



County of Los Angeles DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESS RELEASE

DCFS Release of Information under SB 39 Regarding October 6 Child Fatality

On October 6, a 2-year-old girl was pronounced dead under suspicious circumstances. It is unclear whether the child was in the home of her parent or primary guardian when she died. This fatality is being investigated by law enforcement. This constitutes the full extent of information permissible to be released by law at this time.

“While the circumstances surrounding this little girl’s death are still uncertain, the loss of one so young is truly heartbreaking,” said Trish Ploehn, Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). “This tragedy reminds every one of us of the importance of working together to keep our children safe from harm.”

Senate Bill 39 of 2007 (SB 39), which went into effect in 2008, allows for the initial release of limited information when there is a reasonable suspicion that a child death was caused by abuse or neglect. SB 39 permits the Department of Children and Family Services to comment on the case within the scope of the release of information.

DCFS is the nation’s largest public child welfare agency also encompassing the largest public adoption agency in the country. The department serves over 32,000 children on any given day, and each year receives over 160,000 calls to its child abuse and neglect hotline.

With public private and community partners, DCFS provides quality child welfare services and supports so children grow up safe, healthy and educated and with permanent families.

DCFS, which operates under a \$1.7 billion annual budget, has over 7,300 employees and currently supervises 32,936 children. 15,407 children reside in temporary out-of-home care, of which 7,310 live with relatives.

“To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service”

Key DCFS outcomes include: increased child safety; decreased timelines to permanence; reduced reliance on out-of-home care; increased child and family well-being and enhanced organizational excellence.

DCFS is recognized nationally as an innovative leader in child welfare reform. Some of the more successful DCFS programs include Structured Decision Making, Point of Engagement, Team Decision Making, Concurrent Planning, Permanency Partners Program, Wraparound and the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project.

Los Angeles County covers over 4,800 square miles, including 88 cities and 81 school districts with 10.5 million residents, representing 28% of California's population and 3% of the nation's population. Our population is one of the most diverse populations in the world and exceeds that of 42 states. 25% of Los Angeles County's population is under the age of 18. Over half of the county residents speak a language other than English at home.

Report child abuse in L.A. County by calling 1-800-540-4000.

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