

# Summaries of Executive Child Fatality Reviews

Washington Department of Children Youth and Families, 2023 to 2024

**J.S.R.**, five weeks old: Died January 24, 2023 while bed sharing with mother, who had drunk between eight and 20 beers. The family had an open CPS investigation at the time and had received three intakes concerning an older sibling, one of which resulted in an investigation.

**Prince Lewis**, three years old. Prince was found dead and covered with bruises and burns on February 13, 2023. His mother has been charged in his murder. At the time of his death, Prince and his mother had an open child welfare services case. He was removed from his mother when he was one month old, and had been in foster care for over three years. Termination of Parental Rights hearing was scheduled for May 2021 but his mother had “not been properly served notice” so DCYF continued looking for her. In March 2022 DCYF made contact with the mother regarding an allegation about another child and began working with her toward reunification. When he died, Prince had been on a trial return home for five months.

**X.P.B.**,(infant) Died March 25, 2023 “under suspicious circumstances while sleeping in an adult bed. Between 2018 and 2022, DCYF received “multiple intakes” involving the mother, her three children, their three fathers, and her parents. The intakes involved prenatal substance exposure, unaddressed mental health needs for the mother, substance use, family conflict, violence in the home between family members, an inability to meet the needs of the children, and concerns about the conditions of the home creating an unsafe environment. The reports led to six CPS investigations and three CPS-FAR cases, while six intakes were screened out because they did not meet criteria for response.

**B.B.** (born 2022): Died March 20, 2023 of fentanyl poisoning: DCYF had received 30 reports on B.B.’s family involving use of heroin, marijuana and alcohol in the home; lack of supervision of the children; domestic violence; an unsafe caregiver living with the family; an unsafe and unclean living environment unsecured guns in the home “out-of-control” behaviors by B.B.’s older siblings at school, with the mother described as “out-of-it” and unresponsive to school concerns; concerns about the children’s hygiene; and the mother driving under the influence of marijuana. A Family Voluntary Services (FVS) case was closed days before B.B.’s death.

**A.R. (Avril)** one year old: Died May 7, 2023, of suspected fentanyl exposure. The mother reported using fentanyl and other substances. There were six previous intakes involving the family of which five were screened in. Two investigations closed without opening a case. No information is provided about the other intakes.

**S.K.**, zero to one year old: Died May 24, 2023 after being left in a car by foster parent while she was at work.

**M.R.S.**, aged one or two, died on June 18, 2023 of streptococcal sepsis resulting from untreated third-degree burns covering 30 percent of the child’s body, with a ruling of homicidal negligence.

The family was the subject of three reports concerning substance abuse and other issues before the birth of M.R.S. TM.R.S. came to the attention of DCYF when he was born suffering from withdrawal symptoms and staff did not believe he was safe with his parents. M.R.S. was placed with the adult daughter of his mother's wife. While in that placement, M.R.S. received the burns resulting in his death.

Alfonso Feliciano, an infant, died August 10, 2023, of fentanyl poisoning. The family was "involved with" DCYF twice before A.F.'s birth, with allegations concerning substance abuse by parents and other issues. A.F. tested positive at birth for cocaine, triggering a new investigation, which closed after two months when the mother entered treatment with her children.

L.B., under one year old. L.B. died August 26, 2023. The father admitted to pushing L.B.'s face into the mattress to get the infant to stop crying. Before L.B.'s death, DCYF had received six calls regarding lack of medical follow-up for the family's three children, unmet developmental needs, and lack of prenatal care and resources to care for the newborn (L.B.). The three reports that were screened in led to two FAR cases and one CPS investigation, all of which ended in the family being referred to community services.

J.L., age 15 or 16, died on August 31, 2023 of a fentanyl overdose. The family was the subject of 18 intakes before JL's death with concerns including the mother's mental health, parental and children's substance use, domestic violence, medical neglect; the children's school absences, sexualized behaviors and inappropriate clothing. The 12 intakes that were screened in resulted in four investigations, five FAR cases, and one voluntary services case. DCYF had closed a FAR assessment in April 2023.

Sebastino Ragusa and Valentina Ragusa, aged seven years and four months, died on September 2, 2023 of asphyxia due to smoke inhalation in a house fire, and their death was ruled as a homicide by their father, who allegedly stabbed their mother to death and set the house on fire, killing himself and the two children. Between 2017 and 2022, DCYF received four intakes expressing concerns about physical abuse, unmet academic needs, and the father's mental illness and substance addiction. The four reports resulted in one CPS investigation, two FAR cases, and one intake screened out as already reported. In all three cases the children were assessed as safe and the cases were closed without ongoing services.

A.S., aged eight, was shot and killed on September 28, 2023 by a 10-year-old sibling. There were 11 intakes concerning neglect, lack of supervision, dirty home, substance abuse by the father, physical abuse by the mother and father, and possibly other topics that were redacted. These resulted in three Family Reconciliation Service cases and three FAR cases. The last FAR case was open at the time of A.S.'s death.

R.C., aged under one month, died on October 20, 2023. Law enforcement found multiple diapers saturated with blood and an autopsy identified almost total blood loss. DCYF received a report from the hospital when R.C.'s mother testing positive for fentanyl and cannabis and reporting untreated mental health issues at R.C.'s birth. There was an open CPS investigation into these allegations at the time of R.C.'s death.

F.C., aged 16, died on November 5, 2023 of a drug overdose. DCYF first became involved with the family upon F.C.'s birth because the infant tested positive for opiates and cannabis. There were at least 13 intakes over the next 16 years with concerns including parental substance abuse, mother's mental health, domestic violence, physical abuse by the father, FC's school

absences, FC's drug use and mental health. These led to at least three investigations and three family assessment cases. At the time of his death, A CPS investigation regarding his substance abuse was ongoing.

S.N. died at six weeks old on December 2, 2023. The cause of death was "combined toxic effects of fentanyl and methamphetamine with a contributory condition of unsafe sleep environment." Before S.N.'s death DCYF received 12 intakes regarding the family, of which six were screened in, for allegations including parental substance abuse and driving other the influence. At the time of S.N.'s birth, the family had an open Child Welfare Services (court-involved) case for S.N.'s five-year-old sibling. The details are redacted but it appears that sibling was recently returned home from foster care. The hospital reported that S.N. was born positive for fentanyl, gabapentin, methadone, and cannabinoids. S.N.'s mother was prescribed methadone at that time. A new investigation was started and it appears that the investigation as well as the services case were both open at the time of death.

Ryleigh Walker age four, died Dec. 27, 2023 after ingesting fentanyl. There were 11 intakes regarding the family before Riley's death. The allegations included parental substance abuse, neglect, domestic violence, and parental mental health crises. The most recent intake occurred about four months after Ryleigh's death, when a hospital reported that she was brought in with pneumonia that could have resulted in her death. A Family Assessment was closed on November 22 as unfounded when the children were staying with relatives and the mother said she was not planning to remove them. When Ryleigh died, she was in the care of her mother and father in a motel.

O.S., an infant less than two months old, died on January 20, 2024. O.S.'s father reported he had fallen asleep in a recliner and awoke to find the baby unresponsive. The toxicology report found a small amount of methamphetamine but could not authoritatively state that it played a role in the death. DCYF became involved with the family when O.S. and his mother tested positive for fentanyl at birth. An investigation was ongoing when O.S. and his parents disappeared. DCYF filed a dependency petition while searching for O.S. and his parents until they learned from the police that the father had been located and O.S. had been found dead.

E.S., about one year old, died on March 9, 2024 after ingesting a lethal dose of methadone. E.S. and his siblings had been in out-of-home care since August 2023 after E.S. ingested fentanyl while in the care of E.S.'s father. The three children were at their parents' home for their first overnight visit when E.S. died.

Ariel Garcia, aged 4, was discovered on the side of a road on March 28, 2024. Ariel's mother has been charged with stabbing him more than 40 times, and leaving his body on the side of the road. On March 23, 2024, DCYF received a call from Ariel's grandmother saying his mother was using drugs and "acting crazy," hitting A.G. and pulling his older sibling off the bed by the legs and dragging the sibling outside without shoes or a jacket. The grandmother reported she had court paperwork and was trying to obtain custody. The grandmother spoke Spanish only and the intake worker used an interpreter. She screened out the report. A FAR case with a 72-hour response time was opened the next day after a call from law enforcement stating among other things that Ariel's older sibling reported being dragged by the neck down the stairs by their mother, but by the time the FAR worker interviewed the sibling, Ariel was missing and probably dead.

**A.M.**, eight months, May 8, 2024: A.M. was shot and killed by his father, who was under the influence of substances and hallucinating. DCYF had been involved with the family at A.M.'s birth but closed that case after one or two months. Two previous intakes on the mother were screened out.

**P.J.**, aged five months, died on June 25, 2024. The medical examiner's report indicating P.J. died of sudden infant death syndrome, had been in an unsafe sleep environment, tested positive for rhinovirus, and had positive toxicology for methamphetamine. DCYF had received nine calls about P.J.'s family between 2009 and 2024. Five of these reports resulted in four CPS investigation and one FAR case. Allegations included lack of age-appropriate supervision and medical care, lack of prenatal care, and substance related concerns at the birth of three of the four children. The last investigation was opened when P.J.'s mother tested positive for fentanyl, amphetamine, and THC at P.J.'s birth. The investigation was closed in April 2024 when P.J. was assessed to be safe in his mother's care and no ongoing DCYF services were needed. P.J. died in June.

**L.N.**, aged one, died of drowning on July 6, 2024. The father had dropped L.N. and an older sibling off at the home of relatives, where they were not received by an adult. L.N. entered the pool and drowned. Before L.N.'s death, there had been three calls to DCYF concerning neglect due to parental substance abuse, unmet medical needs, and physical abuse. Two Family Assessment responses cases and a CPS investigation all closed with the children being found safe and no services recommended.

**F.A.**, six months old, died on July 7, 2024 in a car crash after his mother was observed driving erratically, probably under the influence of substances. There was an open CPS investigation at the time of the crash. Before FA's death, there were 12 intakes on the family, involving allegations of parental lack of supervision, domestic violence, sexual assault by a family friend, physical abuse, and parental substance use.

**M.T.J.**, seven years old, died of non-accidental injuries on April 16, 2024. There were seven screened-in intakes and 12 screened-out intakes on this family between 2015 and 2023. M.T.J. and a sibling were placed in foster care in March 2018 after their seven-month-old sibling died while bedsharing during an investigation for domestic violence. The children were returned to their mother after two-and-a-half years in care. A FAR case opened in May 2023 based on a report that M.T.J. was coming to school in urine-soaked clothing and had regressed to using pullups. The case closed the same month despite the mother's failure to provide requested information about a medical appointment for M.T.J.

**M.K.**, age 16 months, died on September 25, 2024. M.K. had methamphetamine and fentanyl in his system at the time of death and the parents were found to be negligent as law enforcement found heroin and fentanyl on the kitchen counter and drug paraphernalia within reach. Before M.K.'s death, DCYF received eight intakes regarding the family, of which five screened in for CPS investigations and included concerns for lack of supervision and parental substance use. There was an open Family Voluntary Services case at the time of M.K.'s death.