10 Steps to Maintaining an Effective Fatality Review Team

1. **Be prepared**
   a. Set regular meeting times.
   b. Create and follow an agenda.
   c. Develop and respect team agreements.

2. **Train and orient team members**
   a. Provide training for new staff and for whole teams when necessary.
   b. Orient new members on requirements and team logistics.
   c. Prepare guests for meetings.

3. **Stay focused on the purpose of the team**
   a. Keep the mission or vision of the team present during review meetings.
   b. Revisit the mission or vision every few years.

4. **Share, question, and clarify all information**
   a. Share, question, and clarify all death information during the review process.
   b. Discuss the investigation.
   c. Discuss the delivery of services.
   d. Identify risk and protective factors.
   e. Identify and recommend systems improvements.
   f. Be a catalyst for action to implement prevention recommendations.

5. **Stay focused on findings from the review meeting**
   a. Document findings during the review meeting.
   b. Remember, teams are expected to catalyze prevention and not individual or systems blaming.

6. **Incorporate community context**
   a. Gather information about how community factors may influence individual deaths.
   b. Ensure the team has a common language when discussing deaths during the review meeting.

c. Use the Life Stressors section of the Pediatric National Fatality Review-Case Reporting System (Pediatric NFR-CRS).

7. Address conflict

a. Be direct and refer to team guidelines and agreements.
b. Work with state staff as needed to address conflict.
c. Provide constructive feedback to team members.

8. Seek education

a. Bring in local experts to provide education to team members.
b. Work with professional organizations for opportunity to provide education to team members.

9. Practice self-care

a. Recognize signs of burnout and compassion fatigue.
b. Implement self-care practices in your team meetings.

10. Enter data in a timely manner

a. Begin data entry before the review meeting and highlight any missing variables.
b. Enter data within 30 days of review.

Please note that every effort has been made to ensure this document is as accessible as possible. If you encounter any issues or have any questions or concerns, please contact the National Center at info@ncfrp.org.

The National Center is funded in part by Cooperative Agreement Number UG7MC28482 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) as part of an award totaling $5,150,000 annually with 0 percent financed with non-governmental sources. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.