

Information for Release

3/7/2014

Date of the notification to CPS: 3/4/2014

Fatality

The date the child suffered the fatality: Unknown

Child's name: Roman Barreras

Age at time of incident: Approximately 3 years old

Perpetrator(s): Raquel Barreras

Age: 39 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 Tucson, Arizona.

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

On March 4, 2014, The Division of Child Safety and Family Services (DCSFS) received a call from the Tucson Police Department stating a family had been evicted from their residence in January 2014, and while cleaning out the unit today, the landlord found an unknown child's skeletal remains in a toy box left at the property. The investigation determined that the child was 3-year-old Roman Barreras. On March 5, 2014, the child's mother, Raquel Barreras, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder.

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* :

The Division of Child Safety and Family Services (DCSFS) has received two prior reports alleging abuse or neglect of Roman Barreras by Raquel Barreras and two additional calls were made to the Hotline regarding the Barreras family:

On July 14, 2010, a report was received when Roman was born and the mother, Raquel Barreras, admitted to being addicted to Percocet for the past nine to ten years. Ms. Barreras stated she had sought help for substance abuse through a community organization and had been taking methadone for the last three months. Both the mother and child tested negative for substances but neither were tested for methadone. Roman was removed from the home and placed in foster care. A dependency case was filed and services were provided. Roman was eventually returned to his father's care and the dependency was dismissed. The allegations of neglect were substantiated.

On October 15, 2012, a call was received from a mandated source with concerns about the family. The source went to the Barreras' home to attempt to make contact with the family and observed the outside of the home. There was a sign on the window indicating the property had been condemned. Wrestling around could be heard inside the home, but no one answered the door. It was unknown who was inside the home, but it was believed the family lived there. It was unknown if they have electricity or gas. The outside of the home was picked up and clean. There was a small piece of police tape on the front gate. The source stated they would be calling Tucson Police to request a welfare check.

On November 7, 2012, a report was received with concerns of neglect. The report noted that Roman had not been seen for three weeks and the family was not responding to attempts to contact them. There were also concerns about the condition of the home being condemned due to mold. It was also reported that the mother, Raquel Barreras, was in the home, but per the family's prior involvement with DCSFS, she was not supposed to be. The report noted that Tucson Police were asked to conduct a welfare check on October 15, 2012 and were being contacted again today. The investigation determined that Roman was being adequately cared for by his father. Roman was observed and noted to be very small and thin for his age. The father reported that he was not previously diagnosed as Failure to Thrive. The case was closed and the allegations were unsubstantiated.

On January 10, 2014, the Hotline received a call from an anonymous source stating Roman had not been seen for several months to a year. He did not attend the last Halloween Party. The exact address for the family was unknown. This call was classified as a "communication" rather than a report. This classification has since been determined to be inaccurate. In addition, resources have been added to aid the Hotline in locating families where the initial report provides insufficient information.

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

The Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI), assisted by the Division of Child Safety and Family Services (DCSFS) is conducting a joint investigation with the Tucson Police Department.

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

The other children in the home were removed and placed in foster care.

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

Services will be determined following the outcome of the investigation.

*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).

*Posted information may be updated as new information becomes available.

Information, if any, regarding the child and other family or household members, not specifically related to the fatality or near fatality, is not posted on the website. This also applies to information, if any, regarding the alleged perpetrator(s) and other family or household members.