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**WHITMAN MOTHER PLEADS GUILTY TO MANSLAUGHTER AND RECKLESS
ENDANGERMENT OF TODDLER**

PLYMOUTH – The mother of a two year-old Whitman toddler found unresponsive and who later died as a result of her injuries, has pleaded guilty to charges in connection with the child’s death, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Today, Shaniqua Leonard, 29, of Whitman, pleaded guilty in Plymouth District Court to one count each of Manslaughter and Reckless Endangerment of a Child. The Commonwealth recommended that Leonard serve 8-10 years in State Prison to be followed by five years of probation. Judge Maynard Kirpilani sentenced Leonard to serve not more than four years and not less than three years in State Prison with five years of probation.

On December 28, 2019, Whitman Police received a 911 call for an unresponsive 2 year-old, later identified Lyric Farrell, at 863 Washington Street #3 in Whitman. Whitman Police and Fire responded and transported the girl to Brockton Hospital. The child was later medflighted to Children’s Hospital in critical condition, and on December 30, 2019 at approximately [2:07 p.m.](#), she was taken off of life support.

Whitman Police contacted Massachusetts State Police and an investigation commenced. As a result, detectives determined that Farrell was in serious distress and in urgent need of immediate medical attention and that Leonard failed to take action and get the child proper treatment in a timely manner.

The State Office of the Chief Medical Examiner performed an autopsy and determined Farrell died from complications of blunt force trauma to the head.

“Lyric Farrell was a perfectly healthy 2 ½ year-old who loved bubbles, her daycare, and the colors blue and purple,” DA Cruz said. “She was loved, she was special, and didn’t deserve what happened to her.”

Judge Kirpilani adopted the probation conditions that the Commonwealth requested which include that Leonard stay away and have no contact with anyone under the age of 16 and the witnesses in the case, that she abide by all restraining orders, have mental health evaluations and treatment, if necessary. Leonard was also ordered to wear a GPS monitoring bracelet, and to undergo parenting and anger management classes as part of her probation.

Assistant District Attorneys Jeremy Beth Kusmin and Elizabeth Mello Marvel prosecuted the case, which was investigated by Massachusetts State Police and Whitman Police.