed to be extremely malnourished while in the care of his mother Megan Gerhart and her boyfriend Robert Hollenbaugh. Upon investigation, Cloud was removed from the home and taken to the hospital where he was diagnosed as failure to thrive and assessed as being in critical condition according to a treating physician. Megan Gerhart and Robert Hollenbaugh have been charged with child abuse.

Whether DCS has received any reports or past cases, of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian*:

DCS has received four reports of neglect to Cloud by Megan Gerhart and/or Robert Hollenbaugh:

On September 24, 2011, a report was received alleging neglect to Cloud due to allegations of marijuana use by Megan Gerhart during pregnancy. The investigation determined that Cloud was healthy and safe in the care of his mother and the allegation was unsubstantiated. No services were provided directly through the Department and the case was closed.

On June 7, 2012, a report was received alleging neglect to Cloud due to concerns of possible substance abuse and mental health issues involving his mother as well as the poor condition of the home. The investigation determined that Cloud was safe at home and receiving scheduled well-baby medical care. The family was reportedly receiving community services including parenting classes and Early Head Start. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On April 15, 2013, a report was received alleging neglect to Cloud stating he is always dirty and is not being provided with adequate food. The caller noted that Cloud appeared to be skinny, but not malnourished or unhealthy. Concerns were also raised regarding possible developmental delays and previously dirty condition of the home. An investigation was initiated and determined that Cloud was safe with his basic needs being met. It was verified that the family had been receiving services in the community since Megan Gerhart's pregnancy with Cloud. The allegations were unsubstantiated and no additional services were provided through the Department. The case remained open pending the necessary documentation for closure.



On December 19, 2013 a call was received and categorized as a "Status Communication" stating that Megan Gerhart and Cloud have moved in with mother's boyfriend, Rob, last name unknown. Concerns were raised regarding the poor condition of the home and Cloud appearing to have a welt on his face two months ago which his mother said was from sleeping against a bar of the crib. The caller also stated Megan Gerhart has never liked Cloud, is not affectionate to him and screams at him. It was noted that Megan Gerhart uses marijuana daily and her boyfriend disciplines Cloud by wrapping him tightly in a blanket to the point where he cannot move. Cloud was noted to be filthy and unbathed and not yet talking. Megan Gerhart was noted to have cut off Cloud's contact with relatives for the past month and there is concern that she may be hiding him because of visible bruising. The case continued to remain open when the next report was received.

On January 3, 2014, a report was received alleging neglect to Cloud due to the poor living conditions of the family's residence and allegations that Cloud was disciplined by Robert Hollenbaugh by being wrapped up in a blanket to the point where he could not move. Concerns were also raised regarding Cloud appearing thin and very hungry when last seen as well as substance abuse involving marijuana by his mother. An investigation was initiated and Cloud was seen on January 6, 2014 and determined to be safe in the home. The case remained open when the next call was received.

On March 13, 2014 a call was received and classified as a "Second Source" to the January 3, 2014 report. The same information as previously reported was shared as well as new information stating Cloud looks like "skin and bones." The caller stated Cloud used to be chubby and "happy go lucky" but no longer responds to people the way he used to and appears bow-legged and almost like his legs are not growing properly. It was also stated that Megan Gerhart would not feed Cloud for three days because he would not say the word "eat." Cloud was reported to appear clean but not healthy when last seen. The case continued to remain open until the September 1, 2014 report was received.

Actions taken by DCS in response to the fatality or near fatality of the child including:

The Department of Child Safety, in conjunction with the Office of Child Welfare Investigations, conducted a joint investigation with the Cochise County Sheriff Department.

1. Actions taken regarding the child and/or other children in the home:

Following an assessment of child safety, the other children in the home were removed and placed in licensed family foster homes. Upon discharge from the hospital, Cloud was placed with a relative.

2. Whether the agency is or intends to provide direct services or service referrals to the family:

The Department of Child Safety is providing services.

*Posted information provides whether there have been reports, or any current or past cases, of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child who has died or suffered a near fatality and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-807(F)(2)(a)(iv).

*Posted information may be updated as new information becomes available.

Information, if any, regarding the child and other family or household members, not specifically related to the fatality or near fatality, is not posted on the website. This also applies to information, if any, regarding the alleged perpetrator(s) and other family or household members.