



# Child Fatality Teams





# What are Child Fatality Teams

- Multi agency
- Multidisciplinary
- Review deaths of children from various causes
- Often with emphasis on abuse and/or neglect



# Why and How Child Fatality Teams are Formed

- Agencies and professionals join together
  - Address the facts and follow-up to the death
  - Sharing information and resources
  - Support local data collection for use in development of mandates and reports
  - Official protocols and policies may be changed
  - Highlight recommendations aimed at prevention
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# Basic Team Structure

- Core Membership
  - ▶ Coroner/Medical Examiner
  - ▶ Law Enforcement
  - ▶ Prosecuting Attorney
  - ▶ Child Protective Services
  - ▶ Health Department





# Review Process

- Chosen by protocol from either coroner or health records
- Often includes deaths of all children under age 18
- Members share their knowledge of the child, family and the circumstances surrounding the child's death
- Will continue the collection of information until all aspects of case management are concluded





# Common Problems

- One agency won't cooperate
  - Records can't be found
  - Team stopped meeting and needs to restart
  - Confidentiality
  - Failure to write a report on team activity
  - Lack of staff resources necessary to coordinate activities when reviewing a large number of cases
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# Common Problems

- Vulnerability of front line staff who are involved with a child who dies (especially when reported in the press)
  - Tribal leaders are bothered by negative statement in reports about deaths
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# Other Activities the Team can take on

- Public education on the potential hazards of 5 gallon buckets to toddlers
  - Infant automobile safety seat campaigns
  - Child-proof drug containers
  - Traffic safety campaigns
  - Enacting ordinances for swimming pools, spas, river safety
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# Other Activities the Team can take on

- Providing smoke detectors for all homes in community
  - Parenting programs for young mothers and fathers
  - Multi-agency joint home visits
  - Community education on shaken baby syndrome, FAS/FAE, child abuse and neglect, etc.
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