

Statement on the near fatality of a 4-month-old female

Date Issued: August 21, 2023

On April 22, 2021, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of a 4-month-old female.

According to the report, a 4-month-old female was found unresponsive at home and transported to the hospital. Upon examination, the child was determined to be in critical condition and required intubation for acute respiratory failure, altered medical status, and seizures.

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Yuma Police Department. On April 28, 2021, the Department filed a dependency petition with the Yuma County Superior Court.

Upon her release from the hospital, the child was placed in a licensed foster home. In December 2021, she was transitioned to a kinship caregiver. There were no other children in the home.

On October 11, 2022, the Yuma County Superior Court found that the parents, Amber Hehe and Gary Williams, neglected to adequately address her medical needs.

The Department provided services to the family. The child was returned to her parents' care on May 22, 2023 when the court dismissed the dependency.

DCS received the following prior report involving the family:

On March 13, 2021, report was received alleging neglect to the child by her mother, Amber Hehe. The report alleged the mother missed appointments for the child's vision and walked out of another appointment without the child being seen. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegation.

The family was provided with information on services available in the community, the allegation was unsubstantiated, and the case was closed on April 21, 2021.

There were no prior reports received involving Mr. Williams as an alleged perpetrator.