

## Statement on the near death of a 5-month-old male

**Date Issued: October 30, 2024**

On April 2, 2023, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of a 5-month-old male, who was taken to the hospital after being found unresponsive with multiple injuries. The child had been left alone with a 12-year-old relative. Upon examination, the child was determined to be in critical/serious condition with non-accidental trauma.

There were no other children in the home. Upon release from the hospital, the near fatality victim was placed in an unlicensed kinship caregiver's home. Ultimately, the caregiver was granted guardianship of the child.

On May 1, 2023, the Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Superior Court, alleging neglect by the mother, Seryna Teaford AKA Hazel Reeves. On October 24, 2023, the court found Ms. Teaford neglected the near fatality victim.

The Department provided services to the family.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Ms. Teaford:

On November 21, 2019, the Department received a report alleging physical abuse to a child by their adult sister, Ms. Teaford. The report alleged Ms. Teaford had bitten a sibling and was making threats to them and that child was afraid of Ms. Teaford. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegation. The allegation was unsubstantiated and no services were offered to the family. The case was closed on January 2, 2020.