

90-Day Summary Report for Child Death, Serious Injury or Egregious Incident

Case Tracking Number: 110429DSP-Milw-105 Agency: Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare

Child Information: Age: 4 months Gender: Female Male
Race or Ethnicity: Biracial
Special needs: None prior to incident

Child's Residence: In-home Out-of-home care placement

Date of Incident: 5/1/11

Description of the incident, including the suspected cause of death, injury or egregious abuse or neglect:

On May 1, 2011 the four-month-old infant was transported via ambulance to the hospital after the foster parent contacted paramedics due to the child having seizures. The baby was admitted to Intensive Care with nonaccidental trauma/injury. The infant's physician reported the following injuries: fractured distal tibia corner fracture, subacute and chronic subdural hemorrhages, and multiple retinal hemorrhages too numerous to count that resulted in blindness. The fracture had evidence of healing, but the physician was not able to definitively assess when the injury had occurred. The subdural hemorrhages were of two different ages, and the retinal hemorrhages could not be dated. The physician stated that abusive head trauma with or without impact is the suspected cause of these injuries, but the incident(s) of the injuries remain unexplained. The criminal investigation is ongoing.

Findings by agency, including material circumstances leading to incident:

The agency substantiated physical abuse to the infant by an unknown maltreater. The child was moved to another foster home during the initial assessment and was determined safe at the end of the assessment. The doctors believe that the injuries occurred within a three-day to two-week time period, during which the infant was cared for by multiple caregivers. The infant has resided in a two-parent foster home since he was placed in out of home care in January 2011. The infant was in the care of a respite care provider from 4/22/11 to 4/24/11. The infant and his siblings had their second authorized unsupervised overnight visit with their mother 4/28/11 to 4/29/11. The mother reported that during the visit, she left the infant unrestrained in his car seat on the floor while she went upstairs to attend to a sibling. She reported that while upstairs, she heard the infant cry out as if in pain and returned downstairs to find him out of his car seat and lying face down on the floor. She called the fire department, who examined the infant and did not observe any injuries, so additional medical treatment was not pursued. The foster parents picked up the infant from the mother on 4/29/11. The morning of 4/30/11 the foster family went to an out-of-town social event where numerous individuals had contact with the child, which the foster parents supervised. During the evening of 4/30/11, the child became feverish and was vomiting, so the foster parents took him to the local hospital emergency room. The attending physician gave the infant medication to stop the vomiting and discharged him to the foster parents' care. After returning home from the event, on 5/1/11, the infant became limp, pale and developed shallow breathing. The foster parents called 911 and the fire department transported the infant to Children's Hospital for admission. The actual cause of the injuries and identity of the maltreater(s) remain unknown.

Additional information for children in home:

Description of the child's family:

Yes No **Statement of Services:** Were services under ch. 48 or ch. 938 being provided to the child, family or alleged maltreater at the time of the incident, including any referrals received by the agency or reports being investigated at time of incident?

If "Yes", briefly describe the type of services, date(s) of last contact between agency and recipient(s) of those services, and the person(s) receiving those services:

Summary of all involvement in services as adults under ch. 48 or ch. 938 by child's parents or alleged maltreater in the previous five years:

Summary of actions taken by the agency under ch. 48, including any investigation of a report or referrals to services involving the child, any member of the child's family living in this household and the child's parents and alleged maltreater at the age of 18 years or older:

Summary of any investigation conducted under ch. 48 or ch. 938 and any services provided to the family since the date of the incident:

Additional information for children in out-of-home (OHC) placement at time of incident:

Description of the OHC placement and basis for decision to place child there:

In January 2011 the infant was placed in a general foster home due to concern that the mother would not provide proper medical care for her newborn child. The foster parents had previously been licensed as a treatment foster home and adopted a special needs baby placed with them. The family wished to continue fostering and chose a general foster home license to limit the potential of caring for another child with higher medical or developmental needs. The newborn infant and foster family were matched based on the family's history with young children, the infant having no special needs and their current license.

Description of all other persons residing in the OHC placement home:

At the time of the incident, the child was residing with the married couple and their two-year-old adopted child in a single family home.

Licensing history: Including type of license, duration of license, summary of any violations by licensee or an employee of licensee that constitutes a substantial failure to protect and promote the welfare of the child.

The foster parents have been licensed as a general foster home since August 2006. They were licensed as a treatment foster home from August 2008-August 2009, at which time the license expired. The family continues to hold a general foster care license.

An independent investigation was conducted by another county agency as a result of the current incident. That agency substantiated physical abuse of the child by an unknown maltreater.

*** Summary of actions taken by agency in response to the incident:**

The agency screened in the allegation of injuries to the infant, substantiating physical abuse by an unknown maltreater. The agency conducted initial assessments that included the mother's household and a respite care provider that watched the child over one weekend. The agency also requested an independent investigation of the foster home where the child was placed. The agency collaborated with law enforcement, medical professionals and another county agency during the investigation. The agency had the siblings medically examined and no injuries were noted. Upon discharge from the hospital, the infant was placed in a treatment foster home due to special needs resulting from the recent trauma incurred. The children in all of the assessed homes were determined safe. The mother's visits with the children continue but are again supervised due to the severity and unknown cause of the infant's injuries. The family continues to receive Ongoing Services from the agency.

***Summary of policy or practice changes to address identified issues:**

See following section.

***Recommendations for further changes in policies, practices, rules or statutes needed to address identified issues:**

The DSP conducted a full, on-site review of this case. The Office of Performance and Quality Assurance is working with the BMCW on past practice issues identified in the review.

Statement of Completion:

Yes No This 90-day summary report completes the Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) review of this case.

* If a full report including agency actions, changes in policies or practices and recommendations for further changes was not completed within 90 days, the DSP will complete and submit the final summary report within 6 months.