

Report Identification Number: SV-21-017

Prepared by: New York State Office of Children & Family Services

Issue Date: Oct 26, 2021

This report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns: A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
☐ The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child's family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child's death; whether the child or the child's family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child's death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child's death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child's household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate of the State of New York.

This report may <u>only</u> be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child's siblings or other children in the household.

OCFS' review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS' assessment and the performance of these agencies.



Abbreviations

	Relationships							
BM-Biological Mother	SM-Subject Mother	SC-Subject Child						
BF-Biological Father	SF-Subject Father	OC-Other Child						
MGM-Maternal Grand Mother	MGF-Maternal Grand Father	FF-Foster Father						
PGM-Paternal Grand Mother	PGF-Paternal Grand Father	DCP-Day Care Provider						
MGGM-Maternal Great Grand Mother	MGGF-Maternal Great Grand Father	PGGF-Paternal Great Grand Father						
PGGM-Paternal Great Grand Mother	MA/MU-Maternal Aunt/Maternal Uncle	PA/PU-Paternal Aunt/Paternal Uncle						
FM-Foster Mother	SS-Surviving Sibling	PS-Parent Sub						
CH/CHN-Child/Children	OA-Other Adult							
	Contacts							
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner						
DrDoctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services						
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother						
CPS-Child Protective Services								
	Allegations							
FX-Fractures	II-Internal Injuries	L/B/W-Lacerations/Bruises/Welts						
S/D/S-Swelling/Dislocation/Sprains	C/T/S-Choking/Twisting/Shaking	B/S-Burns/Scalding						
P/Nx-Poisoning/ Noxious Substance	XCP-Excessive Corporal Punishment	PD/AM-Parent's Drug Alcohol Misuse						
CD/A-Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	LMC-Lack of Medical Care	EdN-Educational Neglect						
EN-Emotional Neglect	SA-Sexual Abuse	M/FTTH-Malnutrition/Failure-to-thrive						
IF/C/S-Inadequate Food/ Clothing/ Shelter	IG-Inadequate Guardianship	LS-Lack of Supervision						
Ab-Abandonment	OTH/COI-Other							
	Miscellaneous							
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender						
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence						
LDSS-Local Department of Social	ACS-Administration for Children's	NYPD-New York City Police						
Service	Services	Department						
PPRS-Purchased Preventive	TANF-Temporary Assistance to Needy	FC-Foster Care						
Rehabilitative Services	Families							
MH-Mental Health	ER-Emergency Room	COS-Court Ordered Services						
OP-Order of Protection	RAP-Risk Assessment Profile	FASP-Family Assessment Plan						
FAR-Family Assessment Response	Hx-History	Tx-Treatment						
CAC-Child Advocacy Center	PIP-Program Improvement Plan	yo- year(s) old						
CPR-Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	ASTO-Allowing Sex Abuse to Occur							



Case Information

Report Type: Child Deceased Jurisdiction: Rockland **Date of Death:** 05/14/2021

Gender: Female **Initial Date OCFS Notified:** 05/14/2021 Age: 15 year(s)

Presenting Information

Rockland County Department of Social Services (RCDSS) became aware of the death of the 15-year-old subject child (SC) on 5/14/2021. The child was involved with RCDSS on an open Family Assessment Response (FAR) case. The child was found deceased by a staff member of a hospital where the child was admitted for a mental health issue.

Executive Summary

This report concerns the death of a 15-year-old child which occurred while she was hospitalized for mental health concerns. The child was found unresponsive in her bed by a staff member of the hospital during a bed check at 8:45 AM. The family was involved with RCDSS through an open FAR case to address concerns for the subject child's mental health and ungovernable behavior in the home.

RCDSS met with the mother and surviving siblings in the home. They identified no knowledge about how the subject child died and were only given limited information from the hospital. The child was observed to be alive during a bed check at 8:30 AM, and then found unresponsive at 8:45 AM during the next bed check. The child was brought to the emergency room in cardiac arrest and was unable to be revived.

RCDSS interviewed the medical examiner (ME). The ME stated that preliminary findings showed the child had an abnormality in her heart; however, it was unclear if the child passed away from natural causes or suicide. The cause of death would be dependent on the toxicology report.

RCDSS closed the case pending the final autopsy report. The family was offered services in response to the child's death. It was unknown from the case record if the services were utilized by the family.

Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

Safety Assessment:

- Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:
 - Safety assessment due at the time of determination?

N/A

Determination:

- Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations as well as any others N/A identified in the course of the investigation?
- Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate appropriate?

N/A

Was the decision to close the case appropriate?

Yes

Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant statutory or regulatory requirements? Yes Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation? No



Explain:

There were no documented supervisory consultations that occurred in relation to the death of the SC other than to document the SC's death.

	Required Actions Related to the Fata	ılity							
Are there Required Actions related	d to the compliance issue(s)?	⊠No							
Fatality	Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities								
	Incident Information								
Date of Death: 05/14/2021	Time of Death	: Unknown							
Time of fatal incident, if different	than time of death:	08:45 AM							
County where fatality incident occ		Rockland							
Was 911 or local emergency numb	er called?	No							
Did EMS respond to the scene?		No							
At time of incident leading to deat	h, had child used alcohol or drugs?	No							
Child's activity at time of incidents	:								
☐ Sleeping	Working	Driving / Vehicle occupant							
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	Unknown Unknown							
Other									
Did child have supervision at time	of incident leading to death? Yes								
How long before incident was the	child last seen by caretaker? 15 Minute	es							
At time of incident was supervisor	impaired? Not impaired.								
At time of incident supervisor was	:								
Distracted	Absent								
Asleep	Other: Working								
Total number of deaths at incident	t event:								
Children ages 0-18: 1									
Adults: 0									
	Household Composition at time of Fa	ality							

Household Composition at time of Fatality

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	No Role	Female	15 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	No Role	Female	51 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	14 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	12 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	11 Year(s)



LDSS Response

On 5/14/2021, RCDSS was informed by a family member that the SC had passed away on the same date. The family was involved in an open FAR case with RCDSS at the time of the SC's death. The SC had been hospitalized and was found unresponsive in her bed by a staff member of the hospital.

RCDSS interviewed the mother (BM) and the 14-year-old, 12-year-old, and 11-year-old surviving siblings (SSs) in the home. The BM identified being informed by the hospital that the SC was alive during a bed check at 8:30 AM and was found unresponsive in her bed at 8:45 AM. The SM stated that the doctor treating the SC had contacted her the day before for permission to change the SC's medication. No other information was known by the family regarding how the SC passed away. The SSs were assessed as being safe in the care of the BM. The BF was not interviewed regarding the SC's death as there was an existing order of protection against him barring unsupervised contact with the SSs. It was not documented in the case record when the BF last had contact with the SC and he had no known contact with the SC during her hospitalization. RCDSS provided information for bereavement and grief counseling. It was unknown from the record if services were utilized.

RCDSS interviewed the hospital staff that treated the SC. RCDSS was informed that the SC was alive during a bed check at 8:30 AM and found unresponsive at 8:45 AM during the next scheduled bed check. The SC was brought to the emergency room in cardiac arrest and was unable to be revived.

The ME was interviewed by RCDSS. The ME identified an abnormality in the SC's heart but could not definitively identify a cause of death until the toxicology report was returned. The ME identified that the death could be from suicide or natural causes pending the toxicology results.

RCDSS closed the case prior to the final autopsy results being made available to them and the cause of death was pending. No other information regarding the death of the SC was made available to RCDSS prior to the closure of the FAR case.

Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Pending

Primary Cause of Death: Pending

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Medical Examiner

Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

Was the fatality reviewed by an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team? No

Comments: Rockland County does not have an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team

CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	\boxtimes			
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	\boxtimes			

SV-21-017 FINAL Page 5 of 12



Contact with source?				
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	\boxtimes			
Was a death-scene investigation performed?			\boxtimes	
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?			\square	
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?				
Fatality Safety Assessment Activities				
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?				
Was there an adequate assessment of impending or immediate danger to shousehold named in the report:	surviving	siblings/o	other chil	dren in the
Within 24 hours?		\boxtimes		
At 7 days?	\boxtimes			
At 30 days?			\boxtimes	
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?			\boxtimes	
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?		\boxtimes		
When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?				
Explain: There were no allegations for which the safety of the SSs needed to be assesse the home within 7 days and the case was closed within 30 days.	d. The SS	s were see	en and inte	erviewed in
Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment	DuaGla			
ratanty Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment	rrome			
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?	\boxtimes			
During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household?	\boxtimes			
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?				
Did the protective factors in this case require the LDSS to file a petition				

SV-21-017 FINAL Page 6 of 12

 \boxtimes

in Family Court at any time during or after the investigation?

Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case



Explain:

Services were offered and it was unknown from the case record if the services were accepted.

Placement Activities in Response to the Fatality Investigation

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed or placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?				
Were there surviving children in the household that were removed either as a result of this fatality report / investigation or for reasons unrelated to this fatality?		\boxtimes		

Legal Activity Related to the Fatality

Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity.

Have any Orders of Protection been issued? No

Services Provided to the Family in Response to the Fatality

Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Not Offered	Needed but Unavailable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling			\boxtimes				
Economic support						\boxtimes	
Funeral arrangements							
Housing assistance							
Mental health services			\boxtimes				
Foster care							
Health care							
Legal services							
Family planning							
Homemaking Services							
Parenting Skills							
Domestic Violence Services							
Early Intervention						\boxtimes	
Alcohol/Substance abuse						\boxtimes	

SV-21-017 FINAL Page 7 of 12

NEW Office of Children	CLILE	/ l'/ D			
Office of Children and Family Services	Child Fa	tality Repor	rt		
Child Care					\top
Intensive case management					
Family or others as safety resources					
Other					
Were services provided to siblings or their well-being in response to the fats Explain: Services were offered in relation to the Services were offered to parent(s) a fatality? Unable to Determine Explain: Services were offered in relation to the Services were offered in relation to	ality? Unable to De SC's death. It was u	etermine inknown from the ers to address an	e case record	if services were util	lized. he
	·	or to the Fatali	ty		
	Cinia	mor mation			
Did the child have a history of alleged				Yes	
Was the child ever placed outside of t Were there any siblings ever placed o	-		ild's dooth?	No No	
Was the child acutely ill during the tw		•	nu s ucatii:	No	
·					
CPS - Invest	igative History	Three Years P	rior to the	Fatality	
Date of SCR Alleged Victim(s)	Allegeo Perpetrato		egation(s)	Status/Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
03/02/2021 Deceased Child, Female, 14 Years	Mother, Femal Years	e, 50 Inadequ Guardia		Far-Closed	No
Report Summary: The SCR report alleged that the BM wa					

OCFS Review Results:

RCDSS worked with the family to identify resources in which the child could be placed upon discharge from the hospital. The SC was re-admitted to the hospital and transferred to an adolescent mental health unit where she later passed away. RCDSS interviewed all family members and relevant collateral contacts to assess the safety of the children and identify appropriate services. Upon the death of the SC, no other service needs were identified and the case was closed.

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	Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? Yes No	
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Date of SCR Report		Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
12/11/2019	Sibling,	Female, 10 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated	No
	Sibling,	Female, 10 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Sexual Abuse	Substantiated	
	Sibling,	Female, 9 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated	
	Sibling,	Female, 9 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Sexual Abuse	Substantiated	
	Sibling,	Male, 12 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated	
	Sibling,	Male, 12 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Sexual Abuse	Substantiated	
	Sibling,	Female, 10 Years	Mother, Female, 49 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling,	Female, 9 Years	Mother, Female, 49 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling,	Male, 12 Years	Mother, Female, 49 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	

Report Summary:

The SCR report alleged that the BF was inappropriately touching the 12-year-old, 10-year-old, and 9-year-old children. As a result, the children were acting out by touching others. The parents were unable to control the children's behaviors and they got into physical altercations with each other.

Report Determination: Indicated **Date of Determination:** 02/10/2020

Basis for Determination:

RCDSS coordinated their investigation with LE and interviewed the family and relevant collateral contacts. The three SSs each made admissions to the sexual abuse and the BF was arrested and charged with three counts of Course of Sexual Conduct against a Child in the 2nd degree. Orders of protection were issued against the BF regarding the three siblings. The SC was interviewed in the congregate care facility where she was admitted to. The SC made no disclosures of sexual abuse to RCDSS or LE.

OCFS Review Results:

RCDSS met regulatory requirements in their investigation of the allegations and a determination of the allegations was made in congruence with the evidence gathered. Orders of protection were issued on behalf of the children against the BF and the father left the home and had no further contact with RCDSS. The SC had been admitted to a congregate care facility prior to the investigation and remained in care throughout the duration of the investigation.

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)?

Yes

No

Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
08/15/2019	Deceased Child, Female, 13 Years	Mother, Female, 49 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	No
	Deceased Child, Female, 13 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Choking / Twisting / Shaking	Unsubstantiated	
	Deceased Child, Female, 13 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling, Male, 12 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Choking / Twisting / Shaking	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling, Male, 12 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling, Female, 10 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Choking / Twisting / Shaking	Unsubstantiated	
	Sibling, Female, 10 Years	Father, Male, 40 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated	



Deceased Child, Female, 13 Years

Report Summary:

The SCR report alleged that the BF had a history of domestic violence against the BM and being aggressive towards and using excessive corporal punishment against the SC. As a result of the physical incidents, the SC had sustained marks and bruises and did not feel safe in the home. Subsequent reports were received on 8/27/2021, 9/10/2019, and 10/2/2019 with additional allegations of excessive corporal punishment of the SSs by the BF.

Report Determination: Unfounded Date of Determination: 10/10/2019

Basis for Determination:

RCDSS interviewed all family members and all denied the allegations in the report aside from the SC. RCDSS learned that the SC had a history of calling an ambulance and then refusing to return to the home when ready for discharge. The SC was aggressive towards the BM and BF in the home and had a history of running away and staying in youth shelters. The case was already open for prevention services to address the concerns for the SC's behavior which continued upon the closure of the investigation.

OCFS Review Results:

RCDSS met regulatory requirements in their investigation of the allegations. RCDSS interviewed the family members and relevant collateral contacts to gather evidence. A determination of the allegations was made in accordance with the evidence gathered and the case remained open for prevention services. Collateral information obtained from LE showed no reports of DV in the home.

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? Yes No

Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Status/Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
12/18/2018	Sibling, Male, 11 Years	Mother, Female, 48 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Far-Closed	No
	Deceased Child, Female, 12 Years	1	Choking / Twisting / Shaking	Far-Closed	
	Deceased Child, Female, 12 Years	Mother, Female, 48 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Far-Closed	
	Deceased Child, Female, 12 Years	Mother, Female, 48 Years	Lack of Medical Care	Far-Closed	
	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Father, Male, 39 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Far-Closed	

Report Summary:

The SCR report alleged that the BM and BF hit the SC with objects such as belts, coat hangers, and a broom handle. It was unknown if the SC had sustained any injuries from the physical incidents. The SSs had unknown roles.

OCFS Review Results:

RCDSS initiated their investigation and the allegations were denied by the family, citing that the SC was making false allegations as a result of her mental health. A FAR case was opened to address the needs of the family and a prevention case was opened upon the closure of the case. RCDSS met regulatory requirements in their investigation into the incident and in identifying the prevention service needs of the family.

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? Yes No

D (C					
Date of	Alleged	Alleged			Compliance
SCR	9	0	Allegation(s)	Status/Outcome	_ •
Report	Victim(s)	Perpetrator(s)			Issue(s)

SV-21-017 FINAL Page 10 of 12

NEW YORK STATE	Office of Children and Family Services
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NEW YORK and Fam	f Children nily Services	Child Fatal	ity Report		
				.	1
06/19/2018 Deceas Years	ed Child, Female, 12	Father, Male, 39 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Far-Closed	No
Deceas Years	ed Child, Female, 12	Father, Male, 39 Years	Lacerations / Bruises / Welts	Far-Closed	
Report Summary The SCR report all recent incident occ and SSs was unknow OCFS Review Res RCDSS met regula denied by all partic behavioral issues w case was tracked for parents. Are there Require	eged that on multiple of urred on 6/17/2018 and own. sults: ttory requirements in the est aside from the SC. The with the SC and that they or a FAR response as the ed Actions related to the	ccasions the BF has to it was unknown if the it was unknown if the it was unknown if the it was unknown of the it were no marks of were seeking mental ere were no identified to the compliance issued ive History More Than three years part of NYS.	chrown objects at and hit the ne SC had sustained any injure allegations. The allegation or bruises observed on the SC all health counseling to assist disafety concerns for the chiral or of the SC allegation of the school of t	ns of physical disc C. The parents ide t with the issues a	cipline were ntified thome. The
		Preventive Serv	ices History		
	d to further develop the	parenting skills of th		n with dealing wi	th the mental
	Legal H	History Within Three Y	Years Prior to the Fatality		
Was there any leg ☐Family Court	al activity within three	e years prior to the	·	of Protection	
Criminal Charge	: Course of sexual cond	luct against a child	Degree: 2		
Date Charges Filed:	Against Whom?	Date of	Disposition:	Disposition	:
01/16/2020	Biological Father	Unknow	/n	Unkown	
Comments:	-	d and charged with t	hree counts of Course of Sex	xual Conduct Aga	inst a Child

Have any Orders of Protection been	n issued? Yes	
From: Unknown	To: 03/01/2023	
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SV-21-017 FINAL Page 11 of 12



Explain:

The Order of Protection was issued against the father for the sexual abuse of the two female surviving siblings and the male surviving sibling which occurred in 2019.

Recommended Action(s)
Are there any recommended actions for local or state administrative or policy changes? Yes No
Are there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review? Yes No