

Child Fatality Review (CFR)

**Data Contact:**

Monica Clouse, MPH
Kentucky Department for Public Health
Division of Maternal and Child Health Branch
(502) 564-4830 ext. 4394
monica.clouse@ky.gov

State Web Site:

[https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dmch/cfhib/
Pages/child-fatality.aspx](https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dmch/cfhib/Pages/child-fatality.aspx)

Sources of Information for the Database

The Child Fatality Review (CFR) program is a passive surveillance system that reviews all child deaths from birth to the age of seventeen years in Kentucky. The system is designed to provide information on incidence, prevalence, and trends of causes of death of Kentucky's children. The CFR is located organizationally in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health (MCH), Child and Family Health Improvement Branch. The Child Fatality Review and Injury Prevention Program is funded by the MCH Title V Block Grant. KRS 211.680 established in 1996 was created to establish priorities and develop programs to prevent child fatalities and requires collection and analysis of data to identify trends, patterns and risk factors as well as evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies.

Description of the Data Collected

The CFR collects information from vital records, the MCH Rapid Response Child Death Reporting Form, and coroner report forms on all Kentucky resident children from birth to seventeen years of age who die of any cause of death. Supplemental information pertaining to childhood deaths is obtained from Coroner's CFR Reports, Medical Examiner Reports, Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation Reporting Form (SUIDIRF), and obituary scans. Data are also provided to the CFR from the Department for Community Based Services regarding substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect to Kentucky's children. Vital records are accessed on a weekly basis from the Electronic Death Reporting System (EDRS) and coroner report forms are mailed in as soon as they are completed and subsequently entered into the CFR database. Personal identifying information, cause of death codes, and circumstances surrounding the death are collected by CFR. Thus, CFR is considered a highly confidential database. Due to the sensitive nature of the data and laws designed to protect the individual, no personal identifying information is released from CFR, and data are only presented or released in aggregate fashion. The lowest demographic level of information that can

be provided by CFR is the Area Development District level; county level data are **not** available.

Strengths of the Data

The CFR provides data on causes of death and circumstances surrounding the death as well as recommendations for prevention education and awareness. The CFR is a statewide program with data analysis and reporting occurring on an annual basis. Data are readily accessible only by two full-time staff members in the MCH Division and are updated on a monthly basis. Data provided to the CFR occurs in a relatively timely fashion, with coroner report forms being submitted as soon as the investigation is complete and vital records being reviewed on a monthly basis.

Data Limitations

There is one main limitation to CFR data: small numbers when dealing with individual causes of death. As a result, data must be presented in an aggregate fashion and cannot be provided by county level. Also, the sensitive nature of the data plays a role in what can and cannot be released to data requestors. This limitation should not hinder the use of CFR data, but should be considered. Another limitation that CFR is working to correct involves capturing deaths of Kentucky residents that occur out-of-state. Not all out-of-state cases are being captured in CFR.

Specific Uses of Information

- Monitor Healthy *Kentuckians 2020 Goals*.
- Monitor KIDS NOW Initiatives on Early Childhood Development.
- Provide data for use in various projects.
- Provide data for the Annual Child Fatality Review Report.
- Monitor select performance measures for the Title V Federal Maternal and Child Health Block Grants.
- Evaluate health disparities.
- Monitor trends of child deaths among specific populations, geographical areas, and the state as a whole and to monitor any cluster of specific causes of death.

System Evaluation

Data collection for CFR is monitored on a quarterly basis with review of the MCH Rapid Response Child Death Reporting forms and the coroner reporting forms to ensure proper agency (i.e. local health departments, law enforcement, and the Department for Community Based Services) notification when a child death occurs. Death certificates from vital records are also reviewed to determine any discrepancies or omissions.

Data Set Availability

CFR data from 2000 to present are available to certain individuals, provided an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to access the data has been obtained. CFR staff reserve the right to deny any data request they deem would violate state and or federal laws governing the data set. The data set is only available in aggregate form and no identifying information will be released to any requestor under any circumstances.

Data Release Policy

Kentucky CFR will only release a de-identified data set provided that the request has received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and has been deemed to be Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant.

Data Publications

The CFR produces an annual report that contains trend data on causes of death of children from birth to age seventeen. The data are broken out by cause of death, age, sex, and race. The report is produced in printed format as well as placed on the CFR web site.

Suggested Data Citation

Kentucky Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health, Child and Family Health Improvement Branch. *Child Fatality Review Data*. Frankfort, Kentucky: Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Kentucky Department for Public Health, [data year].

Contributing Authors

Louan Cottrell, RN BSN, Kentucky Department for Public Health
Monica Clouse, MPH, Kentucky Department for Public Health