

Forsyth County, NC Child Fatality Prevention Team

2020 Annual Report
(2019 Child Deaths)
July 7, 2021



Our Children, Our Future,
Our RESPONSIBILITY

**Forsyth County Department of Public Health
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I. Introduction

In 1993, the North Carolina General Assembly established a network of local Child Fatality Prevention Teams (CFPT's) across the state to confidentially review medical examiner reports, death certificates and other records of deceased residents under age 18. Each local team consists of representatives of public and nonpublic agencies in the community such as law enforcement, Guardian Ad Litem, health department, among others, that provide services to children and their families (Appendix, Table1).

The purpose of this report is to give a summary of the causes of death, the number of cases reviewed, recommendations for prevention, if any, that have been made, and to share local team activities and accomplishments for the 2020 calendar year.

II. Role of the Forsyth County Commissioners and Consolidated Board

- i. Receive annual reports which contain identified system issues, recommendations, and actions taken (or to be taken)
- ii. Appoint members of the local team as identified by the membership

III. 2019 Child Deaths by Cause, System Issues Identified, Recommendations for Prevention & Proposed Action

In 2020, the Forsyth County CFPT Subcommittee received 53 child death cases from the 2019 calendar year for review. The number of child death cases received for review was unchanged from the 2018 calendar year (see Appendix, Figure 1, Page 6).

Key Characteristics:

- Forty-two (79.2%) of the cases received for review were infants (Appendix, Table 2, Page 7).
- Cause of Death:
 - ✚ Extreme immaturity/prematurity/congenital abnormalities: 37 (69.8%)
 - ✚ Illness: 4 (7.5%)
 - ✚ Suicide (gun): 1 (1.9%)
 - ✚ Unsafe sleep/co-sleeping: 5 (9.4%)
 - ✚ Homicide (gun): 6 (11.3%)

In general, the Subcommittee recommends cases for a Full Team Review when the information gathered suggests that any of the following may have negatively influenced a child's health outcome:

- Lack of or inadequate communication between agencies and/or the child's parent or guardian regarding services
- Current rules or regulations did not adequately protect the child
- Abuse or neglect
- Mental health issues and/or developmental disabilities
- Alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drug use during pregnancy
- Unsafe sleep/co-sleeping

Of the 53 cases reviewed in Subcommittee, 12 were submitted for a Full Team Review.

The system issues identified, recommendations and proposed actions are summarized based on cause of death. The summary breakdown by cause of death is homicide (6), suicide (1), and unsafe sleep/co-sleeping (5).

| Summary of the Full Team Case Review Findings | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Cause of Death | System Issues | Recommendations | Actions |
| Homicide (6): Handgun | <i>Pending¹</i> | <i>Pending¹</i> | <i>Pending¹</i> |
| Suicide (1) : Handgun | <i>Pending¹</i> | <i>Pending¹</i> | <i>Pending¹</i> |
| Unsafe sleep/co-sleeping (5) | Unsafe sleeping environment | Continued interagency/partner (doctors, day care community, etc.) training programs to raise awareness about unsafe sleep/co-sleeping. | Action plans to reduce child deaths due to unsafe sleep/co-sleeping have been implemented. See the 2020 Forsyth County SOTCH Report. |

¹Pending outcome of law enforcement investigation. These cases are carried forward until the review can be completed. This action is in compliance with the North Carolina CFPT Task Force directive.

IV. Forsyth County CFPT Activities and Accomplishments

Between January and February, 2020, CFPT/Forsyth County Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition (FCIMRC) organized and recruited 10 Forsyth County pediatric providers who agreed to discuss safe/unsafe sleep with parents and infant caregivers who visited their practice. Also, they agreed to include handouts about safe/unsafe sleep in their end of visit instructions to parents and caregivers,

V. Conclusion

Thank you to the members of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to share with you the successes and dedicated work of the local team as we continue to review child fatalities, make recommendations, and take actions to prevent future child deaths. Please feel free to contact the Public Health Director/Chairperson at 336.703.3112 should you have any questions about this report.

Public Health Director/Chairperson: Mr. Joshua Swift

Date: July 7th, 2021

APPENDIX

Table 1: 2020 CFPT Members

| Agency/Appointer | Name | Agency |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Public Health Director | Joshua Swift | FC Dept. of Public Health |
| Social Services Director | Victor Isler | FC Dept. of Social Services |
| Social Services Staff Member | Linda Alexander | FC Dept. of Social Services |
| Social Services Staff Member (Proxy) | John T. Thacker | FC Dept. of Social Services |
| Appointed by Chair of DSS Board | Sharon Rimm | FC Health and Human Services Board Member |
| Appointed by District Attorney | Kia Chavious, Asst. D.A. | District Attorney's Office |
| Appointed by the Board of Health | Wayne Franklin, MD | Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center |
| District Court Judge | Lawrence Fine | District Court |
| Appointed by Chief Medical Examiner | Anna Greene McDonald, MD | County Medical Examiner |
| Appt. by Director of Area MH Authority | Katy Eads | Cardinal Innovations Healthcare |
| Community Agency | Elizabeth Miller, Director | The Parenting Path |
| Department of Public Health | Glenda Dancy | FC Department of Public Health |
| Department of Public Health | Ashton Putnam | FC Department of Public Health |
| Guardian Ad Litem | Melissa Bell | Guardian ad Litem |
| Kernersville Police Department | Det. Hannah Leonard | Kernersville Police Department |
| Local School Superintendent | Robin Fisher, Social Worker | WS/FC Schools |
| Local School Superintendent (Proxy) | Sandra R. Lamb, Social Worker | WS/FC Schools |
| Appointed by BCC | Capt. Bryan Gallimore | Emergency Medical Services |

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------|---|
| Appointed by BCC | Det. T. R. Albert | Winston-Salem Police Dept. |
| Appointed by BCC | Meagan Goodpasture, MD | Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist |
| Appointed by BCC | Mary D. Showalter | Parent of Child who died before Age 18 |

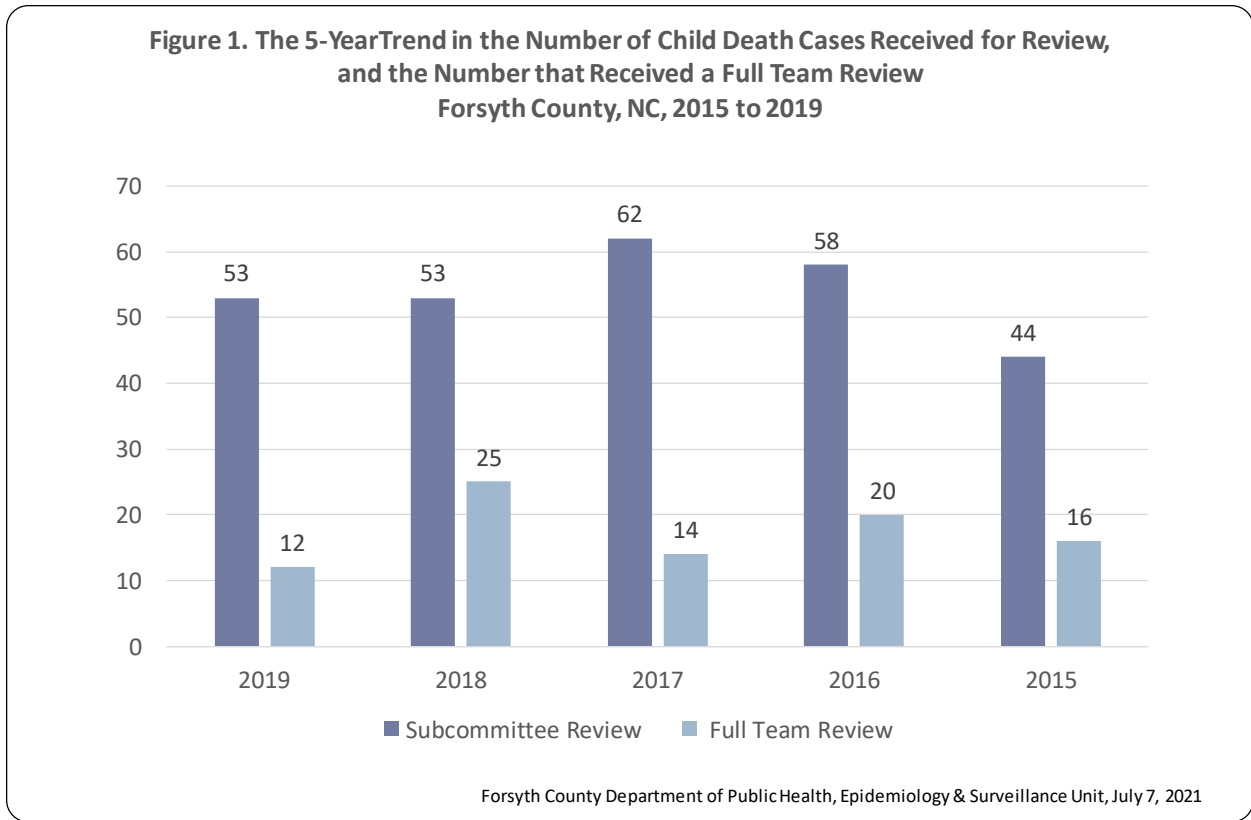


Table 2. Summary Characteristics of Child Death Cases Received for CFPT Review, Forsyth County, NC 2015 - 2019

| Total Number of Child Death Cases | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Number of Child Death Cases | 53 | 53 | 62 | 58 | 44 |
| Age Groups | | | | | |
| ≤ 1 year | 42 | 32 | 44 | 42 | 32 |
| >1 and ≤5 years | 1 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| >5 and ≤10 years | 4 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| >10 years | 6 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 7 |
| Total | 53 | 53 | 62 | 58 | 44 |
| Gender | | | | | |
| Female | 16 | 20 | 30 | 23 | 23 |
| Male | 37 | 33 | 32 | 35 | 21 |
| Total | 53 | 53 | 62 | 58 | 44 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | |
| Black, non-Hispanic | 37 | 22 | 36 | 19 | 14 |
| Hispanic | 3 | 7 | 9 | 14 | 10 |
| White, non-Hispanic | 13 | 23 | 16 | 23 | 20 |
| Other, non-Hispanic | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Total | 53 | 53 | 62 | 58 | 44 |
| Cause of Death | | | | | |
| Abuse/Neglect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Accident | 0 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 2 |
| Sudden Infant Death | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Homicide | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Extreme immaturity, Prematurity, Congenital abnormalities | 37 | 27 | 37 | 39 | 29 |
| Illness | 4 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 6 |
| Suicide | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Unsafe sleep/co-sleeping | 5 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Total | 53 | 53 | 62 | 58 | 44 |

Forsyth County Department of Public Health, Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit, July 7, 2021