

Information for Release		1/8/2014
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Date of the notification to CPS: 12/20/2012

Fatality

The date the child suffered the fatality: 7/16/2013

Child's name: Zemira Smith

Age at time of incident: 1 Month

Perpetrator(s): Jewel Nez and Vaughn Smith

Age: 21 years and 25 years

City, town or general location of residence of the child and perpetrator(s): At the time of the incident, the child and alleged perpetrator(s) were living in Safford, Arizona.

A. Circumstances of the fatality or near fatality that indicate it was the result of abuse or neglect:

On December 20, 2012, Jewel Nez and Vaughn Smith contacted 911 in response to their child, Zemira Smith, having seizures. The parents, who were solely responsible for Zemira's care, reported that she had fallen off the bed two days prior on December 18, 2012. Zemira was observed to have injuries including severe hemorrhaging of the brain. She was later found to have suffered intracranial, subdural, subarachnoid hemorrhages, an acute uncal herniation and an acute right 9th rib fracture. Zemira was not expected to survive her injuries and doctors noted that the injuries were not consistent with the fall reported by the parents.

Both parents were found to be negligent in failing to seek immediate medical care and on May 1, 2013, Jewel Nez was detained by police on charges of child abuse and aggravated assault involving serious physical injury. Zemira remained hospitalized until her death on July 16, 2013.

B. Whether CPS has received any reports or past cases of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian* :

Arizona Child Protective Services (CPS) had received no prior reports alleging abuse or neglect of Zemira Smith by Jewel Nez or Vaughn Smith.

1. Actions taken by CPS in response to the fatality or near fatality of the child including:

A joint investigation was conducted by Arizona Child Protective Services (CPS) and the Safford Police Department.

2. Actions taken regarding the child and/or other children in the home:

Following an assessment of safety, CPS took custody of Zemira and she remained hospitalized until her death on July 16, 2013. There were no other children in the home.

3. Whether the agency is or intends to provide direct services or service referrals to the family:

Services offered to family included parenting classes, counseling and case management.

*Posted information provides whether there have been reports or any current or past cases of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child who has died or suffered a near fatality and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-807(F)(2)(a)(iv).

Information, if any, regarding other family or household members and the child or the alleged perpetrator is not posted on the Web site. Calls to the Child Abuse Hotline that do not meet the criteria of a report because they do not contain allegations of abuse or neglect (or because there is no information provided to locate the child or family) are not posted.