



"The Review" Division of Child Fatality Review

American Academy of Pediatrics Supports Child Fatality Review

The AAP issued a policy statement on August 30, 2010, supporting the work of child fatality review teams and encouraging pediatricians to become involved in the review process. The following is an excerpt from the report:

“Injury remains the leading cause of pediatric mortality and requires public health approaches to reduce preventable deaths. Child fatality review teams, first established to review suspicious child deaths involving abuse or neglect, have expanded toward a public health model of prevention of child fatality through systematic review of child deaths from birth through adolescence. Approximately half of all states report reviewing child deaths from all causes, and the process of fatality review has identified effective local and state prevention strategies for reducing child deaths. This expanded approach can be a powerful tool in understanding the epidemiology and preventability of child death locally, regionally, and nationally; improving accuracy of vital statistics data; and identifying public health and legislative strategies for reducing preventable child fatalities. **The American Academy of Pediatrics supports the development of federal and state legislation to enhance the child fatality review process and recommends that pediatricians become involved in local and state child death reviews.**” *(emphasis added)*

“Reducing preventable child mortality requires a systematic and integrated evaluation of fatality causes, which begins with accurate vital statistics data. Vital statistics data do not, however, accurately capture all causes of child fatality (eg, deaths attributable to child maltreatment). National and state mortality statistics, which rely on the *International Classification of Diseases (ICD)* coding system to define cause of death on death certificates, underestimate child fatalities attributable to homicide and unintentional death. Detailed review of child deaths in [several states] has revealed that approximately half of child abuse fatalities are unrecognized in vital statistics data... **Ultimately, the purpose of child fatality review is to identify effective prevention and intervention processes to decrease preventable child deaths through systematic evaluation of individual child deaths and the personal, familial, and community conditions, policies, and behaviors that contribute to preventable deaths.**” *(emphasis added)*

We are very excited to have the support of AAP, and hope that you will use this to encourage your local pediatricians to become involved in the review process. Please visit www.pediatrics.org to view the full report.

OCA Offices Relocating in November 2010

The OCA/CFR staff will be relocating to new office space in Atlanta. Currently, OCA occupies two separate offices—one in Atlanta and one in Macon. This move will merge the staff from both offices to better manage resources and improve efficiencies.

Our new office space will be located on the 8th floor of 270 Washington Street in downtown Atlanta. The main office phone number (404-656-4200) and fax number (404-656-5200) will not change. Staff phone numbers will change, but you will be notified of the new numbers as soon as they become available. Email for all staff will remain the same.

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- (SUID Case Registry Coordinator) Carri Cottengim - ccottengim@oca.ga.gov

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SUID Case Registry Update

It has been one year since CFR staff began working to promote the Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Case Registry (SUID-CR). Our participation in this program requires that we strengthen and standardize our investigations, reviews, and reporting for all unexpected infant deaths statewide. We have had big successes and several challenges in our first year. Here is a brief update of our activities in 2010:

Successes:

- 1) One of the objectives of the SUID-CR project is to develop an efficient and timely method for case identification for all SUID deaths in the state. CFR staff and SUID Case Registry Coordinator Carri Cottengim have worked with GBI and the Coroners Association to promote quick and accurate submissions of the SUIDI reports. Coroners and Medical Examiners are eligible to receive, under the grant, a monetary payment for their timely submission (i.e. within 7 days of death) of completed SUIDI reports to their CFR committee chairs.
- 2) We have reached an agreement with Vital Records for routine access to death certificates and birth certificates for infant decedents. This helps us to identify those deaths needing review, and also to fill in certain gaps of information relating to the infant's birth history, which is requested on the CFR committee case report.
- 3) Limited grant funds were available to support registration at the September 2010 conference on Shaken Baby Syndrome in Atlanta. Twenty CFR committee members from 15 counties attended, to network with experts and learn new research on the investigation, pathology, and prosecution of SBS cases.

Challenges:

- 1) One of the objectives of the SUID-CR project is to have all infant deaths reviewed within 3 months of the death. We have not achieved a 100% success rate with that objective, but we are working to improve it. Feedback from committees tells us that the deaths could be reviewed sooner if there were sufficient information available to the review committee (i.e. autopsy and toxicology reports) within the requested timeframe. CFR staff are working closely with GBI to provide pathology reports to committees to facilitate more timely reviews.
- 2) The SUID-CR is expected to inform our understanding of the quality of infant death scene investigations and autopsies performed. CFR staff have used the grant funds to purchase and distribute 83 scene re-enactment dolls to coroners, law enforcement and committee chairs in 69 counties, to support their investigative work and SUIDI form completion. We have many more counties and agencies yet to receive this valuable tool, and there is still a great deal of work to do around training and conducting scene re-enactments.
- 3) The CDC requests that staff maintain a quality assurance plan to identify and resolve data collection problems, including missing and inaccurate data on the reports. CFR staff generally observe a 30-60 day timeframe for reviewing completed case reports and obtaining the corrected information from the review committees. Staff will work toward achieving a 15-30 day timeframe for 2011 infant deaths.

Congratulations and THANK YOU to all of the county CFR committees for your time, commitment, and dedication to improving the review process in Georgia. We hope to use our grant funds to help each committee get more training and resources, and to make sure our investigations, reviews, and reports are thorough and complete.

New CFR Panel Members

In July 2010, the Child Fatality Review Panel welcomed two new Governor-appointed members to the Panel: Superior Court Judge and Injury Prevention Advocate.

Judge Tain Kell was appointed Superior Court Judge for Cobb County in 2007 by Governor Sonny Perdue. A litigator for 21 years, he has been in both private practice as well as a decade in the Georgia Attorney General's Office.

Beverly Losman, Director of Safe Kids Georgia, has over 20 years of non profit management experience. Currently she is serving in the capacity of Director of Safe Kids Georgia and Manager of Child Health Promotion for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. Her position is to enhance the business acumen of the 23 coalitions throughout Georgia that provide education and advocacy on injury prevention for children age 14 and under.

Update on the Partners of CFR

CFR staff work very closely with many state and local agencies in our efforts to improve surveillance of child deaths and recommend prevention measures. In many instances, our staff serve in advisory roles to guide and inform our partners with fatality data provided by the local review committees. Here is a brief update on the work of some of the partners of CFR, and how the review data from the county reports guides their efforts.

Georgia Violent Death Reporting System - GVDRS, funded by CDC and housed in the Division of Public Health, collects data on the circumstances and the victims of violent deaths (homicide and suicide). CFR is working with the GVDRS staff to share information on youth victims of homicide and suicide, and undetermined infant deaths, to enhance the quality and completeness of data for both our offices.

Infant Safe Sleep Coalition - the Coalition is funding an infant sleep safety awareness pilot project in Liberty County called "floor talkers". This innovative social marketing campaign was done successfully in Louisiana recently, using large floor-mounted signs in baby care aisles of select retail stores, and data evaluation showed a noticeable decrease in sleep-related infant deaths after the campaign. If the project is successful, the Coalition may consider obtaining funds for a statewide effort.

Maternal and Child Health Division - the new Director of MCH, Brian Castrucci, is supporting many child safety programs, including car seat distribution through the Injury Prevention Section, and development of a statewide conference focusing on child death and injury prevention. CFR staff are working with the MCH Division to offer the best training and networking opportunities for county review teams.

Cribs for Kids - announced the passage of Pennsylvania House Bill 47, The SIDS Education and Prevention Act, that requires birthing hospitals in Pennsylvania to educate new mothers about the importance of Infant Safe Sleep, passed at the beginning of SIDS Awareness Month, October 4, 2010. Cribs for Kids® is in the process of developing a new program called 'Safe Sleep Ambassador'. This safe sleep education program will include buttons and certificates to distribute to all of your 'Safe Sleep Ambassadors', i.e., nurses in hospitals, educators, new mothers and anyone else who completes a safe-sleep education program. As always, Cribs for Kids® will make all of the materials to implement the 'Safe Sleep Ambassador' program available to our partners. We will let you know when this program is up and running.



County Prevention Successes



- The Cobb County Child Fatality Review team are working with Traffic Court to require all offenders who receive a car seat violation to go through a car seat checkpoint and have their car seat checked for proper installation. This might be done in exchange for a reduction in a fine, in lieu of a fine or just in addition to a fine. If they are successful they are going to work on getting all teenage drivers who receive any traffic violation required to attend a PRIDE class hosted by the county. CONGRATULATIONS Cobb County for a great partnership!
- The Liberty County Child Fatality Review team are working with an advertising agency, local retail stores and the Louisiana CFR office to initiate an infant safe sleep social marketing campaign called "floor talkers". This campaign will use large floor-mounted "safe sleep" signs in select retail stores to encourage parents and shoppers to consider infant sleep safety this winter. CONGRATULATIONS Liberty County for a great idea!

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

Please submit your stories of success or other ideas by **December 15, 2010** to:
OCA– Division of Child Fatality Review ● 55 Park Place - Suite 410 ● Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Phone: 404-656-4200 or Fax: 404-656-5200 or Email to: ocacfr@oca.ga.gov

Upcoming Events

- **October 28– 29, 2011: The Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Child Protection Center’s 10th Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Conference.** The registration deadline is October 20. The conference will be held at the Evergreen Marriott Resort in Stone Mountain, GA. Please visit the CHOA Child Protection Center website for more information and to download the conference brochure. This event will provide professionals with the knowledge needed to prevent, recognize and report, investigate and treat child abuse and neglect. For registration information, please contact Elizabeth Williams at (404) 785-7694 or Amber McKeen at (404) 785-5754.
- **“Promises to Keep” Training Institute, Three-Part Webinar Series offered by Prevent Child Abuse Georgia.** The course is offered to empower families and communities to help prevent the sexual abuse of children. Dates are October 19, November 16, and December 9. If you have any questions, contact Anna Curtis at Prevent Child Abuse Georgia: (404) 870-6561 or email annac@pcageorgia.org.
- **January 31-February 1, 2011: Safe Kids Georgia Leadership Conference.** The conference will be held at The Hyatt Place in Buckhead, and the Awards Breakfast will be at the Fabulous Fox Theatre! Registration begins November 2010. Please visit www.safekidsgeorgia.org for information.

Important Information for YOU

- CFR staff are currently working on the analysis and production of the 2009 CFR Data Report. This report will be completed and available to the public after January 1, 2011. The data for this report will be from our first full calendar year using the National Center for Child Death Review case report form. We are very excited to produce this year’s report, as it will show new variables that we can all use for fatality risk reduction and prevention education.
- In addition to the 2009 Data Report, CFR staff will also produce a multi-year trend report, based on selected data from calendar years 2002-2008. Because we have produced complete annual reports for each of those years, we do not want to create a duplicate of those data reports. The topics we will address in this trend report will be sleep-related deaths, homicide, child maltreatment, and drowning. This trend report will be available to the public after March 1, 2011.
- If you did not have a chance to submit your county CFR prevention plan during the spring 2010 CFR training classes, please FAX your plan to 404-656-5200 (attn: Arleymah Raheem). Your county prevention plan is a reflection of the child fatality prevention goals and objectives your CFR committee wants to achieve in the next year, and is used to help direct funds and resources from our partners. You can reference your local report data for leading causes of injury and fatality, and note the local resources available to the target families. If you need assistance with the development or implementation of your plan, please contact Arleymah Raheem at araheem@oca.ga.gov.
- The National Center for Child Death (NCCDR) Review Training Task Force, comprised of over 20 state CDR leaders, will be working this fall and winter to complete the web-based training curricula for new teams and new team members. If you would like to participate in writing and/or editing the curricula, let us know. We anticipate the curricula will be complete by April of 2011.
- NCCDR wants to partner with families who have lost children to sudden cardiac death in youth (SCDY). Parent Heart Watch (PHW) was formed to address their concerns and to prevent SCDY. PHW has educated their membership about child death review. They have developed an educational presentation specifically for CDR teams. Their members, representing hundreds of families across the U.S. who have lost a child to SCDY or who have a child survivor of a SCD event, are ready and willing to make educational presentations at your team meetings and engage you in their prevention efforts. We will work with PHW to inform our local reviews and prevention efforts.

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