

## Child Fatality Summary

**Child's Name:** Ron'niveya O'Neal

**County:** Hillsborough

**Date of Birth:** 7/29/2008

**Date of Death:** 3/19/2018

**Report Number:** 2018-477264

### Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Ron'niveya O'Neal	Age 9 years	Deceased Child
██████████	Age 8 years	Surviving Sibling
Ronnie O'Neal, III	Age 29 years	Father
Kenyatta Barron	Age 33 years	Mother

### Circumstances Surrounding Death

On March 19, 2018, FSFN #2018-477264 was received alleging that the death of 9-year-old Ron'niveya O'Neal and hospitalization of 8-year-old ██████████ occurred at the hands of their father, Ronnie O'Neal, III-29. At the time of the incident, the children's mother, Kenyatta Barron-33, was also discovered deceased.

Documentation reflects that the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office responded to the family's home just after midnight on March 19, 2018, due to a call related to domestic violence. Upon law enforcement's arrival, they discovered the mother lying face down on the sidewalk near the home. Hillsborough County Fire Rescue arrived at the scene and determined that the mother was deceased. When law enforcement initially arrived at the home, there were no lights coming from the residence. However, a short time later, a light was observed coming from the corner of the home. As the light grew brighter, it was determined to be caused by a fire within the residence, resulting in law enforcement forcing entry into the home. When law enforcement gained access to the home, the main living area was engulfed in flames. Law enforcement yelled for anyone in the residence to exit, and ██████████ (child) came outside. When ██████████ appeared, he was covered in blood and was observed with a severe abdominal injury and burns; he was subsequently transported to a local hospital where he received immediate medical attention. Mr. O'Neal exited the home a short time later, and he was placed into custody. Ron'niveya, who was nonverbal and on the Autism Spectrum, was discovered in the home with multiple injuries, to include burns and stab wounds. She succumbed to her injuries and was pronounced deceased at the home on March 19, 2018 at 12:30 a.m..

The Child Protection Team conducted a forensic interview with the surviving sibling who witnessed the tragic incident. Documentation reflects that on the night of the incident, Mr. O'Neal continuously yelled "Allahu Akbar (God is great)," as he shot the mother with a shotgun, stabbed Ron'niveya with an ax ("tomahawk"), and stabbed [REDACTED] with a knife. At some point, Mr. O'Neal also used gasoline, tissue, and matches to set the home and Ron'niveya on fire.

During the Child Protective Investigation, interviews were conducted with multiple sources, to include neighbors, paternal relatives, and maternal relatives. Sources denied previous concerns for violence in the home, mental health issues, substance use, or erratic behaviors.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office investigated any criminal aspect. Mr. O'Neal was arrested on May 20, 2018 on several charges to include two counts of First Degree Murder (Premeditated), First Degree Murder with a Weapon, First Degree Arson, and Resisting an Officer Without Violence. He remains incarcerated at the time of this report writing.

Dr. M. Mainland with the Hillsborough County Medical Examiner's Office conducted an autopsy of the mother. The cause of death was determined as Homicidal violence including Blunt Impact to Head and Shotgun Wounds to Torso and Extremity, and the manner of death was listed as Homicide (assaulted by another person).

Dr. M. Mainland with the Hillsborough County Medical Examiner's Office conducted an autopsy of Ron'niveya O'Neal. The cause of death was determined as Homicidal violence including Chop, Blade, and Penetrating Wounds, and the manner of death was listed as Homicide (assaulted by another person). The autopsy final diagnosis reflects as follows:

- Penetrating, chop, and blade wound to head, neck, torso, and foot
  - Fractures of cervical vertebrae
  - Transection of cervical spinal cord
  - Perforation of larynx
  - Fracture of mandible
  - Subdural and subarachnoid hemorrhage
  - Cerebral contusion and traumatic axonal injury
- Therma burn injuries
  - Full-thickness burns to total body surface area
- Bronchial asthma with focal bronchopneumonia
- History of prematurity (28 weeks, 750-999 grams),
  - with complications including Grade III intraventricular hemorrhage
- Developmental delay
- Cerebellar hypoplasia
- Paraplegia
- Autism (anamnestic)

Based on the interviews and evidence gathered during the course of the investigation, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Child Protective Investigations Division closed their investigation on August 1, 2019, with the following findings.

Child	Identified Maltreatment	Finding	Caregiver Responsible
Ron'niveya O'Neal	Death	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Burns	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Internal Injuries	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Physical Injury	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Household Violence Threatens Child	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Intimate Partner Violence	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
[REDACTED]	Burns	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Internal Injuries	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Physical Injury	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Household Violence Threatens Child	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III
	Intimate Partner Violence	Verified	Ronnie O'Neal, III

### Other Children in the Family

The surviving sibling was examined by the Child Protection Team. Records reflect that the child sustained multiple stab wounds to his neck, abdomen, chest, and extremities, and he suffered burns on 30% of his body. The Child Protection Team opined that the injuries that [REDACTED] sustained were consistent with physical abuse. Based on the totality of the situation, [REDACTED] was removed from the father, and a Termination of Parental Rights petition was filed. The father's parental rights were subsequently terminated in December 2018. [REDACTED] received medical, mental health, and other necessary support services while under protective service supervision.

Mr. O'Neal has a younger child from a previous relationship. His custody was not modified regarding this younger child; however, that child continues to reside with his biological mother, and he has no contact with Mr. O'Neal.

### Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

The nuclear family does not have prior child welfare involvement. [REDACTED]

  
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Mechell Young-Williams  
Child Fatality Prevention Specialist  
SunCoast Region

*9/10/19*  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephanie Hayden  
Quality Improvement Manager  
SunCoast Region

*09-16-19*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attachments: None