

Child Fatality Review #08-47
Region 5
Kitsap County

This 16-year-old Caucasian male died in a car accident.

Case Overview

On August 9, 2008, a van driven by an adult relative, rolled over and this youth was killed. This teenager was a dependent youth placed in the care of his aunt and uncle. He was placed in this home in November 2005. The family was on vacation in Wyoming in the Grand Teton National Park. The family was riding in a van driven by the father of the teenager's uncle. The deceased youth was seated in the rear of the van and was ejected from the vehicle at the time of the accident. He was pronounced dead at the scene by a responding doctor. The youth was not wearing a seat belt. One of the children involved in the accident stated that the driver of the van asked if everyone had their seat belts on, and the deceased youth said he did. The other six family members in the van were injured, but survived. National Park officials believe the tires of the minivan drifted onto the shoulder and the driver overcorrected, causing the vehicle to roll. The accident investigation report from Wyoming indicated no evidence of driver impairment.

Referral History

On August 19, 2008, the uncle of the deceased youth notified Child Protective Services (CPS) intake that the youth died in a car accident while on vacation in Wyoming. There was no allegation of negligence by the driver. The referral was screened as information only.

The mother of the deceased youth has an extensive history with the department dating from the mid-1980s to present. As primary caregiver or alleged perpetrator of child maltreatment, the mother has been reported to Washington State Children's Administration intake over forty times. Primarily the reported concerns have been neglect related (four investigations were founded); although on two occasions there were allegations of physical abuse (unfounded). Historically, there were repeated reports of dirty/unsanitary living conditions, poor hygiene maintained for her children, lack of adult supervision, leaving children with inappropriate caretakers, failure to protect, allowing access to drugs and drug paraphernalia, and a general failure to meet the needs of her children. Caretaker risk factors reported included use of illicit drugs, pre-natal drug use and positive drug screens at delivery, domestic violence, criminality, homelessness/instability of living situations, and lack of follow through with offered or recommended services.

Issues and Recommendations:

Issue: None identified.

Recommendation: None