

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

Case Tracking Number: 111018DSP-Rock-156 Agency: Rock County Human Services Dept.

Scope of DSP Review: No Review. The information contained in this report was provided by the agency.
 90-Day Review

Child Information: Age: 4 months Gender: Female Male
Race or Ethnicity: Caucasian & African-American
Special needs: None

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

Date of Incident: 10/18/11

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

The baby was taken to Mercy Hospital on October 18, 2011 after her mother noticed a golf ball sized indentation to the back of her skull. Upon initial examination, including a head CT scan and skeletal survey, it was determined that she suffered blunt force trauma to her head as well as two fractured ribs. The doctor believed the rib fractures were likely old, as they appeared to be in the healing process. He reported the injuries to her ribs were consistent with being squeezed. He had concerns the injury to her head may have caused brain damage and recommended she follow up with a neurologist. It was his belief the injuries were different ages and were not consistent with one incident, such as a fall. The child's mother noticed the injury and immediately brought her to the hospital. She was unable to provide plausible explanations as to what may have caused the injuries. Further, it was learned that the child was left in the care of three adults over the course of the last few weeks, including her mother, her mother's boyfriend and a babysitter. None of these individuals were able to provide an explanation for the injuries. The child was taken to American Family Children's Hospital to be further evaluated by the Child Maltreatment Team. The doctor confirmed the infant had a depressed skull fracture and only one fractured rib. He concluded these types of injuries could be caused by a short fall against a pointed object; however several additional factors clearly pointed to a diagnosis of child abuse. His basis for the diagnosis was based on three factors; the child is not yet mobile and could not have obtained these injuries on her own. There is no report of a fall, and presence of a posterior rib fracture is highly specific for abuse in infants. These types of rib injuries are not caused by a short fall and if accidental are generally associated with major trauma such as a motor vehicle accident. Further, when the infant was seen for her four month well-baby check, Mother spoke to the pediatrician about bruising to the baby's wrist and back. Again, the doctor noted it was highly unlikely she caused these injuries to herself, as she is not yet mobile. The doctor suggested someone may have picked up the child, squeezed her mid section and forcefully hit her head against a sharp object, such as a dresser corner. Again, none of the adults who were left alone with the baby could provide a plausible explanation for her injuries. However, when the department interviewed the babysitter, she consistently stated that it was her belief that her ex-husband may have caused the injuries to the child. Although she did not personally observe him maltreat her, the babysitter indicated there was an occasion within the past few weeks in which she left the infant in his care while she ran some errands. She indicated he has a history of anger related problems and further cited he had previously physically abused their child when he was younger.

Findings by agency, including material circumstances leading to incident:

The department substantiated physical abuse to the infant by an unknown maltreater. The basis for this determination was due to medical reports indicating her injuries were a result of child abuse. However, the department was unable to decipher who caused the injuries to the child; therefore a maltreater couldn't be named. Additionally, the department substantiated neglect to the child by the babysitter. The babysitter consistently maintained that it was her belief her ex-husband inflicted the injuries, however, she knowingly left the infant in his care while having full knowledge and concern about his anger problems.

Additional information for children in home:

Description of the child's family:

The child resides in her mother's home with her mother, older sister, and her mother's boyfriend. The child has had little to no contact with her biological father since her birth. The boyfriend's children also visit the home on weekends.

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:

N/A

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:

The mother has had previous contact with the department in 2007, 2008 and 2010. In 2008, the department's involvement was in relation to the mother leaving her child with inappropriate care providers. However, all previous reports to the department, which name the mother as the alleged maltreater, have been unsubstantiated. Additionally, her boyfriend, does not have any substantiations. The babysitter has not had contact with the department in the past five years. However she had contact with the department in 2004 as she was named as an alleged maltreater in neglect and physical abuse reports. However the department was unable to locate her to make a substantiation determination.

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:

The mother and boyfriend were referred for ongoing CPS services and are currently working with the department to assure for their children's safety. Additionally, the family began working with the department's Family Skills unit shortly after the child's removal and has assisted the family in working towards reunification. They continue to provide in-home services to assure for child safety.

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

The mother and boyfriend will continue to work with the department until May 2012 as they agreed to a six-month consent decree. They continue to have in-home services provided by the department's Family Skills unit.

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:

Description of all other persons residing in the OHC placement 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.

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

N/A

For DSP completion only:

Summary of policy or practice changes to address issues identified during review of the incident:

N/A. No DSP review.

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

N/A. No DSP review.

*This 90-day summary report completes the Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) review of this case.

Yes No Not Applicable

* If this case is undergoing a review that was not completed within 90 days, the DSP will complete and submit the final summary report within 6 months.