

Anthony Avalos

May 4, 2008 - June 21, 2018

Personal Details:

- Parents: Heather Barron & Victor Avalos
- Heather's Children: Destiny, Rafael, Angel, Anthony, Noah Gella, & David.
- Heather's two older siblings are Crystal & David
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- Heather was a victim herself, she and her sister had been molested by their stepfather, Anthony's grandfather.
- Heather was 18 when he was born, and his father left for Mexico soon after.
- Remained in contact through video calls.
- Mother's earnings were from Subway & Welfare.

Timeline of events

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-09-03/anthony-avalos-timeline>

May 4, 2008

Heather Barron, then 18, gives birth to Anthony.

Feb. 28, 2013

Child abuse hotline call arrives from the unknown caller — substantiated.

April 29, 2014

Child abuse hotline call, from Heather's sister's therapist — substantiated

Oct. 14, 2014

Child abuse hotline call, from Wendy Wright, a counselor for the Children's Center of the Antelope Valley — not substantiated.

Nov. 5, 2014

Child abuse hotline call, from Chrystal Gee, a counselor for the Children's Center of the Antelope Valley — ruled to be duplicative of fourth call.

April 27, 2015

Child abuse hotline call, from Sheriff's Deputy Elijah Goffigan — substantiated.

June 12, 2015

Child abuse hotline call, from DCFS caseworker Anna Sciortino — not substantiated.

Sept. 18-19, 2015

Child abuse hotline calls, from Vice Principal Gia Greaux, Sheriff's Deputy Michael Gelardo and maternal uncle David Barron — not substantiated.

April 28, 2016

Child abuse hotline call, from Mildred Blue, a child care worker at a domestic violence center — not substantiated.

Sept. 28, 2016

Child abuse hotline call, from unknown caller — not substantiated.

Nov. 2, 2016

Child abuse hotline call, from unknown caller — not substantiated.

June 18, 2018

Anthony tells his mother he has romantic feelings for boys, she later tells DCFS caseworkers.

June 19, 2018

Leiva allegedly drops Anthony on the ground repeatedly, because he would not eat a peanut butter sandwich, his sibling later told authorities.

June 21, 2018

Anthony dies

Community & Social Media

Facebook Pages:

Justice for Anthony - Public Group -3.9 K Members

- Last. Posting April 27th, 2023, Birthday Party for Anthony.

"Anthony has touched so many people's lives and his name shall live on forever, we won't ever forget"-Isabella Ramirez

[Justice For Anthony | Facebook](#)

The Anthony Avalos Memorial Tree - 1K likes, 1.2 k followers -Page: Monument; 43748

Challenger Way, Lancaster, CA

-Last Posting April 27th, 2023

[The Anthony Avalos Memorial Tree | Lancaster CA](#)

Early Childhood and Abuse

- Anthony was 4 When his mother brought him to a health Clinic; when he claimed Someone close to the family Sexually Molested him.
- Removed from home after sex abuse from grandfather, whom his mother would leave with at times.
- DCFS Concluded the abuse had occurred, but didn't set up any further Supervision or Counseling.
- Heather assured DCFS that she would find Anthony help & keep him away from the abuser.
- After Anthony's 6th Bday, his aunt Crystal Diuguid told therapist Heather was beating & locking Anthony in a room with no food or Restroom access

- Therapist Reported it to the hotline, & was verified by him at School. Caseworker that interviewed.
- Heather had not gotten Counseling for Anthony, & he was acting sexually inappropriate with another Child, according to DCFS
- Sibling Confirm beatings.
- Caseworkers referred fam to departments Voluntary Family Maintenance Program - Where Children Can Stay in home to resolve issues underlying abuse
- Designed for low risk Cases- no judicial oversight or attorneys.
- Internal reviews showed the department's risk scoring tool evaluated them as being at "high" risk of abuse.
- Around this time, Caseworkers refused to remove Anthony after a suicide note & bb gun wounds on his face.
- According to relatives. Heather had crying spells, Complained of feeling empty and lost, and seemed incapable of Connecting with her children. Bouts of depression bursts of violent angeressen on a hair trigger.
- When Confronted by siblings, She told them that what She did to Punish her kids was her business.
- Mansfield & Colleague Mark Millman brought in Counselors from Children's Center of Antelope Valley.
- Heather then 24, With four kids and one on the way.
- Assessor believed that "her capacity to provide suitable care for her children is severely limited by her poor parenting skills, poor judgment, & denial & lack of awareness of her mental issues" Counselor Luis Ramirez said; June 2014
- Wendy Wright, another Counselor, Called Child abuse hotline in October, Reporting Barron grabbed a Sibling and violently dragged them across the room; talked about children derogatorily, and displayed nothing but anger towards those Children"

Refer to Wendy Wright call to DCF Hotline Clip*

- Told the hotline operator, Millman wasn't responding to Calls or taking action.
- Shane bulkley, DCFS, assigned to investigate Wright's report, wrote that Barron cursed, yelled & claimed hitting them with a belt.
- Bulkley quoted millman as saying "Given the children and their age, and behavior, she is doing all she can "
- Nov 2014, therapist Crystal Gee, Called hotline to report one child saying "Mommy whoops our asses"; Mill man followed up briefly.
- Children's risk of being abused was high, & recommended supervision.
- Bulkly and Supervisor overruled recommendation & closed the investigation, stating they did not have enough evidence to substantiate allegations.
- At the close of '14 Millman and his Supervisor, Mansfield, took the Children's Center of the case and enlisted the Hathaway - Sycamores Child & family Services.
- It's unclear why the switch was made; Gee later testified. that she considered her removal & it's timing, odd.

- Barbara Dixon was assigned to the case & the focus was on Anthony more than Heather.
- She Counseled him to listen to his mother more attentively & finish his homework.
- Barbara Dixon was an unlicensed intern.
- Dixons notes from Feb. 2015 - Jan. 2016 (Anthony ages 6 & 7) said he was Prone to "whining", "crying" & "tantrums", which made parenting him difficult.
- Notes were cut & pasted between sessions, and did not mention reports from the hotline.

Δ Levia comes into the picture 2015-2017

- David Barron Meets Kareem Leiva at a Santa Clarita at a shipping facility as a coworker.
- David introduces Heather to Leiva
- Within months, the father of one of heathers Children, told police who said Levia violently grabbed his ear, leaving it bruised & Cut. about his son being abused. A Sheriff deputy interview the boy (Age2) and wrote he saw wounds
- Deputy Chris Wyatt got the report, didn't Contact Levia & ended the investigation
- Levia was suspected to be in the home regularly, but DCFS did not locate or interview him.
- They also didn't contact his other children or their mothers.
- Court records would have shown 2 restraining orders with women who were beaten with Children Present
- DCF's opened a case in dependency Court for Sibling, but not other children at home.
- DCFS, Anna Sciortino Saw "Visible marks & bruises" on face & left arm.
- Sciortino told the hotline She doubted claims but wanted it recorded to "Cover our butts"..
- Barron and the boy claimed the injuries were from a fall in the Shower
- Story was deemed Plausible & marked allegation "unfounded".
- DCFS required the allegation be sent for Criminal investigation.
- Assignment went to Sheriff Deputy Billy Cox, who testified they never contacted Barron or Leiva; said it was routine "we basically rubber stamp it, so to speak & Sent it through".
- Anthony is enrolled at Lincoln Elementary school in Lancaster
- Vice Principal Gia Greaux becomes increasingly dismayed & called the Child abuse hotline School on Sept 18th

Refer to Voice Clip of Greaux

- Anthony claimed Heather beat him, locked him in a room with no food, water, or restroom. He also described "the Captain's Chair which was an hours long squat with outstretched arms.
- Children made to kneel on Rice & Leiva Pushed on their knees making them bleed.
- David Barron hears the same stories from Kids; He was also told how Leiva Whipped their faces with a belt & dangled Anthony's Younger brother upside down from a staircase.
- When heather came to pick Up Children from visit, David & his wife Physically Blocked them from taking the kids & Called 911
- Sheriff deputy Michael Gellardo responded & cared Child abuse hotline to report

Refer to Sheriff Deputy Voice Clip

- Hotline to report "they seemed Pretty Shaken UP When I talked to them about it". Recommended Children don't go home with Heather.
- The children were locked in a room so long they urinated & defecate on themselves; Leiva Slammed them into walls, threw dirty diapers at them, & dragged one Child by the ear, Causing Scabs & bruising.
- The Children hoarded food; & said the abuse has been going on for "a thousand weeks"

Refer to David Barron Voice Clip

- David told hotline heather" is Cutting herself & Saying she hates life... I have pictures of her slitting her wrists & Saying "She wants to die"; as well as the fact Leiva is a MS-13 Gang member.
 - DCFS Caseworker Ikea Vernon quoted Anthony as saying "Heather is my old mom. This is my new house. I'm Part of the Barron family how" I'm never going to see Heather again. She locks is up in our room and makes us starving".
 - Vernon called the other Counselors who were supportive of reported Heathers parenting stating "each service provider reported that they have never heard anything from the children about abuse and neglect"
 - David & Maria Barron were turned away at DCFS; Vernon told them they could only get info from Anthony's Mother.
 - After this, Heather brought Kids home.
 - Anthony Aunt, Maria Baron said the boy lives. happily with her & her husband for 7 years until, DCFS ordered him to be returned.
- <https://www.turnto23.com/news/local-news/da-to-see-death-penalty-for-mother-boyfriend-charged-in-murder-of-10-year-old-anthony-avalos>

- Vernon Met with Anthony and he said his mother was "Starting to be nice" "does a new thing Where She doesn't lock the bedroom door anymore" The kids recanted allegations a month later.
- Wyatt, Sheriff detective, Closed investigation after one failed attempt to reach Leiva
- December 2015, Vernon Marked allegations from Greaux, Gellardo & David as Inconclusive"; family risk of. abuse & neglect still reading "High"
- "At the Conclusion of my investigation the Situation was Stabilized because the Children recanted their Stories" Vernon said.
- Mildred Blue, a teacher Providing services to Barron at a Domestic Violence Center, Called Hotline in April 2016.
- Claimed Children arrived with bruises because Leiva forced them to fight each other.
- They were also hungry, & one ate from the trash.
- Children denied allegations when questioned by DCFS.
- Barvon & Leiva weren't called.
- Sheriff investigator Cox also did not Call & follow up.
- One more Call was made near the end of 2016 & Caseworkers marked it unfounded.
- Heather Barron Cuts ties with her brother, Sister, Sister-in-law and the educators who Reported abuse.
- Anthony changed schools and attended El Dorado Elementary.
- Gets to know 4th grade teacher, Harmony Bell; whom he gave a heartfelt letter to on his last day of school.
- "Anthony absolutely amazes me," she wrote in his report card. "He is so kind and considerate to others, arrives on time, keeps a smile on my face all day long. I can't imagine my class without him." Said Bell
- "Dear Mrs. Bell, Thank you for teaching me everything you could it was such a blessing to meet you. I just hope that when I'm going to 6th that you can come to New Vista so I can see you still. I hope that you can come to my high school, middle school and college. That way we will see each other for school years without a problem because how close we are [and] how we are best buddies/friends.....I just want to stay with you forever but i can't I just hope you have a good rest of your life because you already know that I'm going to have a good life. Love Anthony Avalos your friend."
- June 18th, Anthony Confides in Heather Saying he likes boys; A Conversation Leiva Overheard.
- Anthony's Aunt Maria Barron Said "It took great courage for Anthony to announce he was gay in the home. For the Boy to Come Out only reinforces how brave Anthony was."

<https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-boy-death-gay-20180626-story.html>

- Leiva Drops Anthony repeatedly on his head, the next night.
- 911 Call from Heather at 12:15 PM June 20th, 2018
- Paramedics were told he "suffered injuries from a fall".
- Anthony was taken to hospital unresponsive in Cardiac arrest with a traumatic brain injury.
- Maria & David Barron learn of his Condition; went to the hospital & found Heather in the Hall.
- Heather initially Said no to Maria Seeing Anthony, until she begged on her hands & knees.
- In interviewing Heather at the hospital, FBI agents noted She volunteered the fact that a few days earlier, the boy came out as gay (FBI Agents Reddy & Wilkenson).
- Maria found Anthony unconscious & breathing on a ventilator Wearing a neck brace & Sensors on his Skull to record diminishing Brain activity.
- Anthony's body was covered with Cuts, bruises & Cigarette burns. He was so Malnourished & dehydrated, his veins Collapsed.
- Paramedics had to drill into his Tibia and administer the IV
- He was 4 feet, 6 inches tall & Weighed 77 Pounds He died hours later on June 21st from dehydration & blunt force trauma
- The remaining Children were removed from the home.

Article People - Calif Boy, 10 who was tortured

- "It was going to happen no matter what. Maybe it was just to give themselves a reason, I don't know "David Said " But I don't think they needed a reason. I think whatever happened to Anthony was going to happen anyway"

Trial and Court Testimonies

- In Court 7-year-old brother said he was forced to wrestle his brother until he hurt him, sometimes with Barron & Leiva watching
- Destiny, 8, Said Leiva would also make the kids beat each other
- "So the boys would be in trouble so Kareem would have me and [my other brother] beat up Anthony or me and Anthony beat up [my other brother]. Kareem would have us pinch him or sock him."
- She also said they were made to stand in a Corner for hours after returning home from School.
- "Sometimes we would like go in the hallway, the little wall between my room and my mom's room, we would have to go there on our knees and carry books and with two weights on top tied all together and we would have to hold it for like 10 minutes," the girl said.

- Evidence also shows they were hit with Power Cords & Vacuum tubes as well as fists

<https://people.com/crime/anthony-avalos-allegedly-forced-wrestle-brother-mom-watched/>

- Destiny Stated food was withheld, & after the boys were Caught Sneaking food, an alarm was placed on their door.
- Destiny is quoted as saying “Because of these two monsters, he is not here anymore. Anthony did not deserve any of the things that happened to him,” .
- “I am a 13-year-old girl. I should not have to be here doing all this. I should be able to live a normal life. To me, you are both monsters and Heather, you’re not my mother,” Destiny added. “If I knew that the abuse would have ended with me losing my brother, I would have said something. But I didn’t, because I was scared and terrified. And I’m not anymore ... I have learned to accept it. You guys can’t hurt me anymore. I’m finally free from all the torture and abuse. And if I were to have known that this would end with me losing a brother, I would do it all over again with just one difference – that it would be me. Thank you, your Honor.”

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/mother-sentenced-murder-torture-10-year-old-son-rcna81387>

- The boys were also forbidden from leaving the room to use the bathroom, which led to further punishment if they soiled themselves.
- “Kareem would hold their legs, make them lay down, and put their face in the pee,” the sister said.
- Anthony’s father, who lives in Mexico, told the media: “We know that Anthony Avalos is in heaven with a little smile on his face today.”
- Victor Avalos told CBS LA that his mother noticed Scratches while Video Chatting; Later Said Heather Prevents Son from talking on video chats.

<https://heavy.com/news/2018/06/heather-barron-kareem-leiva/amp/>

- Victor Avalos told the Court that although he lives in Mexico, he made it clear he was willing to take over. He Misses his son & wished she made the right choice.

<https://people.com/crime/anthony-avalos-allegedly-forced-wrestle-brother-mom-watched/>

- The judge called Anthony Avalos a “helpless child” dependent on his mother for his basic needs. “Instead Anthony was tortured and killed,” Ohta said.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/04/26/mom-boyfriend-get-life-sentences-in-10-year-old-boys-death/amp/>

- “The acts of knowingly preventing Anthony from access to liquids involve each defendant actively keeping Anthony’s bedroom door locked for the substantial duration of the period required to cause the severe dehydration, or when Anthony was not locked in his room. For each, to vigilantly watch him or prevent him from access to liquids,” Ohta said.
- “Evidence adduced at trial shows both defendant Leiva and Barron at separate times independently went into Anthony’s room. This meant each had to lock his door when each exited. This was clearly a purposeful and coordinated action by both the parents meeting the requirement of willfully.” He continued

<https://lawandcrime.com/crime/i-hope-she-gets-beat-up-in-jail-mom-and-boyfriend-wont-ever-get-out-of-prison-after-unimaginable-torture-murder-of-10-year-old-anthony-avalos/amp/>

<https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/the-short-unhappy-life-of-anthony-avalos/>

Verdict

- Judge Sam Ohta - First degree torture Murder
- Crime 1-Murder on or around June 20th, 2018
- Crime 2- Torture 17th-20th, 2018
- Crime 3- Child Abuse - April 2014 - June 20th 2018
- Judge asked for Complete Silence during verdict reading
- Barron Seems emotionless; bored
- Kareem Guilty of first degree Murder
- Heather Maxine Barron Guilty of First degree murder
- Both were sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.
- The case was settled in a \$32 million agreement, according to the family's attorney, Brian Claypool.

[Anthony Avalos: Verdict announcement](#)