

Office of Juvenile System Oversight
**REVIEW OF THE NEAR-DEATH OF A.A.
CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**

Report Release Date: December 22, 2023

OVERVIEW

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) received a request regarding the near-death of two-year-old A.A. On February 18, 2020, the Cleveland County District Attorney filed a felony charge of child abuse against Tyler Anderson. On July 13, 2021, he was sentenced to a term of 20 years incarceration.

IDENTIFIERS

Child's Name:	Age at Time of Incident:	Date of Near-Death:
A.A.	Two Years	February 13, 2020
Person Responsible for Child (PRFC):	Siblings:	
Tyler Anderson	Sibling One, Five Years	

ACTIONS

The release of the following summary of the actions taken by Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) and the proceedings in the district court is authorized by Title 10A O.S. § 1-6-105.

The OJSO did not become aware of this case until after the near-death incident of B.W.

NEAR-DEATH INCIDENT

On February 13, 2020, the near-death report was received by the OKDHS office in Cleveland County. Reportedly, paramedics were called to the family's home concerning two-year-old A.A., who had a fever and was having seizures. When A.A. was taken to the ambulance, A.A. was gasping for air and was observed by the paramedics to have several injuries consistent with child abuse. It was reported A.A. was observed to have strangulation marks on both the right and left side of the neck, bruising around the nose, a bite mark on the left forearm, a hematoma on the left side of the head, an abrasion to the right shoulder, an abrasion on the spine area,

and bruises on the buttocks and knees. It was reported A.A. was wet but it was possible that water could have been thrown on A.A. A.A. had to be intubated and was in critical condition

OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority I Investigation.

INVESTIGATION

During the investigation, Tyler Anderson and third-party witnesses were interviewed. The investigation was a joint response between OKDHS and law enforcement.

OKDHS documented that upon arrival, two-year-old A.A. was observed by law enforcement to be coughing, gagging, and wet. OKDHS documented the paramedics informed law enforcement that when a child is abused to this extent, the perpetrators will often use water to try to revive the child. OKDHS documented that law enforcement noted there was bruising to the left side of A.A.'s neck and it was consistent with signs of choking. OKDHS documented law enforcement also noted A.A. was covered in bruises. A.A.'s skin was red and blotchy, and a fresh bite mark was seen on the left forearm. A.A. was observed having small seizures.

OKDHS documented A.A. was intubated while en route to a medical facility. Once A.A. arrived at the medical facility, medical professionals observed signs of child abuse. The medical records for A.A. documented that a computed tomography (CT) scan was conducted and showed A.A. had suffered a subdural hematoma but A.A. did not have any skull fractures. Due to the subdural hematoma, A.A. underwent emergency surgery in response to the blood that accumulated in A.A.'s brain.

On February 18, 2020, OKDHS observed A.A. and noted that A.A. was quiet and did not want to talk to OKDHS. OKDHS documented that a medical professional stated that A.A. could not fully walk but was able to stand.

OKDHS documented that during law enforcement's interview with Tyler Anderson, Mr. Anderson stated he was playing video games while A.A. was sitting at the table eating a sandwich. A.A. then fell over and started choking. After A.A. finished the sandwich, Mr.

Anderson laid A.A. down on a pallet. Mr. Anderson then continued to play video games. Mr. Anderson stated A.A. began to fuss, so he reached over and struck A.A. on the top of the head with a closed fist in a motion like a hammer strike and then said "I popped [the child] on the head a little too hard. That was too aggressive. I hit [the child] on the head too hard." Mr.

Anderson also admitted to biting A.A. because A.A. had bitten him first. Mr. Anderson stated Sibling One was in the room when the incident happened.

On February 14, 2020, OKDHS documented Sibling One was forensically interviewed and Sibling One disclosed witnessing Mr. Anderson choking A.A.

OKDHS documented a third-party witness stating they knew Mr. Anderson was a threat to A.A. It was also documented that Mr. Anderson was not A.A.'s biological father and that it was "a matter of time" before A.A. was hurt.

OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Abuse/Near-Death by Tyler Anderson to A.A. OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Abuse/Threat of Harm by Tyler Anderson to Sibling One. OKDHS recommended that a 'deprived petition' be filed due to the heinous and shocking nature of the abuse of A.A.

On February 14, 2020, A.A. and Sibling One were placed in the emergency custody of OKDHS.

PRIOR INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRFC WITH OKLAHOMA HUMAN SERVICES

There was one pertinent report prior to the near-death incident of two-year-old A.A.

On May 5, 2017, a report by the OKDHS office in Cleveland County. Reportedly, a third-party witness took Sibling One, who was two years old at the time, to a medical appointment. Sibling One was observed to have multiple bruises all over their body. Specifically, the bruises on Sibling One were on the legs, face, and the top of the head. The third-party witness stated they did not know how the bruises happened. The third-party witness stated Sibling One may have fallen down the stairs because the third-party witness caught Sibling One as Sibling One started to fall. The third-party witness stated they caught Sibling One so Sibling One did not hit anything. The third-party witness stated the bruising just "appeared." Sibling One had bruises that could be explained by normal play on the legs. However, there were concerns about bruises on Sibling One's face and head. Sibling One had a bruise

on the cheek and one on the forehead going towards the top of the head. The collateral witness could not give an explanation for the bruises.

OKDHS accepted this report as a Priority II Investigation. On May 8, 2017, OKDHS documented they contacted the family.

OKDHS documented and observed that Sibling One had bruises over multiple areas of the body and the bruises were in various stages of healing. Sibling One had bruising to the face, shoulder, buttocks, left thigh, hip, and both legs. There was a bruise on the left thigh that extended up to the bottom. The bruise was approximately six to eight inches in length and was as wide as a hand. OKDHS documented the bruising was said to be from a third-party witness giving Sibling One a spanking.

OKDHS documented that Mr. Anderson is Sibling One's biological father. It was also documented the third-party witness could not say how Sibling One got the facial bruising or the bruises on the shoulder and hips. The facial bruising was sustained while the third-party witness and Sibling One were staying with Tyler Anderson. The third-party witness did not remember how Sibling One got hurt but knows the bruises "appeared" while they were at Mr. Anderson's house.

OKDHS stated the home where Sibling One was living was observed to be extremely dirty. Cigarettes and cigarette butts were observed in every room of the house that was accessible to Sibling One. Full and empty alcohol bottles were observed throughout the home. There was a water pipe used for smoking found in the master bedroom. A third-party witness admitted they smoked marijuana there. There were cockroaches observed in most rooms of the home. Sibling One was observed playing with the cockroaches as OKDHS watched.

OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Abuse/Beating/Hitting by the third-party witness to Sibling One. OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Lack of Supervision by Tyler Anderson and the third-party witness to Sibling One. OKDHS recommended a 'deprived petition' be filed.

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS PRIOR TO THE CHILD'S NEAR-DEATH

The OJSO identified one relevant judicial proceeding prior to the near-death incident involving Sibling One and A.A. Three days after the birth of A.A., a permanency case was opened which led A.A. to be placed into OKDHS custody. On May 8, 2017, Sibling One was removed from third-party witnesses. On June 22, 2017, A.A. was removed from Mr. Anderson and a third-party witness.

OKDHS created an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) for Mr. Anderson and third-party witnesses which was completed successfully, and the children were placed in a trial reunification on November 6, 2017, with a third-party witness. The reunification was deemed successful, and the case was closed by the judge on May 2, 2018.