

**Amendments to the information originally posted on 3/11/20 are displayed below in red.**

## Statement on the death of a four-year-old girl

**Issue Date: June 16, 2020**

On September 18, 2019, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the death of a four-year-old girl, Michelle Thresher.

Michelle was found unresponsive in her home and transported to the hospital where she was pronounced deceased.

DCS removed Michelle's siblings from the home and placed them in foster care. One of Michelle's siblings was placed with that child's father.

The Department filed a dependency petition on September 23, 2019, against Michelle's mother, Allie Harris, for allegations, including failing to provide appropriate supervision.

On November 4, 2019, the Maricopa County Juvenile Court ruled that Ms. Harris did not provide proper supervision for Michelle at the time of her death.

The Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office completed its report on November 25, 2019. The report determined Michelle died from fentanyl toxicity.

**Michelle was in the care of her mother's significant other, Christopher Daniel, when the incident occurred.**

**DCS substantiated the allegation of neglect against Mr. Daniel for failing to provide supervision, which allowed the child to gain access to fentanyl.**

The Department is currently providing services to the family.

DCS has the following history with Michelle's family:

On August 22, 2011, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Harris neglected one of Michelle's siblings. According to the report, there were concerns the newborn sibling could not be properly cared for at home. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support removing the child from the home. Ms. Harris was provided information on resources in the community. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

Recipient Name

Page 2

On May 31, 2014, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Harris neglected one of Michelle's siblings. According to the report, the child was not being properly cared for and there were concerns for domestic violence in the home. During the investigation, the Department received another report involving the family on June 3, 2014. This report alleged Ms. Harris neglected the same child by not providing proper medical care and failed to meet the child's needs. The investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The mother was provided information on resources in the community. Both the May 31st and June 3rd allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On November 9, 2016, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Harris neglected Michelle Thresher and one of her siblings. According to the report, Ms. Harris was not providing adequate housing or care to the children. The investigation did not find evidence to support removing the children from the home. Ms. Harris agreed to participate in DCS in-home services. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family successfully completed in-home services and the case was closed.

The Department has the following history with Christopher Daniel:

On November 18, 2015, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Daniel neglected his child. According to the report, the child was not having their medical needs met and wasn't being properly cared for. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The Department provided information on community resources to the family. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.