



GEORGIA'S STATEWIDE CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PANEL

Annual Report for Calendar Year 1998

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Summary Of All Deaths:

Figure 2. Deaths to Children Under 18 in Georgia

Findings:

- Motor vehicle incidents were the leading, non-medical cause of child deaths.
- The overall increase in total child deaths (from 1,693 in 1997 to 1,706 deaths in 1998) is attributable to an increase in the medical deaths (1,105 to 1,157)
- Deaths due to motor vehicle crashes, SIDS, drowning and suicide all decreased from 1997 to 1998.
- An increase in homicide was seen only among children under the age of 5 (see Figure 4 and 5).

Figure 3. Race and Gender of All Child Deaths

Findings:

- Though African-American children make up only 34.6% of the child population, their deaths were almost 50% of all child deaths

Figure 4. All Causes of Death, Age < 1

Findings:

- 96% of infant deaths resulted from natural causes (medical and SIDS)
- Of defined causes, homicide was the largest single injury-related category. Homicides among infants increased from 12 deaths in 1997 to 15 in 1998 (25%)
- Compared to 1997, SIDS deaths decreased from 123 to 109 (11%)

Figure 5. All Causes of Death, Age 1-4

Findings:

- Over half of deaths (52%) resulted from

medical conditions

- 42% of deaths resulted from unintentional injuries
- Motor vehicle incidents accounted for nearly half (48%) of unintentional deaths

Figure 6. All Causes of Death, Age 5-14

Findings:

- Over half of the deaths in this age group were caused by injury (intentional and unintentional)
- 56% of all drowning deaths occurred among 5-14 year olds

Figure 7. All Causes of Death, Ages 15-17

Findings:

- Motor vehicle incidents represented 42% of deaths
- 56% of all deaths from intentional incidents (homicide and suicide) occurred in this age group
- 24% of deaths in this age group resulted from intentional causes

Race, Ethnicity And Disproportionate Deaths:

Figure 8. Deaths to Children < 1 and Percent of Population in Georgia By Race and Gender

Findings:

- A disproportionate number of deaths occurred among African-American infants

	% of Deaths	% of Population
All A-A Infants	53.8	33.7
A-A Male	29.4	17.0
A-A Female	24.3	16.7

- The infant mortality rate for African-American infants (13.5 per 1,000 births)

was more than double the rate for white infants (6.1 deaths per 1,000 births)

Figure 9. Deaths to Children 1-17 and Percent of Population in Georgia, By Race and Gender

Findings:

- A disproportionate number of deaths occurred among male children
- A disproportionate number of deaths occurred among African-American children

	% of Deaths	% of Population
All A-A Infants	64.0	51.0
A-A Male	29.7	17.6
A-A Female	34.4	32.5

All 1998 Reviewed Deaths:

Figure 10. Number of Reviewed Child Deaths by Cause of Death

Findings:

- Over 60% of motor vehicle deaths were reviewed
- SIDS deaths were most likely to be reviewed (88%)

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome:

Figure 11. SIDS Deaths by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- 70% of SIDS deaths occurred among infants 1 to 3 months of age

Figure 12. SIDS Deaths by Race and Gender Findings

Findings:

- The number of SIDS deaths were nearly equal among the four race/gender categories

- 50% of SIDS victims were African-American, however, there were 1.3 deaths per 1,000 African-American births compared to 0.7 deaths per 1,000 white births
- 55% (60) of SIDS victims were male

Figure 13. Sleeping Position At the Time of Death for Infants Who Died of SIDS 96 Child Fatality Review Cases Addressed (Sleeping Position)

Findings:

- Sleeping position was known in 69% of SIDS deaths when the question about sleeping position was answered
- 17 (18%) SIDS victims were reported to be sleeping on their backs

Figure 14. SIDS Death Rates Per 1,000, age <1, 1990-1998

Findings:

- The total number of SIDS deaths continued the general decline that has persisted during the decade
- The decline is consistent with national trends
- There were slight declines for all race/gender combinations except black females. (24 in 1997 and 27 in 1998)
- The total number of SIDS deaths (109) was down from 123 in 1997

Child Abuse And Neglect:

Figure 15. Circumstances of Death for Reviewed Deaths with Abuse/Neglect Findings

Findings:

- 34% of child abuse/neglect related deaths were homicides
- Of the 25 homicides, 8 were due to Shaken Baby/Sudden Impact Syndrome, 10 to blunt trauma, 2 to drowning, 1 to firearm, 1 to suffocation, 1 to fire, and 2 to neglect
- Other causes of death include unintentional suffocation, unintentional firearm injury, unintentional poisoning, inadequate care, and suicide

[Figure 16.](#) Relationship of Perpetrator to Decedent in Reviewed Cases with Abuse and Neglect Findings

Findings:

- Perpetrators were identified in 37 of the 73 deaths (51%)
- Among the 37 identified perpetrators, 60% (21) were parents (natural and step), and 7 were parents' male paramours

[Figure 17.](#) Age Distribution for Reviewed Deaths with Abuse or Neglect Findings

Findings:

- 86% (63) were under the age of 5
- 34 were under the age of 1

[Figure 18.](#) Reviewed Deaths with Abuse or Neglect Findings by Race and Gender

Findings:

- 60% (44) of deaths were African-American children
 - 52% (38) of deaths were females
-

[Prior Agency Involvement:](#)

[Figure 19.](#) Agency Involvement: Reviewed Deaths with No Child Abuse/Neglect Findings

Findings:

- 44% of deaths without abuse findings had no prior agency involvement
- 56% of deaths (247) had prior agency involvement
- The average family with agency involvement had involvement with 1.7 agencies
- 36% of identified contacts were with Public Health
- 25% of identified contacts were with the Department of Family and Children Services

[Figure 20.](#) Agency Involvement: Reviewed Deaths With Child Abuse/Neglect

Findings:

- 30% of deaths with abuse findings had no prior agency involvement
- 70% of deaths (51) had prior agency involvement
- The average family with agency involvement had involvement with 2 agencies
- 33% of identified contacts were with Public Health
- 25% of identified contacts were with the Department of Family and Children Services
- Of the 13 children known to Child Protective Services, the involvement was with the following:

Another child in the family, not the decedent	4
Decedent	4
Both decedent and another child in the family	4
Decedent, another child in the family, caretaker (other than family)	1

Injury-Related Deaths:

Figure 21. Injury -Related Deaths by Cause Findings:

- 61% of deaths resulted from motor vehicle-related incidents
- Excluding motor vehicle incidents, 38% of injury-related deaths occurred among children under the age of 5
- Compared to 1997, drowning deaths decreased from 48 to 39 (19%)
- The total unintentional injury deaths decreased slightly (from 364 to 344) from 1997 to 1998 (5%)

Motor Vehicle -Related Deaths:

Figure 22. Motor Vehicle-Related Deaths by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- 45% of motor vehicle-related deaths occurred among teens ages 15-17
- As teens achieved legal driving age, the number of deaths increased as follows:

Age 15	19 deaths
Age 16	33 deaths
Age 17	43 deaths

- 43% of motor vehicle related deaths to 15-17 year olds were not reviewed

Figure 23. Motor Vehicle-Related Deaths by Race and Gender
Findings:

- 64% (133) of deaths were white children
- 61% (128) of deaths were males

Figure 24. Motor Vehicle Fatality Rates per 100,000 Age 15-17, 1990-1998
Findings:

- Motor vehicle-related fatalities remain the leading cause of death for 15-17 year olds
- Rates for white males consistently exceeded other population groups
- The total number of motor vehicle-related fatalities for 15-17 year olds decreased slightly (from 97 to 95) from 1997 to 1998
- There was basically no change by race from 1997 to 1998, but among white teens, the rate increased for males and decreased for females.

Drowning:

Figure 25. Deaths Due to Drowning by Age and Review Status
Findings:

- 56% (22) of drowning victims were children between the ages of 5 and 14
- Compared to 1997, drowning deaths decreased from 48 to 39 (19%)

Figure 26. Drowning Deaths by Race and Gender

Findings:

- Almost seven times as many drowning deaths occurred among males as females
- Compared to 1997, African-American male drowning deaths almost doubled (from 11 to 19)

Figure 27. Drowning Fatality Rates per 100,000 Ages < 18, 1990-1998

Findings:

- Drowning death rates varied widely among all population groups since 1991, with no trends apparent
 - The drowning death rate for African-Americans (3.1) is almost twice the rate for whites (1.7)
 - Though drowning deaths for black males increased from 1997 to 1998, the number of deaths in all three other race/gender groups decreased
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Fire-Related Deaths:

Figure 28. Deaths Due to Fire by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- Compared to 1997, fire-related deaths increased from 15 to 23 (53%)
- A majority of the victims of fire-related deaths (78%) were under the age of 10

Figure 29. Deaths Due to Fire by Race and Gender

Findings:

- Compared to 1997, fire deaths among African-American males more than doubled (from 5 to 13)
- More than three times as many males (18)

died in fires as females (5)

Figure 30. Fire-Related Fatality Rates per 100,000 Ages < 18, 1990-1998

Findings:

- The rate for African-American children (3.3) is almost 2.5 times the rate for white children (1.3)
 - The increase in fire-related deaths from 1997 to 1998 was due to an increase in the number of black, male victims
 - Given the small number of fire deaths, changes in the observed rates are attributable to random fluctuations in the number of deaths
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Homicide:

Figure 31. Reviewed Homicide Deaths by Circumstances of Death

Findings:

- Firearms were the cause of 38% (20) of homicides
- 8 children were victims of Shaken Baby/Sudden Impact Syndrome

Figure 32. Homicide Deaths by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- Homicides among 15-17 year olds were 48% of all homicides

Figure 33. Homicide Deaths by Race and Gender

Findings:

- 71% of homicide victims were male
- 62% of homicide victims were African-American
- 43% of homicide victims were African-American males

Figure 34. Death Rates for Teen Homicides per 100,000 Ages 15-17, 1990-1998

Findings:

- Teenage African-American males have been victims of homicides at rates that have significantly exceeded all other race and gender groups since 1990
 - The total number of homicides remained essentially unchanged from 1997 (34 deaths in 1997 and 33 in 1998)
 - After a decline for three years, the rate of homicides among black males appeared to level off in 1998 (17 reported in each year)
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Suicide:

Figure 35. Suicide Deaths by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- 78% of suicides occurred to teens 15-17
- The youngest suicide victim (9 years old) died of strangulation

Figure 36. Suicide Deaths by Race and Gender

Findings:

- 89% of all suicide victims were white children
- 81% of suicide victims were males
- 70% of suicide victims were white males

Figure 37. Suicide Death Rates 1990-1998 per 100,000, Ages 15-17

Findings:

- White males had consistently higher suicide rates throughout the period with the exception of 1992
- In 1992 African-American male suicides doubled from the previous year, the most significant single year increase during the years shown
- Suicides among black males dropped from 6 in 1997 to only one in 1998
- The rates for other race/gender groups remained about the same in 1998 as they had been in 1997

Firearm Deaths:

Figure 38. Firearm Deaths by Manner of Death (on Death Certificate)

Findings:

- 54% of firearm deaths were due to homicide
- 15% were unintentional
- 30% were suicides
- Death certificate did not determine whether 1 of the firearm deaths was intentional. The child fatality review team concluded this death to be a suicide (intentional).

Figure 39. Firearm Deaths by Age and Review Status

Findings:

- 77% of firearm deaths occurred to children ages 15-17

Figure 40. Firearm Deaths by Race and Gender

Findings:

- 56% of firearm victims were white
- 82% of firearm victims were male
- African-American females were least likely to die from firearms

Figure 41. Reviewed Firearm Deaths by Type of Firearm

Findings:

- 64% (25) firearms were handguns
- Of the 23 reviewed suicide deaths, 65% (15) were committed with a firearm, and 11 of those 15 (73%) were handguns
- Of the 52 reviewed homicides, 38% (20) were committed with a firearm, and 12 of the 20 (60%) were handguns

Figure 42. Firearm Death Rates per 100,000, Ages 15-17, 1990-1998

Findings:

- After 1994, the rate for African-American males has steadily declined

- For the past three years the death rates due to firearms have been declining for all race/gender groups except white females
 - There were ten fewer firearm-related deaths in 1998 than in 1997 (47 in 1998 versus 57 in 1997)
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Next: [THE HISTORY OF CHILD FATALITY REVIEW IN GEORGIA](#)

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