



Ceres Department of Public Safety

Art de Werk, Chief/Acting City Manager/Director of Public Safety



Chief Art de Werk

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NEWS RELEASE

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July Death of Toddler Suspected to be Linked to 2009 Abuse

Ceres, California - On July 9, 2012, Ceres firefighters and police officers' responded to St. Jude's Church for a three year boy who was not breathing and non-responsive. Emergency personnel immediately began CPR in an attempt to resuscitate the toddler, however, he was pronounced dead after being transported to a local hospital. The first responders were informed by the child's mother that her son suffered from a prolonged illness and had recently been discharged from the hospital.

Ceres Detective Derek Perry reviewed the case and the 12-year police veteran's instincts told him something was amiss. He was not comfortable closing the case as a natural death, so he began an investigation. What he discovered was a sad chain of events that led up to the child's tragic death.

In February of 2009, the baby's father, 31 year old Everardo Gomez, Sr. out of Santa Ana, intentionally stomped on the infant's head in a jealous rage. In the Orange County court trial, prosecutors alleged the father was jealous that his wife was paying more attention to the baby and than to him. Everardo Gomez was convicted on a felony charge of abuse and is currently serving an eight year sentence.

Following the abuse, the child suffered from a series of medical issues, including Cerebral Palsy, seizures, Hydrocephalus, and he had to be fed through a tube in his stomach. The baby could not walk and the only word he could say was "mama." The baby boy had been seen by numerous specialists who treated his illnesses since 2009.

Detective Derek Perry and the Santa Ana Police Department are awaiting the results of the autopsy from the Stanislaus County Coroners Office, as they are reviewing all of the child's medical records to determine if the child's death in July was related to the injuries sustained from the 2009 abuse. If it is determined the abuse did have a direct influence on the baby's tragic death, investigators will move forward with a murder case against Everardo Gomez, Sr. The county that would proceed with this process has not yet been determined.

The Ceres Police Department is asking anyone with any information on this case or the events leading up to the child's death is encouraged to contact Detective [Derek Perry](#) at (209) 538-5730 or tips can be anonymously report to the Stanislaus Area Crime Stoppers at:

Stanislaus Area Crime Stoppers.

Phone number: 1-866-60-CRIME

Text Tips: "274637" TIP704 in the wording

Website: www.modestopolice.com/crimestoppers