



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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August 29, 2016

PRESS RELEASE: Yonathan A. (AKA Yonatan A.)

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

At the request of the Department of Children and Family Services, today the Juvenile Court granted an order allowing the Department to address some pertinent issues related to the tragic death of the child Yonatan A.

As you may be aware from media reports, 11 year-old Yonatan was found deceased in his family's home. We are investigating the incident and are also reviewing our Department's involvement with this family in the past. Although our review is still ongoing, the present court order allows me to share some preliminary information about the family's prior involvement with the Department.

The family had six prior referrals, ranging in date from 2002 to 2012. Four of those referrals involved Yonatan (2009 to 2012). All six referrals were investigated and none resulted in an open case which would have required ongoing supervision and services.

Our preliminary review of these investigations reveals that some good social work practices were utilized. It appears that our social workers consulted with outside professionals connected to the family, including medical doctors, a hospital social worker, a school counselor, a therapist, a school coach, teachers, school counselors, and a special education teacher, all of whom indicated that Yonatan was receiving proper care. We also see that Yonatan was enrolled in school and had been participating in specialized social services at the time of our last contact with him in 2012.

Further, as required by law, the allegations involving physical abuse were also submitted through the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System (commonly known as E-SCARS) to ensure an investigation by law enforcement. Each of these investigations concluded that no crime had been committed.

I am deeply saddened by Yonatan's death and will continue to review the services provided to him and his family to see if there are things we as a community can do better.

On behalf of the Department of Children and Family Services, we extend our condolences to Yonatan's family and those affected by his loss.

PLB