

Statement on the near fatality of a 13-year-old boy

Date Issued:

On November 16, 2019, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of a 13-year-old male.

The near fatality victim was in the care of DCS and ran away from his kinship placement prior to this incident.

The child arrived at the hospital in critical condition after being shot in the abdomen.

DCS conducted a joint investigation with Phoenix Police Department.

The investigation determined that the child's mother, Tonya Monroe, brandished a shotgun to break up an altercation between the child and another person.

During the incident, the shotgun discharged and struck the child in the abdomen.

The law enforcement investigation did not result in criminal charges against Ms. Monroe.

At the time of the incident, DCS discovered that another one of Ms. Monroe's children who was in DCS care and on runaway status was discovered at Ms. Monroe's home.

That child and the near fatality victim were both DCS wards who had run away from their placements and had been staying with their mother, Ms. Monroe.

The other child living in the home was immediately returned to DCS custody.

After the near fatality victim was released from the hospital, the child was placed in foster care.

On March 11, 2020, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse against Ms. Monroe.

DCS is currently providing services to the family.

DCS has the following prior history involving Tonya Monroe and/or the near fatality victim:

On October 18, 2002, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected three children. The report alleged Ms. Monroe left the young children alone for extended periods of time without proper adult supervision. While there was evidence to support the allegations, it did not meet the threshold to remove the children from the home. DCS provided daycare for the children and offered Ms. Monroe parenting classes. She refused to participate in the services. The allegations were substantiated and the case was closed.

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On February 1, 2006, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected multiple children. The report alleged Ms. Monroe left the young children alone for extended periods of time without proper adult supervision. DCS investigators attempted to contact the family, but they were unable to be located. The case was eventually closed.

On April 21, 2006, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of her children. The report alleged one of Ms. Monroe's young children was found riding a tricycle along a busy Phoenix street. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegation. The allegation was unsubstantiated. DCS did provide in-home services to the family. The family completed services and the case was closed.

On March 5, 2009, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his sibling. The report alleged Ms. Monroe left the young children alone for extended periods of time without proper adult supervision. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

On June 26, 2010, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe's home was extremely filthy and was not an appropriate place for the children. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

On September 9, 2010, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the young children were found playing in the street unsupervised. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On June 15, 2011, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe was not providing proper care for her children and she would leave the children alone for extended periods of time without adult supervision. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

On July 30, 2011, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe's boyfriend, who did not reside in the home, was inappropriately touching one of the children. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegation. The allegation was unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

On September 9, 2011, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the home lacked electricity and was filthy. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On August 21, 2012, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe was experiencing health issues and was unable to care for the children. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

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On November 10, 2012, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the home did not have adequate electricity and the children were often left home alone for extended periods of time without adult supervision. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community services and the case was closed.

On February 15, 2013, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected two of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe failed to provide proper medical care for one of the children and the other child was unkempt. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with community resources and the case was closed.

On March 6, 2014, the Department receive a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe was not properly caring for or supervising the children and the home was not properly maintained. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations. The Department filed an in-home dependency petition with the Maricopa County Superior Court. The allegations were substantiated.

DCS received the following reports while the children were involved in the in-home/out-of-home dependencies.

On November 13, 2014 the Department received a report alleging the near fatality victim was neglected by his father. While in DCS care, the near fatality victim disclosed that his father would physically discipline him by hitting the child with a belt, shoe, or other object. The Department attempted to contact the father, but he was unable to be located.

On January 22, 2015, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe and another adult neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe's boyfriend had assaulted two of the children. The DCS investigation found enough evidence to substantiate the neglect allegations against Ms. Monroe. DCS removed the children from the home and placed them with a relative.

On March 10, 2015, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected and physically abused one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe would use excessive physical discipline against one of the children when they previously resided with Ms. Monroe. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegation. The child denied that that Ms. Monroe would physically discipline the child. The report was unsubstantiated. The children remained in DCS care.

On February 1, 2016, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe recently gave birth and was unable to safely care for the newborn baby. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations. The child was removed from Ms. Monroe's care and the Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Superior Court. The allegations were substantiated. The newborn's older siblings remained in DCS care.

On March 18, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged the mother and teenage child were arrested while attempting to steal cigarettes from a gas station. The teenage child had run away from DCS care. The teenage child was returned to DCS care. The report was unsubstantiated.

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On November 27, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged one of the teenage children had run away from DCS care and was residing with Ms. Monroe. The DCS investigation did not find enough evidence to support the allegation. The Department could not locate the child. The child remained on runaway status. The report was unsubstantiated.

On December 6, 2019, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Monroe neglected one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged Ms. Monroe recently gave birth and was unable to safely care for the newborn baby. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations. The child was removed from Ms. Monroe's care and the Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Superior Court. The allegations were substantiated.