

Office of Juvenile System Oversight

REVIEW OF THE NEAR DEATH OF K.B. POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

Report Release Date: March 15, 2024

OVERVIEW

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) received a request regarding the near-death of four-year-old K.B. On June 14, 2022, the Pottawatomie County District Attorney filed a felony charge of Child Neglect against the biological mother, Tera King, and the child's stepfather, Christopher King. On October 25, 2022, both Tera King and Christopher King pled guilty to the felony charge and received the same sentence of three years deferred prosecution.

IDENTIFIERS

Child's Name:	Age at Time of Incident:	Date of Near-Death Incident:
K.B.	Four Years Old	May 30, 2022
Person Responsible for Child (PRFC):	Additional Identifiers:	
Tera Rose King Christopher Shawn King	Sibling One: Two Years Old Sibling Two: Twelve Months Old	

ACTIONS

The release of the following summary of the actions taken by Oklahoma Department of 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 of K.B.

NEAR-DEATH INCIDENT

On May 31, 2022, the OKDHS office in Oklahoma County received the near-death report. The OKDHS report stated that a four-year-old child was admitted to a hospital in serious condition due to being lethargic, pale, and unable to be awakened. On May 31, 2022, in an interview with the biological mother, Tera King, the OKDHS documented that before the incident, K.B. was sleepy and complained of burning eyes. On that same date, the child's stepfather, Christopher King, admitted leaving his tetrahydrochloride (THC) gummies on one of the children's dressers. Mrs. King told the OKDHS that she took the child to the Emergency Room (ER). The OKDHS further documented that the E.R. evaluated Sibling One on the same date for exhibiting identical lethargic symptoms. The OKDHS documented that both children tested positive for THC.

On May 31, 2022, the OKDHS accepted the child's near-death report as a Priority I Investigation, and on the same day, the OKDHS contacted Tera King, Christopher King, and the children.

INVESTIGATION

The persons interviewed during the investigation include the biological parents, stepfather, siblings, law enforcement, medical professionals, representatives of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and various personal third parties of the family.

While investigating the report, the OKDHS documented that upon entering the home, law enforcement and OKDHS found large amounts of marijuana and drug paraphernalia scattered throughout the house, in the children's room, kitchen, and living room. OKDHS documented that Mr. and Mrs. King were taken into custody by the Pottawatomie County Sheriff's Office upon this discovery. The OKDHS further documented that Sibling One was checked for substances while at the hospital due to exhibiting the same behaviors. Sibling One tested positive for THC, as well. On June 2, 2022, OKDHS documented that K.B. was released from the hospital and placed into the custody of the maternal grandmother to the child. On June 4, 2022, Sibling Two moved to a traditional foster home. On June 6, 2022, K.B. and Sibling One moved to a separate traditional home.

- The OKDHS made a Substantiated finding of Neglect-Near-Death as to Tera and Christopher King on K.B.
- The OKDHS made a Substantiated finding of Neglect-Threat of Harm to K.B., Sibling One, and Sibling Two as to Tera King and Christopher King.
- The OKDHS made a Substantiated finding of Neglect-Failure to Protect K.B. as to Christopher King and Tera King.

The OKDHS noted that the safety threshold for the children had been crossed and recommended a deprived petition be filed regarding all three of the children. Mr. and Mrs. King were referred for mental health and substance abuse assessments with the completion of recommended services, anger management, and individual and family counseling. On June 9, 2022, the Assistant District Attorney of Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma, filed a petition alleging that all three children were deprived. On June 14, 2022, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation joined the OKDHS court action. Individualized Service Plans (ISPs) were developed for Mr. and Mrs. King. On October 26, 2022, the court granted the OKDHS permission to begin trial reunification between the children and Mr. and Mrs. King due to their participation with their respective ISPs.

PRIOR INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRFC WITH OKLAHOMA DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES

Pertinent Investigation

There was one pertinent report prior to the near-death incident of four-year-old K.B.

On October 12, 2021, a report was received. The report to OKDHS alleged that when Tera King gave birth to Sibling Two, they both tested positive for marijuana.

On October 16, 2021, the OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority Two Investigation. The OKDHS documented that initiated contact began on October 15, 2021. However, the family could not be located. Over multiple weeks, the OKDHS documented attempts to locate the family, yet they could not.

The OKDHS investigation resulted in No Finding-Unable to Locate concerning the allegations of Neglect-Threat of Harm to K.B. and Sibling One as to Tera King.

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS PRIOR TO THE CHILD'S NEAR-DEATH

The OJSO identified no relevant judicial proceedings prior to the near-death incident.