

**Child Fatality Review #08-21**  
**Region 5**  
**Kitsap County**

This 12-month-old Native American male died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

**Case Overview**

On June 6, 2008, the deceased child's father checked on him as he left for work at 6:00 a.m. The father touched his son's arm and found it cold to the touch. The father called 911 and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) arrived at 6:30 a.m. Both law enforcement and the county coroner were also called to the scene. The child was declared dead. The father's partner indicated she put the baby down in his playpen/crib the night before with his bottle. She reported to the medics that the baby usually slept through the night so she had not checked on him. The coroner determined cause of death was Sudden Unexplained Death in Infancy. There were no obvious signs of abuse or neglect or trauma found during the death scene investigation or during the autopsy.

The biological mother moved from Washington to Oklahoma. There were reports of neglect of the deceased child and his siblings while in her care in Oklahoma and Washington. Oklahoma Child Protective Services (CPS) completed an investigation following the birth of the deceased child. The mother admitted to prior use of methamphetamine, but denied current use. She admitted to smoking marijuana during her pregnancy. The father obtained custody of the deceased child and his siblings from their mother in February 2008. He and the four children lived together with his partner.

**Referral History**

On May 14, 2007, a relative reported to Child Protective Services (CPS) concerns about the deceased child and his siblings in the care of their biological mother. This relative reported the mother used marijuana and methamphetamine and did not care for the children. The mother used drugs and slept until after 1:00 in the afternoon. No one changed the 15-month-old's diaper. The mother did not obtain prenatal care. The parents separated and the father expressed concern for his children. This relative saw the mother smoking cigarettes and marijuana while holding her baby (the deceased child). The baby was hospitalized two months prior with double pneumonia. The mother was unwilling to accept help or parenting advice. The mother moved to Oklahoma on May 15, 2007. The CPS social worker met with the family prior to their move. The children were interviewed and made no disclosures of abuse. The mother was also interviewed. A referral was also made to CPS in Oklahoma with the same allegations. This referral was accepted for investigation and closed with an unfounded finding for negligent treatment.

On June 6, 2008, CPS intake was notified by the county coroner of the death of this 12-month-old child. The deceased child had a bad skin rash (eczema) all over his body which was being treated with medications. His siblings appeared healthy. They appeared bonded to their father's live-in girlfriend. The deceased child appeared well fed and healthy. The county coroner found no signs of trauma. The home was messy, but there were no obvious health risks. The coroner did not find abuse concerns. This referral was accepted for investigation by CPS and closed with an unfounded finding for negligent treatment.

**Issues and Recommendations**

**Issue:** None identified

**Recommendation:** None