

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

Report Release Date: November 13, 2007

**Review of the Near Death of Skylar Sedam
of Kay County, Oklahoma**

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

General Information

On September 26, 2007, the Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) was made aware of the near death of Skylar Sedam, a two-month-old baby who had been taken to the hospital because of a skull fracture. Criminal felony Child Abuse by Injury and First Degree Rape by Instrumentation charges were filed on the mother's boyfriend, Randall William Church Cornett, on October 1, 2007. The following is a summary of the actions taken by the Department of Human Services (DHS); the actions taken by the district attorney's office; judicial proceedings; and the rulings of the court, as authorized by 10 O.S., Section 7005-1.9, D and E (below).

Authorization

Title 10, Section 7005-1.9, D and E, of the Oklahoma Statutes, states:

D. 1. At any time subsequent to seven (7) days, but no more than thirty (30) days, of 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 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 [DHS] 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 [DHS] 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:

Name of Child: Skylar Sedam, Jr.

Age at time of incident: Two months old

Mother's Boyfriend/
Alleged Perpetrator:

Randall William Church Cornett

The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth did not become aware of this case until after the child's near death.

Summary of Actions Taken by the Department of Human Services; Action Taken by the District Attorney; Judicial Proceedings; and the Rulings of the Court:

The OJSO determined there was no child welfare history prior to the September 26, 2007, event.

Referral 1 (September 26, 2007)

The DHS received the referral regarding the baby and Randall Cornett on September 26, 2007. The reporter stated that a two-month-old baby, who had bruises, had been transported to an emergency room. Reportedly, the father (later identified as the mother's boyfriend/Randall Cornett) had stated that he had gotten up with the baby about 4:30 a.m. After changing the baby's diaper, Cornett went into another room,

noticed dog feces on the floor, and stopped to clean it up. Reportedly, when Cornett got back to the bedroom, the baby was on the floor. Cornett picked the baby up, and reportedly, thought that the biological mother, who was asleep on the bed, had accidentally rolled over and had knocked the baby off the bed.

The referral was assigned as a Priority I for investigation. The DHS initiated the investigation on September 26, 2007. Documentation indicated that the child welfare worker made contact with the biological mother at the local hospital, where the baby had been admitted. The DHS documented that a physician stated the baby had numerous injuries: a tear to the rectum, a bruise to the tongue, a bruise to the penis and scrotum, and bruising to both sides of the face and the lower left leg.

Protective Custody (September 26, 2007)

On September 26, 2007, the child was placed into protective custody by local law enforcement.

DHS Case Notes

According to DHS documentation, in addition to the other injuries, the baby was diagnosed as Failure to Thrive. The DHS documented that the two-month-old baby weighed 7 pounds; the baby's birth weight was 5 pounds, 11 ounces.

According to DHS documentation, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) interviewed Randall Cornett regarding the baby's injuries. DHS documented that Cornett admitted to the OSBI that he had pinched the baby's penis and had shoved a pen into the baby's rectum. Documentation indicated that Cornett also admitted to the intravenous use of methamphetamine for several days.

Court Hearing (September 28, 2007)

A Show Cause hearing was held on September 28, 2007, and the child was placed into temporary DHS custody.

Placement

The baby was discharged from the metropolitan hospital on September 28, 2007, and was placed in foster care. The DHS documented that the baby had gained weight during the hospitalization.

Criminal Felony Charges Filed (October 1, 2007)

On October 1, 2007, criminal felony charges of Child Abuse by Injury and First Degree Rape by Instrumentation were filed on Randall Cornett.

DHS's Investigative Findings

The DHS investigation was completed on October 22, 2007. The DHS documented that the abuse was shocking and heinous. The DHS finding was Confirmed-Court Intervention Requested as to Abuse-Burning, Abuse-Beating, Neglect-Failure to Protect, and Neglect-Failure to Thrive. The allegations of physical abuse, neglect, and failure to protect were confirmed against the biological mother; the allegations of physical abuse and neglect were confirmed against the mother's boyfriend, Randall Cornett; and the allegation of failure to protect was confirmed against the child's biological father.