

CHILD FATALITY

REVIEW TEAM

CHILD FATALITY REVIEW TEAM

Child deaths attributable to illness, birth defect, delivery difficulty, neoplastic disease, and other natural causes account for approximately two out of three child fatalities locally. Although these deaths can be devastating, the larger community is impacted perhaps more by deaths occurring unnaturally. Texas, in 1999, had 44,532 confirmed victims of child abuse or neglect. 176 of these children died as a direct result. The greatest risk of death from abuse or neglect occurs among the youngest kids who, because of their age, have an absolute dependence on their caretakers. During 1998, 73 percent of all child fatalities in Texas occurred among victims under four years of age, with males outnumbering females slightly as victims of fatal maltreatment.

Although there are more than 4,000 child deaths annually in Texas, no single agency tracks all aspects of every death reported. Of particular interest are those deaths that are preventable. In 1995, the Texas Legislature amended Chapter 264 of the Family Code to include language outlining the establishment and continuance of a state child fatality review team committee, local child fatality review teams, and formation of a statewide analytical evaluation of all collected and reported child death information. The ultimate goal of the project is to identify trends and reduce the number of preventable childhood deaths. There are approximately 50 representatives appointed the Tarrant County CFRT from the following agencies:

- Tarrant, Denton, and Parker County District Attorney Offices
- Local Law Enforcement
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (CPS)
- Cook Children's Medical Center
- Rural-Metro EMS
- North Texas SIDS Alliance
- Alliance for Children - Tarrant County
- Tarrant County College (Child Abuse Training Project)
- Fort Worth Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Tarrant County, Fort Worth, and Denton Public Health Departments
- University of North Texas Health Science Center - Public Health program
- Medical Specialists (e.g., pediatric neurosurgeon, pathologist, and epidemiologist)
- Emergency Physicians Advisory Board
- Crimes Against Children Task Forces
- Shaken Baby Alliance

Of the 122 child deaths reviewed by the CFRT in 2002, 60 (49%) were due to natural causes while the remaining 62 (51%) were attributable to unnatural means. Unnatural deaths reviewed are comprised of 19 homicides (15%), 32 accidents (26%), 2 suicides (1%), and 9 undetermined cases (7%).

CHILD DEATH CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

Manner of Death Certification	1999	2000	2001	2002
Natural	53	54	56	60
Accidental	47	52	47	32
Homicide	19	21	19	19
Suicide	7	8	10	2
Undetermined	4	8	7	9
Total	130	143	139	122

CAUSE AND MANNER OF DEATH

NATURAL DEATH

Natural Death	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Cardiovascular System	7	1	1	9
Central Nervous System	3	0	0	3
Developmental	0	0	0	0
Endocrine System	1	0	0	3
Gastrointestinal System	1	0	0	1
Hepatic System	3	0	0	3
Infectious Disease	1	0	0	1
Intrauterine Fetal Demise	0	0	0	0
Pulmonary System	3	0	0	3
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	18	5	1	24
Sudden Death (Unknown Etiology)	14	1	0	15
Total	51	7	2	60

ACCIDENTAL DEATH

Accidental Death	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Asphyxiation	1	1	0	2
Aspiration	0	0	1	1
Positional	1	0	0	1
Drowning	0	0	0	0
Bath Tub	2	0	0	2
Lake	0	1	0	1
Pool	4	0	0	4
Complications of Near-Drowning	0	0	0	0
Drug Overdose	0	1	0	1
Firearm	0	0	0	0
Fire/Carbon Monoxide Inhalation	1	0	0	1
Vehicular	9	1	3	10
Environmental	1	0	0	1
Fall	0	0	0	0
Pedestrian	7	0	0	8
Undetermined	0	0	0	0
Total	26	5	1	32

HOMICIDE DEATH

Homicide Death	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Blunt Force Trauma	5	0	0	5
Firearm	2	0	3	5
Fire/Carbon Monoxide Inhalation/Env	1	0	0	1
Vehicular	1	0	0	1
Passenger	5	0	0	5
Pedestrian	1	0	0	1
Total	15	1	3	19

SUICIDE DEATH

Suicide Death	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Drug Overdose	0	0	0	0
Firearm	1	0	0	1
Hanging	0	1	0	1
Vehicular	0	0	0	0
Total	1	1	0	2

UNDETERMINED DEATH

Undetermined Death	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Vehicular -Passenger	1	0	1	2
Vehicular- Pedestrian	1	0	0	1
Intrauterine Fetal Demise	0	0	0	0
Sudden Death (Unknown Etiology)	4	2	0	6
Total	6	2	1	9

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

NATURAL DEATH

Natural Deaths	1999	2000	2001	2002
Cardiovascular System	6	5	5	9
Central Nervous System	0	3	3	3
Developmental	0	1	3	0
Endocrine System	1	1	1	1
Gastrointestinal System	1	0	0	1
Genitourinary System	0	0	1	0
Hepatic System	1	0	2	3
Infectious Disease	0	2	4	1
Intrauterine Fetal Demise	1	4	3	0
Pulmonary System	10	10	0	3
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	26	25	22	24
Sudden Neonatal Death	0	1	0	0
Sudden Death (Unknown Etiology)	8	2	12	15
Total	53	54	56	60

ACCIDENTAL DEATH

Accidental Deaths	1999	2000	2000	2002
Asphyxiation	4	3	4	4
Blunt Force Trauma	0	0	1	0
Drowning	8	13	9	7
Environmental	0	1	0	1
Drug Overdose	3	3	3	0
Fall	0	2	2	0
Firearm	5	0	0	0
Fire/Carbon Monoxide Inhalation	6	3	3	1
Vehicular	21	27	21	10
Hanging	0	0	0	1
Pedestrian	0	0	0	8
Total	47	52	47	32

HOMICIDE DEATH

Homicide Deaths	1999	2000	2001	2002
Asphyxiation	4	1	0	0
Blunt Force Trauma	0	5	5	5
Drowning	8	0	0	0
Firearm	0	4	6	5
Fire/Carbon Monoxide Inhalation	3	0	2	0
Sharp Force Trauma	0	1	0	1
Vehicular	5	8	6	7
Poisoning	6	1	0	0
Shaken Baby Syndrome	21	1	0	0
Environmental	0	0	0	1
Total	47	21	19	19

SUICIDE DEATH

Suicide Deaths	1999	2000	2001	2002
Fall From Height	0	1	0	0
Drug Overdose	1	0	0	0
Firearm	4	3	3	1
Hanging	2	4	5	1
Vehicular	0	0	2	0
Total	7	8	10	2

VEHICULAR DEATH

Vehicular Deaths	1999	2000	2001	2002
Driver	1	9	10	4
Passenger	17	19	12	14
Pedestrian	7	7	7	11
Pedalist	1	0	0	0
Total	26	35	29	29

DEATHS BY AGE

Age	1999	2000	2001	2002
0 (Under 24 Hours)	1	8	0	0
Less than 30 days	8	7	14	5
1 month - 4 months	29	24	31	25
5 months - 8 months	9	11	10	14
9 months - 12 months	1	5	4	6
1 year - 5 years	23	32	22	28
6 years - 10 years	12	4	7	16
11 years - 15 years	20	23	28	12
16 years - 17 years	27	29	23	16
Total	130	143	139	122

SUMMARY STATISTICS

SUMMARY BY RACE

Race	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
White	40	15	4	58
Black	31	2	0	25
Hispanic	21	2	0	33
Asian	6	1	0	6
Indian	0	0	0	0
Total	98	20	4	122

SUMMARY BY GENDER

Gender	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Male	68	12	2	68
Female	30	9	1	54
Total	98	21	3	122

SUMMARY BY RACE AND GENDER

Race and Gender	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
White Male	29	7	1	37
White Female	16	3	2	21
Black Male	11	0	0	11
Black Female	12	2	0	14
Hispanic Male	12	2	2	16
Hispanic Female	12	1	3	17
Asian Male	4	0	0	4
Asian Female	2	0	0	2
Indian Male	0	0	0	0
Indian Female	0	0	0	0
Total	99	15	8	122

SUMMARY BY AGE

Age	Tarrant	Denton	Parker	Total
Under 1 month	5	0	0	5
1 month - 4 months	19	4	2	25
5 months - 8 months	10	4	0	14
9 months - 12 months	6	0	0	6
1 year - 5 years	23	3	2	28
6 years - 10 years	11	2	3	16
11 years - 15 years	9	3	0	12
16 years - 17 years	15-	0	1	16
Total	98	16	8	122