

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

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On June 1, 2021, Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of a 5-year-old boy.

The child arrived at the hospital in critical condition after ingesting fentanyl in his home. The child tested positive for fentanyl.

The Department removed the near fatality victim from the home and placed him in foster care. The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court on June 4, 2021.

On August 25, 2021, the court found that the father, Vincent Winston, had neglected the child by not maintaining a safe home environment free from drugs.

DCS has the following history with Vincent Winston, the father:

On May 4, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Winston and the mother neglected their children. The report alleged that one of the near fatality victim's siblings was brought into the hospital because he had electrocuted himself. It was reported that he put a bobby pin into an electrical outlet. The mother was at work during the time of the incident. Additionally, it was alleged there were concerns of domestic violence between the parents. DCS did not find evidence to support the allegations and the children were assessed as safe. The family was provided with daycare services and community resources. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed on May 12, 2017.

On August 3, 2017, the Department received a report alleging the mother had neglected the children by selling drugs out of their hotel room. There were also concerns that the mother was leaving the children in the room with "random" people while she went out. There was also an allegation of physical abuse to the near fatality victim by an unknown perpetrator because the child was hospitalized with black eyes and scratches on his face. Following an assessment of child safety, the children were taken into DCS custody and placed in a relative's home. A dependency petition was filed on August 8, 2017, with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. The family was provided services. The near fatality victim was reunified with his father, Mr. Winston in August 2018 and the dependency was dismissed to the near fatality victim in November 2018. The siblings were returned to their father's care in September 2019.

On March 8, 2019, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Winston had neglected the near fatality victim. The report alleged that the father engaged in domestic violence with his girlfriend. The child was in the same room when the alleged incident occurred. DCS did not find evidence to support the allegations and the child was assessed as safe. The father declined in-home services offered by the Department. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the case was closed on May 10, 2019.