

**Child Fatality Review #08-28**  
**Region 1**  
**Spokane County**

This six-month-old Caucasian female died from hypoxic encephalopathy (a lack of oxygen to the brain).

**Case Overview**

On June 18, 2008, the father of the deceased child found her face down in her crib. She was not breathing. Her parents called 911 and were instructed how to perform CPR. The child was revived and taken to a local hospital. The treating doctor reported it appeared to be interrupted SIDS episode. He did not suspect neglect or abuse. The father said she was placed on her back when put to sleep, but found her on her stomach. Doctors did not seem to be concerned that the child's death was suspicious.

On June 20, 2008, the deceased child died from hypoxic encephalopathy (a lack of oxygen to the brain) due to cardio-respiratory arrest. There was no evidence of acute injury to the child. Posterior rib fractures were discovered during the autopsy. These fractures were aged between 4 to 8 weeks old. Law enforcement was consulted about investigating the fracture to the ribs. Law enforcement would not investigate unless the injury to the ribs contributed to the fatality. The medical examiner determined conclusively that the rib injury in no way contributed to the child's death.

The mother agreed to discuss the rib injury with the investigating social worker. The mother was surprised to learn of the injury. She stated that many adults including babysitters, relatives, and the child's parents all spent time alone with the child. Any of these individuals had opportunity to inflict the injury. The investigating social worker was unable to determine who fractured this child's rib. The father refused to cooperate with the investigation. He and the deceased child's mother ended their relationship.

**Referral History**

On April 24, 2008, an anonymous referent called Child Protective Services (CPS) intake and reported both parents smoke marijuana. This same source also reported that the baby appears healthy and well care for. This referral was screened as information only.

**Issues and Recommendations**

**Issue:** None identified

**Recommendation:** None