

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
OFFICE OF JUVENILE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

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**Report Release Date: April 1, 2011**

**Review of the Deaths of Christopher Dunham, Jr., Crystal Dunham, and Kailey  
Webb  
of Oklahoma County of Oklahoma**

Dates and Outcome of Investigations and Actions Taken by the Department of Human Services; Actions Taken by the District Attorney; and Dates and Summary of Judicial Proceedings and Rulings of the Court

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**General Information**

On January 5, 2011, the Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) received a request for a public report pursuant to Title 10A Section 1-6-105 in regard to the deaths of Christopher Dunham, Jr., a four year old child, Crystal Dunham a three year old child, and Kailey Webb, a one year old child, all who died on January 4, 2011. The children's parents', Christopher Dunham, Sr. and Stephanie Webb Dunham were charged on February 10, 2011, with three counts of Felony Child Neglect and one count of Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

**Authorization**

Title 10A, Section 1-6-105, B, D and E, of the Oklahoma Statutes, states:

B. When a person responsible for a child has been charged by information or indictment with committing a crime resulting in the death or near death of the child, there shall be a presumption that the best interest of the public is served by public disclosure of certain information concerning:

1. The circumstances of the investigation of the death or near death of the child; and
2. Any other investigations concerning that child, or other children while living in the same household, within:
  - a. three (3) years of the death or near-death, and
  - b. one (1) year after the death or near-death.

D. 1. At any time subsequent to seven (7) days after the date the person responsible for the child has been criminally charged, the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth shall, upon request, release certain information to the public within sixty (60) days of the request as follows:

a. a confirmation shall be provided by the Commission as to whether a report of suspected child abuse or neglect has been made concerning the alleged victim or other children while living in the same household and whether an investigation has begun,

b. confirmation shall be provided by the Commission as to whether previous reports of suspected child abuse or neglect have been made and the dates thereof, a summary of those previous reports, the dates and outcome of any investigations or actions taken by the Department [OKDHS] and the Commission in response to any previous report of child abuse or neglect, and the specific recommendation made to the district attorney and any subsequent action taken by the district attorney,

c. the dates of any judicial proceedings prior to the death or near death of the child,

d. recommendations submitted by the Department [OKDHS] and the Commission shall be provided in writing including recommendations made at the hearing as they relate to custody or placement of a child, and

e. the rulings of the court.

2. Specific recommendations made by the Commission described in any progress reports of a pending case submitted to the court may be disclosed by the Commission.

E. Any disclosure of information pursuant to this section shall not identify or provide an identifying description of any complainant or reporter of child abuse or neglect, and shall not identify the name of the child victim's siblings or other children living in the same household, the parent or other person responsible for the child, or any other member of the household, other than the person criminally charged.

**Identifiers:**

Child's Name: Christopher Dunham, Jr.  
Date of Birth: January 5, 2006

Child's Name: Crystal Dunham  
Date of Birth: January 22, 2007

Child's Name: Kailey Dunham  
Date of Birth: March 19, 2009

Alleged Perpetrators: Stephanie Webb Dunham  
Christopher Dunham, Sr.

The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth did not become aware of this case until after the deaths of Christopher, Jr., Crystal, and Kailey.

The following is a summary of the actions taken by the Department of Human Services (OKDHS); the actions taken by the district attorney; judicial proceedings; and the rulings of the court, as authorized by 10A O.S., Section 7005-1.9, D and E (below).

The OJSO reviewed the OKDHS and deprived court actions regarding Christopher, Jr., Crystal, and Kailey that happened prior to and immediately following the deaths of the children. The OKDHS documented six reports alleging abuse/neglect regarding the children's family within the past three years.

## **Case History**

### Report 1 (April 17, 2008) Oklahoma County

A referral was received by the OKDHS alleging that two year old Christopher Dunham, Jr. (Christopher) had a "knot on the right side of his head". It was also alleged Christopher was observed to have a bruise on his left cheek and three old "small bloody scratches". The referral further documented that Ms. Webb Dunham reported that Christopher sustained the bruise and scratches when he played with a dog and that he sustained the "knot" on his head after Mr. Dunham, Sr. (Mr. Dunham) pushed Christopher down to the ground when he attempted to hug Mr. Dunham.

The OKDHS Screened-Out the report and documented that no injuries were noted by the police officer or the doctor.

### Report 2 (October 13, 2009) Oklahoma County

A referral was received by the OKDHS alleging that Christopher, Crystal, and Kailey were exposed to domestic abuse and substance abuse by Stephanie Webb Dunham and Mr. Dunham. The referral also alleged that Ms. Webb verbally abused the children when she used methamphetamine. The referral further alleged that and that Ms. Webb Dunham and the three children lived in a home without electricity and that, at times, she and the children resided in the home of a relative. Allegedly, Ms. Webb Dunham and Mr. Dunham engaged in loud verbal and physical altercations in the presence of their children.

The OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority I Investigation with an immediate response and contact was made with the child victims on the same day of this report. The OKDHS further documented that the three children, Ms. Webb Dunham, and Mr. Dunham along with four collateral witnesses were interviewed during the OKDHS Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigation.

The OKDHS documented interview with Ms. Webb Dunham confirmed that the electricity had been disconnected at her apartment and that she was currently residing in the home of a relative. The OKDHS also documented that Ms. Webb Dunham

confirmed she had been involved in domestic violence and alleged that she had suffered bruising to her face and back. She also stated that the domestic violence had been in the presence of the children. She further alleged that Mr. Dunham had substance abuse issues along with anger management issues.

The OKDHS documented interview with Mr. Dunham confirmed that Ms. Webb Dunham did obtain a VPO against him for domestic abuse. However, he indicated that the injuries Ms. Dunham Webb suffered were accidental on his part, and that Ms. Webb Dunham had also hit him twice. The OKDHS also documented that Mr. Dunham denied any knowledge of substance abuse by Ms. Webb Dunham but that he was concerned that Ms. Webb Dunham left the children with a person that may be an inappropriate care giver. Mr. Dunham confirmed to OKDHS that he had abused methamphetamines and marijuana in the past but was presently drug free.

The OKDHS documented that the children were not interviewed due to their ages and that both children were observed to be free of unusual marks and bruises.

The OKDHS documented interviews with two of the collateral witnesses noted that neither witness reported concerns regarding Ms. Webb Dunham's ability to care for the children. The OKDHS documented that one of the witnesses reported that Mr. Dunham smoked marijuana and that he had physically abused Ms. Webb. The OKDHS also documented that a third collateral witness provided the OKDHS documentation that noted that during the reported domestic abuse incident, Ms. Webb was witnessed to be holding a child "in her arms" during the physical altercation.

The OKDHS documented a finding of Unsubstantiated-Services Recommended. The OKDHS recommended that Ms. Webb Dunham needed to utilize an appropriate alternative caregiver for her children and that Ms. Webb Dunham and Mr. Dunham needed to provide the children a living environment that was safe, clean, and free from domestic violence and substance abuse.

#### Report 3 (November 13, 2009) Oklahoma County

A referral was received by the OKDHS alleging substance abuse by Ms. Webb Dunham and that she left the children overnight with an inappropriate caregiver.

The OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority Two Assessment and made contact with the child victims on the same date.

The OKDHS case documentation as of March 9, 2011, did not contain verification that a written Assessment was conducted with the family regarding this report and the noted allegations.

#### OKDHS Assessment of Child Safety (December 14, 2009)

The Assessment that pertained to Report 2 (dated October 13, 2009) documented that the children were determined to be "Safe" and that the children were determined to be in an environment "without any safety threats". The Assessment documented that Ms.

Webb Dunham made appropriate childcare arrangements as needed, domestic violence did not interfere with the supervision, care, and/or physical safety of the children, and that the home was adequate and had electricity.

#### Report 4 (June 25, 2010) Oklahoma County

The OKDHS received a referral alleging that Christopher, Crystal, and Kailey were “out of control” and were “not really clean”. The referral also alleged that Mr. Dunham, Crystal, and Kailey sat in a truck with the windows rolled-down with an outside temperature of one-hundred degrees. The referral further alleged substance abuse by both Mr. Dunham and Ms. Webb Dunham.

The OKDHS screened out the report and documented that the allegations did not “fall under the auspices of child welfare”.

#### Report 5 (September 17, 2010) Oklahoma County

The OKDHS received a referral alleging sexual abuse of Crystal by Mr. Dunham. The referral also alleged that Mr. Dunham physically and verbally abused Ms. Webb Dunham in the past, and that the couple separated.

The OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority Two Investigation with six days to contact the child victims. The OKDHS initiated the investigation on September 27, 2010, and conducted a home visit with all three of the child victims. The OKDHS documented that all three children, Ms. Webb Dunham, Mr. Dunham, three collaterals, and a law enforcement officer were interviewed during the OKDHS CPS Investigation.

The OKDHS documented the relative’s home in which they were staying was “messy with random clutter” and that Ms. Webb Dunham, Mr. Dunham, and the three children slept on an air mattress in the living room. OKDHS documented a “roach infestation” was observed to be located in the kitchen, with roaches “running on the wall”.

All of the children were observed to be free of marks or injuries. Mr. Dunham appeared to OKDHS to be “angry and upset” when child welfare approached him and he refused to talk to child welfare. He was interviewed two weeks later where he denied any sexual abuse allegations.

The OKDHS further documented that Mr. Dunham, denied current incidents of domestic violence and reported that the last incident occurred in October 2009. In addition, Mr. Dunham denied illegal drug and alcohol use. The OKDHS further documented that Ms. Webb Dunham denied domestic violence, illegal drug, and alcohol use.

According to OKDHS documentation Christopher and Crystal, were forensically interviewed at a Child Advocacy Center. The OKDHS documented that Christopher was observed to be without bruises or noticeable injuries, however Crystal was observed to have a bruise located on her “upper forehead”. Crystal reported that she sustained the bruise when she “bumped heads” with Christopher. Crystal also reported that Mr. Dunham had spanked her and Christopher and left marks and bruises on them.

The OKDHS also documented that the family home “appeared marginal but posed no safety hazards”. The OKDHS further documented that the children were observed to be healthy and that all of the children were “up to date on shots and medical check-ups”.

The OKDHS documented a finding of Unsubstantiated-Services Recommended as to the allegation of the sexual abuse of Crystal by Mr. Dunham. The OKDHS recommended that Ms. Webb Dunham and Mr. Dunham parent in a “safe and appropriate manner”, and provide an appropriate alternative caregiver to the children when needed.

Report 6 (January 5, 2011) Oklahoma County

The OKDHS received a referral alleging that Christopher, Crystal, and Kailey died in a motor home fire. The report also alleged that Ms. Webb Dunham, Mr. Dunham, and the children resided in the motor home. Reportedly, the motor home was inoperable and was parked behind the home of the children’s grandmother and was used by the family during the remodeling of the home.

The OKDHS assigned the report as a Priority One Investigation with an immediate response. The OKDHS documented that contact was made with the family on the same date of the report and that an investigation regarding the allegations is ongoing.