

## **Statement on the death of 3-year-old Princeton Johnson**

**Date Issued: July 8, 2024**

On June 28, 2022, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 3-year-old Princeton Johnson who was found unresponsive at the home and was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The Maricopa County Medical Examiner concluded that the cause of death was acute fentanyl toxicity.

There were no other children in the home.

On June 25, 2024, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse as to Keosha Caldwell allowing the child to reside in a home and be left alone with known fentanyl users.

There were no services provided by the Department.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Ms. Caldwell:

On May 15, 2013, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Ms. Caldwell. The report alleged a child had an untreated wound on their arm and Ms. Caldwell failed to seek out appropriate medical services. The DCS investigation resulted in a safety plan being implemented during the assessment, which was not followed by the family. Ultimately, the child and siblings were taken into DCS custody and a dependency petition was filed. The parents did not complete reunification services and parental rights were terminated on October 6, 2015. The dependency matter was ongoing at the time of the next report.

On May 2, 2014, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Ms. Caldwell. The report alleged the child being inappropriately touched by another child. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The child was a ward of the court and not in the care of Ms. Caldwell at the time of this report. The case was closed on July 25, 2014.

On August 18, 2014, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Ms. Caldwell. The report alleged a concern regarding mother's ability to care for her newborn child. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The family was receiving reunification services through the ongoing dependency matter regarding her other children. The case closed on March 20, 2015.

On September 13, 2015, the Department received a report alleging neglect to children by Ms. Caldwell. The report alleged the children had access to pill bottles and concerns regarding the cleanliness of the home. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the family was offered in-home services through the Department. The case closed on September 24, 2015.

On November 5, 2015, the Department received a report alleging neglect to children by Ms. Caldwell and their father. The report alleged there were no caretakers for the children since Ms. Caldwell was arrested for burglary and drug possession. Additionally, the ongoing safety plan was not being followed as implemented. The DCS

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investigation found evidence to support the allegations of neglect. The children were removed from the home and a dependency petition was filed. The allegation was substantiated. The parents did not complete reunification services and parental rights were terminated on November 14, 2016.

On February 10, 2019, the Department received a report alleging neglect to Princeton by Ms. Caldwell and the father. The report alleged Ms. Caldwell had been using oxycodone throughout her entire pregnancy and tested positive at admission for Princeton's birth. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations of neglect. As a result, Princeton was removed from the home and placed with a relative. A dependency petition was filed with Maricopa County Superior Court and the allegations as to the parents were substantiated. The Department offered reunification services to the family. Ms. Caldwell successfully reunified with the children and the dependency was dismissed on October 22, 2019.

On May 7, 2020, the Department received a report alleging neglect to Princeton by Ms. Caldwell. The report alleged Ms. Caldwell leaves Princeton alone in the home for extended periods of time. There were also concerns of domestic violence between the parents. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations of neglect were unsubstantiated. No services were offered to the family and the case was closed.