

Statement on the death of 7-year-old Yulissa Moreno Perez and 10-year-old Xenia Moreno Perez

Date Issued: April 30, 2024

On June 24, 2022, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the fatality of 10-year-old Xenia Moreno Perez and her 7-year-old sister Yulissa Moreno Perez. The children were not restrained in the vehicle when their mother, Cristina Moreno, lost control of the vehicle resulting in a rollover accident. Xenia was ejected from the vehicle and was pronounced deceased at the scene. The sibling, Yulissa, was transported to the hospital where she was pronounced deceased.

Following an assessment of child safety, the other child in the home was assessed as safe with their other parent.

The Department provided the family with information on services available in the community and the case was closed on April 25, 2023.

On January 17, 2024, Cristina Moreno was indicted by a Maricopa County Grand Jury on two counts of felony manslaughter related to the death of the children.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Ms. Moreno, Yulissa Moreno Perez, and/or Xenia Moreno Perez:

On December 13, 2011, a report was received alleging physical abuse to a child by their mother, Ms. Moreno. The report alleged that the child had a red mark that resembled a handprint on their leg. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On May 1, 2015, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Ms. Moreno. The report alleged that the child disclosed being hit and tied up at home. Due to communication limitations with the child, more information was unable to be gathered regarding the statements that were made. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.

On July 31, 2019, a report was received alleging neglect to Yulissa by the mother, Ms. Moreno, and sexual abuse to Yulissa by another adult. The report alleged that Yulissa was sexually abused and that Ms. Moreno was aware that this adult was a registered sex offender and still left her children in their care. A joint investigation was completed with law enforcement and the allegation of sexual abuse by this adult was substantiated. The DCS investigation determined that there was no evidence to support the allegation of neglect to Yulissa by Ms. Moreno. Ms. Moreno was aware this other adult arrived for an errand after she left the children with an alternate caregiver but Ms. Moreno was not aware the alternate caregiver allowed the other adult to be around the children. The allegation of neglect by Ms. Moreno was unsubstantiated. The Department remained involved with the family and assisted in connecting the family with community resources. The Department offered additional services, which the family declined, and the case was closed in June 2020.

On September 29, 2021, a report was received alleging neglect and physical abuse to Xenia by her father. The report alleged that while Xenia was at her father's home, there was a physical altercation that occurred between other family members. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The family was provided with information on services available in the community and the case was closed.