

Statement on the near fatality of a three-year-old girl

Date Issued: June 17, 2022

On May 20, 2021, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of a 3-year-old child who was taken to the hospital for difficulty breathing. The child was determined to be in critical condition and had multiple injuries including fractures and a brain bleed. The injuries were highly concerning for inflicted abuse.

Following an assessment of child safety, the near fatality victim and three of the younger aged siblings were removed and placed in foster care. Three older siblings were assessed as safe in the home. One of the siblings that had been removed was later reunified with their father.

On May 9, 2022, the Maricopa County Superior Court found the mother, Tonisha Johnson, abused and neglected the child and granted the petition for termination of parent-child relationship as to the mother. The court terminated the mother's parental rights to the near fatality victim and the two other children.

The Department substantiated the allegations of abuse and neglect and is providing services to the family.

DCS received the following prior report involving Ms. Johnson.

On December 29, 2020, a report was received alleging neglect to the child by the mother, Tonisha Johnson. The report alleged the child had a fractured leg that was not healing and a hernia that was not treated. The investigation did not find evidence supporting the allegations and noted a pediatrician evaluated the child. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the family was provided information on resources within the community. The case was closed on January 22, 2021.