



Information for Release		4/1/15
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Date of the notification to DCS: 9/4/2014

Child Fatality

Date of fatality or near fatality: 9/2/2014

Child's name: Isabella Grogan-Cannella

Age at time of incident: 8 years

Alleged perpetrator(s) name and age:

Justin Rector – age 26

Tania Grogan – age 29

Roy Cannella – age 33

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

Bullhead City, AZ

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

On September 4, 2014, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 8-year-old Isabella Grogan-Cannella whose body had been found in a shallow grave near her family's home. Isabella was reported missing on September 2, 2014 after being left at home with family friend and household member Justin Rector. The Medical Examiner determined her death was due to strangulation and Justin Rector was arrested and charged with first degree murder. The investigation also found that Isabella's parents, Tania Grogan and Roy Cannella, failed to protect her by leaving her with an inappropriate caregiver.

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 no prior reports of abuse or neglect involving Isabella Grogan-Cannella and Justin Rector or Roy Cannella. DCS has received five prior reports of abuse or neglect involving Isabella Grogan-Cannella and Tania Grogan:

On January 23, 2008, a report was received alleging neglect due to Tania Grogan reportedly using and selling methamphetamine in the home in Isabella's presence. Concerns were also raised regarding the condition of the home and the constant flow of people in and out. It was also noted that Isabella is rarely dressed appropriately for the weather and is often left in the care of her mother's "drug friends." The investigation determined that Isabella was safe in the home, but that the family would benefit from in-home services. Ms. Grogan was also to provide evidence of her participation in substance abuse classes. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was referred for services. However, Ms. Grogan was not compliant and services providers were unable to locate the family again. Relatives reported they had moved out of state and the case was closed on February 4, 2009.



On November 13, 2012, a report was received alleging physical abuse due to Isabella stating her mother slapped her on her face and head. Isabella was observed to have a small bump on the right side of her head and a red mark on her right cheek. Originally Isabella said she fell and Ms. Grogan reported she had bumped into a door. A second call was received the next day and categorized as a Status Communication. The caller was concerned that Ms. Grogan became angry and appeared to be in a "rage" after being confronted about not following the proper drop-off rules at Isabella's school. The caller stated this type of behavior is completely out of character for the mother. An investigation was initiated and Isabella stated the mark and bump on her cheek were from accidentally running into a door. She was determined to be safe with Ms. Grogan and the case was still open when the next report was received.

On December 11, 2012, a report was received alleging physical abuse due to Isabella stating her mother was kicking her and hitting her on the back of her legs. Isabella was observed to have a blue bruise on her left shin. Isabella was reported to not need medical treatment and was not afraid to go home. Isabella was interviewed again and denied that her mother caused the bruise on her shin. The investigation determined that the family could benefit from services available in the community. A referral was made to an outside agency and the case was closed on January 15, 2013 with the allegations from both reports being unsubstantiated.

On May 14, 2013, a report was received alleging neglect due to concerns about the condition of the home. The home was reported to be filthy with moldy food, trash covering the floors and flies and cockroaches all over the home. An investigation was initiated and the home was found to be in poor condition, but with no safety hazards. The family was instructed to clean up the home, but Ms. Grogan and Isabella moved to a new residence before the home could be observed again. The case was still open when the next report was received.

On June 14, 2013, a report was received alleging neglect due to Ms. Grogan dropping Isabella off at summer school even though she had been dis-enrolled for lack of attendance. Ms. Grogan was called but said she could not come get Isabella due to work. DCS intervened and the investigation found Isabella to be safe in Ms. Grogan's care. While the case was still open, another call was received on August 2, 2013 and categorized as a Status Communication. The caller was concerned about Isabella's lack of attendance at school. The investigation continued and Ms. Grogan made arrangements for Isabella to be cared for by a relative who could ensure Isabella had stable housing and attended school. The allegations for both reports were unsubstantiated and the case was closed on January 14, 2014.

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

The Department of Child Safety conducted a joint investigation with the Bullhead City Police Department.

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

Following an assessment of child safety, a sibling was placed with a relative.

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

The Department of Child Safety is providing services to the family.



Arizona Department of Child Safety

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

*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.