

**INEXCUSABLE ACTS OF INJUSTICE FOR  
3 TRAGIC DEATHS  
WITHIN 5 MONTHS**

*Different Yet Very Similar:* A 3 year old Conroe boy (David Tijerina)

A 2 month old baby girl in Katy (Amber Maccurdy).

And a 4 year old girl in Spring (Emma Thompson).

Different locations and different ages, but yet similar because they are the victims of child abuse fatalities that could have been prevented. It is an outrage that in all 3 cases Child Protective Services (CPS) had been involved and yet the child did not get removed from the home and said they believed the child was safe and healthy.

It is dreadful that it takes the death of one of these children for CPS to remove the other children living there at the time. These 3 children did not get a fair chance in life to live and be happy. How many more tragedies will it take to realize that there must be a change in the system?

For CPS to say that they will try to improve is not good enough for those children who lose their lives in the future.

In Emma's case, CPS was notified that she had blisters on her hands, inside her mouth and in her genital area. When the test proved positive for herpes, she was not removed from her home because her mother (a "gifted" RN) claimed that she got it from a toilet seat. CPS failed to further investigate. If they did they would have found that she had a boyfriend (which she denied) who had a history of child sexual and physical abuse and a long history with CPS. CPS took mom's word and did not remove the child or her 2 older siblings. Emma was found to be dead with a skull fracture, 80 bruises to her body, and signs of sexual abuse 16 days after the examination date.

In Amber's case, CPS investigators had been called to her home four times since 2003 none of which she or her siblings were removed. In the final CPS call on a suspicion that Amber's older brother had been hit with an open fist, Amber's mom did not allow CPS to examine her. CPS said all the children were fine and no marks were shown on Amber. A month later she was pronounced dead by paramedics from a large abscess on the right side of her chest, the result of a brutal untreated staph infection. Autopsy results later found she had broken ribs and a fractured arm.

In the case of the David, CPS had been called 4 times to investigate abuse and neglect. The 5<sup>th</sup> and final visit was a random check in which CPS claimed he was safe and the boy died less than one week later. He was found bruised and not breathing due to a severe blunt trauma to the abdomen.

**How are these cases similar?** It is appalling that these children all had prior contacts with CPS and all died shortly after the last visit. It is shocking that these kids or the others living with them were never removed from the home. It is horrific that the parents were never thoroughly investigated. It is heartbreaking that they all had a chance to live and be happy.

**All should result in examining how the system that was created to protect children has failed them and what action we can take so that no more children, no matter what their age or location, will have to suffer again.**

-By Nashilla Alibhai, MPH  
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