

The Cuyahoga County Child Fatality Report
Twenty-Second Edition

Protecting Our Future

Child Fatalities 2018



The Cuyahoga County
Child Fatality Review Board
Armond Budish, Cuyahoga County Executive

Invest in Children
Cuyahoga County

The Cuyahoga County
Office of Early Childhood
Invest in Children

Recommendations

The purpose of the Cuyahoga County Child Fatality Review Board is to decrease the number of preventable child deaths. The Board reviews the deaths of all children less than 18 years old who live in Cuyahoga County. This confidential review is conducted by an interdisciplinary team who identifies the contributing causes, risk factors, and trends. The Board makes data-driven recommendations to protect the health and safety of all children in the community.

Infant Mortality and Disparities

1. Actively support the mission and key priorities of First Year Cleveland to reduce infant deaths and racial disparities.
2. Promote the strategies of the Ohio Institute for Equity in Birth Outcomes to eliminate racial inequities and improve birth outcomes in Cuyahoga County.

Prematurity

1. Support research and public awareness regarding the causes, risk factors, and lifelong effects of prematurity. Continue to educate women and expectant parents about the warning signs of preterm labor, the importance of interconception care, and the significance of a “Life Course Perspective” to decrease the risks of preterm births.
2. Support promising and evidence-based practices that decrease preterm births such as CenteringPregnancy®, progesterone use for high-risk women and appropriate birth spacing.
3. Encourage child and family serving agencies to incorporate interconception care and a reproductive life plan as core components of their programs.
4. Promote a seamless system for perinatal services that also addresses the complex needs of many pregnant women by linking them to services for chronic health problems, drug treatment, and mental health counseling.

Sleep Related Deaths

1. Partner with family serving agencies to provide safe sleep education to other infant caregivers, such as grandparents, relatives, and friends, with a focus on providing a safe sleep environment in any location.
2. Continue to educate childbirth instructors and staff at maternity and pediatric hospitals in Cuyahoga County about the importance of role modeling safe sleep in the hospital, educating all caregivers, having conversations with families about barriers to safe sleep, and providing tips to help parents continue safe sleep after discharge.
3. Increase home visitor programs and family serving agencies awareness of the components of a safe infant sleep environment by providing staff training on risk factors, local sleep related fatality data, and the most recent American Academy of Pediatrics safe sleep recommendations.
4. Promote First Year Cleveland Safe Sleep Heroes and the Ohio safe sleep campaign and with their educational resources to hospitals and agencies in Cuyahoga County.

Medically Related Deaths

1. Reinforce the importance of a medical home and care coordination for children with chronic illnesses and assess for barriers to compliance with the treatment plan.
2. Reinforce among providers that multiple missed appointments for potentially life-threatening conditions (i.e. asthma, diabetes, acute mental health issues, etc.) are frequently noted in child fatality case reviews. Providers observing such patterns are in a unique position to assess the situation for barriers to compliance and determine if reporting a suspicion of medical neglect is warranted.

Unintentional Injuries

1. Support the Safe Kids / Safe Communities Coalition in their comprehensive efforts to prevent injuries and educate the community on safety issues that include child passenger seats/restraints; teen drivers; pedestrian, bus, and bicycle safety; and fire, water, and sports safety.
2. Partner with child/family agencies to disseminate the message stressing the importance of adequate and appropriate adult supervision of children in homes, around water, and in neighborhoods.
3. Reinforce the importance of gun safety in the home—unloaded, locked, and out of the reach of children.
4. Monitor the opioid epidemic in Cuyahoga County to identify how and where it is affecting the health, welfare, and safety of children.

Homicide

1. Promote the use of 24-hour parenting hotlines as a safe and confidential resource for parents in crisis.
2. Support educational programs that assist parents and guardians in understanding age appropriate behaviors, using alternative methods of discipline, and choosing suitable caregivers.
3. Support domestic and teen dating violence education and programs that: help families identify warning signs; outline actions to take, especially for escalating behaviors; provide access to counseling and emergency shelter; and initiate early intervention to limit the effects on children in the home.
4. Advocate for community-based safe haven centers for teens, to provide supervised activities and programs after school and on weekends.

Suicide

1. Support school programs for depression awareness, bullying, and suicide prevention that also include resources for assistance.

Interagency

1. Cuyahoga County institutions providing tertiary and emergency medical care and social support to children should begin to investigate opportunities for cross system collaboration and information sharing that will better identify and secure enhanced intervention for those children who have experienced, or are at high risk for, serious or life-threatening injury or medical neglect.



***For more information on the Child Fatality Review Program,
contact either of the following individuals or go to:
<http://protectingourfuture.cuyahogacounty.us>***

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