

Statement on the death of 16-year-old Kenneth Jones and the near fatality of a 14-year-old female

Date Issued: January 15, 2024

On March 2, 2023, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the fatality of 16-year-old Kenneth Jones and the near fatality of a sibling. The report alleged that the mother, Amberleah Valentine, and the father, Jon Imes, helped dispose of Kenneth's body after another adult, Richard Pounds, allegedly murdered Kenneth. During the investigation of the fatality report, additional allegations of physical abuse and neglect to the sibling were added to the assessment after the 14-year-old sibling was transported to the hospital where she was determined to be in serious condition with multiple injuries.

Following an assessment of child safety, the near fatality victim was removed and placed in foster care. There were no other children in the home.

On March 7, 2023, the Department filed a dependency petition in regards to the near fatality victim in the Mohave County Superior Court. On August 2, 2023, the court found that the parents, Amberleah Valentine and Jon Imes, neglected and/or failed to protect Kenneth Jones and the near fatality victim from abuse.

On November 21, 2024, the Department substantiated the allegation of neglect to Kenneth and the near fatality victim by other adult, Shioban Kennedy on the basis that Ms. Kennedy witnessed the abuse and did not seek help or medical attention for the children. On December 18, 2024, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse to Kenneth and the near fatality victim by other adult, Richard Pounds, who inflicted the injuries to the children.

The Department provided services to the family.

There were no prior DCS reports involving Ms. Valentine, Mr. Imes, or Mr. Pounds as alleged perpetrators.

DCS received the following prior report involving Ms. Kennedy:

On September 22, 2014, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Ms. Kennedy. The report raised concerns regarding conditions of the home environment of the child, including that Ms. Kennedy was incarcerated and a sex offender was residing with her child. An investigation was initiated and efforts were made to locate the family without success. The case was closed on June 3, 2015.