

Child: Addison Grace Lanham DOB: June 9, 2009 (age 2)
Mother: Shanna Lanham DOB: October 11, 1978 (age 32)
Alleged Father: Raymond May DOB: February 13, 1975

Previous Report(s)

Report received: November 1, 2010. DSS accepted report for investigation of suspected neglect.

Results: Investigation conducted and concerns were unsubstantiated on November 30, 2010.

Most recent/current Investigation

Report received: June 7, 2011. DSS accepted report for investigation of suspected neglect.

Allegations of Report: Jason Wells, a registered sex offender, is in the home with the child Addison Lanham and he is not supposed to be living with any children. Mr. Wells and the child's mother, Shanna Lanham, are doing drugs around the child, specifically cocaine and marijuana.

Conduct of the investigation:

June 9, 2011: - Two DSS social workers visited Ms. Lanham and the child Addison Lanham at their current residence, the Express Inn in Bessemer City, NC. Addison was asleep upon Social Workers' arrival. Addison awoke during the visit, but did not engage in conversation with Social Worker. Social Worker observed Addison to be appropriately dressed, clean and no apparent well-being issues were observed. Social Worker interviewed Ms. Lanham about the allegations of the report. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham who was staying in the home, and Ms. Lanham told Social Worker it was only her and Addison. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham if she was in a relationship with Mr. Wells, and Ms. Lanham said yes. Ms. Lanham told Social Worker that Mr. Wells lives with his aunt and comes by her place sometimes. Social Worker observed male clothes and shoes in the room and asked Ms. Lanham about them. Ms. Lanham told the Social Worker they belonged to her brother. Ms. Lanham stated that Mr. Wells last visited her residence on Tuesday (June 7, 2011). Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham again if she was sure Mr. Wells was not staying with her, and Ms. Lanham again denied he was staying there. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham about her plans for housing, and Ms. Lanham told the Social Worker she was planning to move in a couple of days. Ms. Lanham stated she thought Mr. Wells could be around children. Social Worker informed Ms. Lanham that she would obtain the conditions of Mr. Wells' criminal charges. Ms. Lanham stated she did not believe Mr. Wells was guilty of what he was accused of and that she planned to marry him. Social Worker encouraged Ms. Lanham to put this on hold until she has more information on Mr. Wells. Ms. Lanham stated she knew all she needed to know on Mr. Wells and feels he just took a deal and plead guilty. Ms. Lanham stated Mr. Wells worked from 5:30am to 7:00pm or 8:00pm and has been working seven days straight. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham about

her employment status, and Ms. Lanham stated she was recently laid off and she has been living in the motel for two weeks. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham about her childcare arrangements, and Ms. Lanham told Social Worker that her mom or her sister watches the child while she works side jobs. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham for two references, and she provided her mother and her father. Ms. Lanham advised she used to use drugs but does not use anymore. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham about discipline of the child, and Ms. Lanham said she does not have to "whoop" the child, but that she just talks to her. Ms. Lanham did not appear to be high or under the influence. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham for a contact number to reach her, and Ms. Lanham stated that her phone was broken. Social Worker told Ms. Lanham that Social Worker would be coming out to visit her next week to see her again. Ms. Lanham told Social Worker she would be cooperative. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham to contact Social Worker with any changes in her address.

- Social Worker completed a safety agreement with Ms. Lanham, in which Ms. Lanham agreed not to allow Mr. Wells to live in her home and to notify the Social Worker of her new address when she moved. Social Worker provided Ms. Lanham with her business card.

June 16, 2011: Ms. Lanham called the Social Worker and told Social Worker that she and the child are going to the beach for two weeks. Ms. Lanham also stated that she has new housing. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham for her new address, and Ms. Lanham stated she did not know the address of their new residence. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham where she would be staying at the beach, and Ms. Lanham told Social Worker she was staying with friends and did not want to give Social Worker that information. Social Worker asked Ms. Lanham for a phone number and Ms. Lanham told the Social Worker she was low on (cell phone) "minutes." Ms. Lanham agreed to call Social Worker back.

June 22, 2011: Mr. Wells left a voice message for another DSS social worker. In his message, Mr. Wells said that Ms. Lanham told him that a social worker from the Department of Social Services came by the hotel. Mr. Wells said that he does not live with Ms. Lanham. Mr. Wells stated that he lives with his Aunt and Uncle.

- Social Worker made a home visit this date to visit Mr. Wells at the address he provided. Mr. Wells' uncle told the Social Worker that Mr. Wells was at work and confirmed Mr. Wells lived there.

June 30, 2011: Social Worker called Ms. Lanham and found the telephone number was disconnected.

- Social Worker visited Ms. Lanham's last known residence at the Express Inn. There was no answer at Ms. Lanham's door.

July 1, 2011: Social Worker spoke with another social worker who was working on a correlated case to ask for social worker's assistance in locating Ms. Lanham and Mr. Wells.

July 5, 2011: Social Worker made another visit to the last known address of Ms. Lanham at the Express Inn. There was no answer at Ms. Lanham's door. Social Worker spoke with a motel office staff who reported she has not seen Ms. Lanham or the child.

July 14, 2011: Social worker attempted to call Ms. Lanham. Ms. Lanham's phone was disconnected.

July 18, 2011: Social Worker attempted to call Ms. Lanham. Ms. Lanham's phone was disconnected.

- Social Worker spoke with another social worker, who had spoken with Mr. Wells. Mr. Wells reported that he and Ms. Lanham had broken up because Ms. Lanham was told by DSS that Mr. Wells could not be around her child. Mr. Wells stated that Ms. Lanham was still at the beach.

July 20, 2011: Social Worker attempted to locate Ms. Lanham by contacting Ms. Lanham's mother (at two different phone numbers), Ms. Lanham's father and a friend of Ms. Lanham's. All of the telephone numbers provided to Social Worker had been disconnected.

- Social Worker called a collateral contact of Ms. Lanham's, who told Social Worker that she had not seen or heard from Ms. Lanham and could not suggest anyone else for Social Worker to call in order to locate Ms. Lanham. Social Worker asked her to contact Social Worker if she received any information regarding Ms. Lanham's whereabouts.

July 21, 2011: Social Worker staffed with her supervisor regarding her inability to locate Ms. Lanham and Addison Lanham. Supervisor advised Social Worker to check computer records to determine whether Ms. Lanham had applied for public assistance services in any other county in North Carolina or any services in Myrtle Beach, SC, to do an updated criminal record check, and to review case history for any relatives or friends that Social Worker could contact for information.

- Another social worker visited the home of a relative of Mr. Wells and asked if she had any knowledge of the whereabouts of Mr. Wells, Ms. Lanham and Addison Lanham. The relative said Ms. Lanham had been seen at the store the other day, but their whereabouts were unknown. Mr. Well's relative told the social worker that Mr. Wells and Ms. Lanham were no longer together.
- The Department of Social Services received a report that the child Addison Lanham had just died, and that the child and Ms. Lanham were presently at Gaston Memorial Hospital and Mr. Wells was being held by the police. Social worker interviewed Ms. Lanham at the hospital.

July 22, 2011: Three social workers and three social work supervisors pulled DSS case information and conducted interviews along with the Gaston County Police to collaboratively gather information regarding the child's demise. Social workers interviewed Ms. Lanham, Mr. Wells, and the child's alleged biological father, Raymond May. Social workers also gathered medical documents and reports and provided said information to law enforcement.

July 25, 2011- July 28, 2011: DSS Social Worker contacted medical records department at Gaston Memorial Hospital to obtain copy of Addison Lanham's medical records.

- DSS Social Worker interviewed Mr. Wells.

- On July 25, 2011, another DSS social worker, who is not involved in this case, learned from a client that on July 19, 2011, said social worker unknowingly came into contact with Ms. Lanham while visiting her client on a different case. Ms. Lanham had identified herself to this social worker with an incorrect name. When that social worker casually asked Ms. Lanham if she had any children, she told the social worker that she did not. After Addison Lanham died, this client admitted to her social worker that social worker had indeed spoken with Ms. Lanham on July 19, 2011.
- DSS Social Workers have maintained contact with Gaston Police Department regarding the case. DSS Social Worker contacted medical records department at Gaston Memorial Hospital and obtained color copy of Addison Lanham's autopsy photos.
- DSS Social Worker provided records to Gaston Police Department and met with detectives regarding the case.
- DSS Social Workers interviewed relatives of Mr. Wells and collateral contacts.

December 8, 2011: Shanna Lanham was convicted of Second Degree Murder in the death of Addison Lanham. Jason Wells was convicted of Second Degree Murder in the death of Addison Lanham.

Case Decision: As of the writing of this report, no case decision has been made as the investigation remains open and is ongoing, pending the final report from the State Medical Examiner.