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Child care employee found guilty in infant's death

Taliah Brigham died as a result of being left unattended and improperly secured in car seat

(Indianapolis, Ind.) An employee of Miracles and Blessings Daycare Ministry in Speedway has been convicted for her role in the death of 10-month-old Taliah Brigham who died in the child care facility in 2016. Karen Tharpe was found guilty by a jury of Reckless Supervision by a Child Care Provider (Level 6 Felony) on Tuesday after a two-day trial. A sentencing hearing has been set for September 29 at 2:00 p.m.

Emergency responders found the infant unresponsive after a 911 call was made from the Miracles and Blessings Daycare Ministry on April 7, 2016. Tharpe is believed to have been left as the only employee in the facility responsible for 36 children at the time the child was discovered unresponsive.

The fatal injuries were caused by infant being left unattended in a car seat with the safety belts not properly connected. In a statement to investigators, Tharpe indicated that she had placed the infant in a car seat in the infant care room and fastened her in with the chest buckle but not the lower buckle. Tharpe stated that she left the infant unattended in the room on two separate occasions. When Tharpe returned to the room she noticed that the infant had slid down in the seat, and the chest buckle was now at her neck. The infant's cause of death was determined to be mechanical asphyxiation.

The owner of Miracles and Blessings Daycare Ministry, Jacqueline Murray, has also been charged with the allegation of knowingly leaving Tharpe responsible for the care of 36 children with children located in three separate rooms in the facility. Murray has a court trial set for September 28 at 9:00 a.m.

A charge of a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.