

# Reviewing Deaths Related To COVID-19

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# Why is it important to review COVID-19 impacted deaths?

- To document the impact of the COVID-19 health emergency on child mortality including deaths directly attributed to the SARS-2 virus and deaths indirectly associated with the health emergency.
- To understand how mitigation measures such as school closure, parental unemployment, and decreased access to health and social services may have differentially impacted vulnerable children.
- To inform national emergency response efforts about the needs of children who are directly and indirectly impacted by future emergencies.

# What are indirect impacts of COVID-19 on child deaths?

## CDR Teams may identify:

- Unique challenges faced by families caring for a CYSHCN
- Home-related injuries: poisoning, fires, drowning, child abuse/neglect
- Stressors resulting from COVID-19 crisis in the child's home or community:
  - Family financial stress
  - Disruption in learning
  - Disruption in access to medical care or social services
  - Isolation from usual supports
  - Parents having difficulty supervising children while working in or outside the home
  - Increased access to firearms due to increased firearm sales associated with the crisis

# Resources

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- **American Academy of Pediatrics: Pediatric Ambulatory Services During COVID-19**
  - <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/#ClinicalGuidance>
- **SafeKids Worldwide: Preventing Injuries during Coronavirus**
  - <https://www.safekids.org/>
- **Children's Safety Network: COVID-19 Resources**
  - <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Newsletter---COVID-19-Resources-from-our-CSN-A-Partners.html?soid=1102805359072&aid=OCrHi6ttYvU>



# Contact Information

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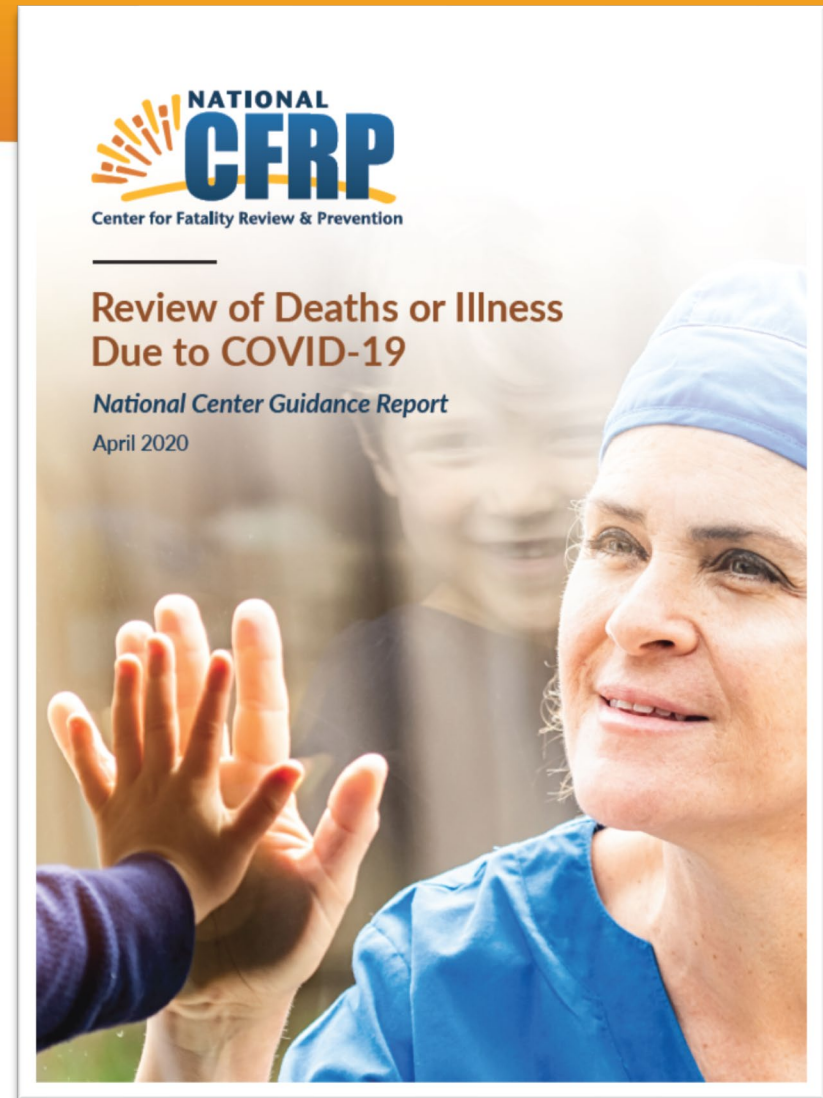
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# Response to COVID-19

- Revised NFR-CRS to include COVID-19 as a cause of death
- Created guidance for teams on conducting virtual meeting and high volume reviews
- Created guidance on reviewing **direct and indirect** COVID-19 deaths
- Compiled self-assessment tools
- Participated in national dialogue with key partners





# Identifying COVID-19 Deaths

- **Directly attributed to COVID-19**
  - COVID-19 is likely to be listed on the death certificate, either as Immediate or Underlying cause

Certifying Deaths Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

## Certifying Deaths Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

**CAUSE OF DEATH**

**Part I.** Enter the chain of events—diseases, injuries, or complications—that directly caused the death.  
Do not enter terminal events such as cardiac arrest or respiratory arrest. Do not use abbreviations.

Approximate interval between onset and death:

<b>Immediate Cause</b> (Final disease or condition resulting in death)	A. <input type="text" value="Acute respiratory distress syndrome"/>	<input type="text" value="2 days"/>
	<small>Due to (or as a consequence of):</small>	
Sequentially list conditions, if any, leading to the cause listed on line A. Enter the	B. <input type="text" value="Pneumonia"/>	<input type="text" value="10 days"/>
<b>Underlying Cause</b> (Disease or injury that initiated the events resulting in death) last.	<small>Due to (or as a consequence of):</small>	
	C. <input type="text" value="COVID-19"/>	<input type="text" value="10 days"/>
	<small>Due to (or as a consequence of):</small>	
	D. <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

# Identifying COVID-19 Deaths

- **Indirectly attributed to COVID-19**
  - COVID-19 could be a contributing factor to death, related to service delivery issues, loss or disruption of usual services or health care
  - Death could be related to the psychosocial stress created by the pandemic
  - Death could be related to the financial strain a family may experience during the pandemic, lost wages, food or housing insecurity
  - Death could be related to environmental factors such as overcrowding

# Preparing for Case Review

- Recognize personal, professional, and community impacts of COVID-19
- Review current literature on COVID-19
  - Symptoms
  - Transmissions
  - Special considerations for pregnant woman, infants, and children
  - Treatment
  - Prevention
  - Equity implications

# Preparing for Case Review: Ad Hoc Members

- Identify additional team members
  - Infectious Disease Specialist
  - Health Communication Professional
  - Expanded local public health officials
  - Emergency Preparedness and Response
  - Mental Health clinician
- Consider the audience for the prevention recommendations and include them in the review



# Preparing for Case Review: Creating Timeline

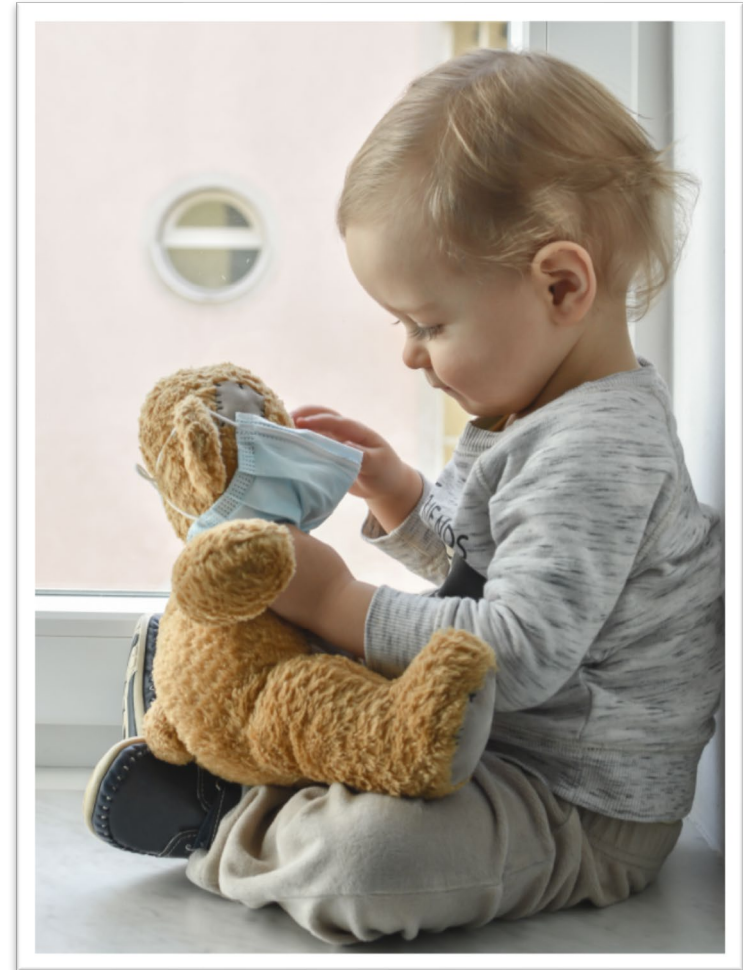
- Develop a timeline for how COVID-19 impacted the community
  - Systems closures/restrictions (schools, legal, health care)
  - Shelter in Place/Safer at Home orders
  - Lack of resources (food pantry, child care)
- Use to understand how the changes to promote physical distancing and physical wellness rolled out into the community
- [Example timeline](#) (Appendix B)

# Preparing for Case Review: Planning for Self-Care

- Make space for a variety of reactions
- Acknowledge what went well by [tracking findings](#)
- Allow team members to opt out of reviews
- Utilize National Center resources
  - Guidance on Vicarious Trauma
  - Guidance on Reviewing Deaths of Children in Disasters
  - Archived webinars
  - Self-assessment tools

# During Case Review: Overarching Questions

- Consider the following questions throughout the case review:
  - Would this outcome be different without COVID-19?
  - How did any COVID-19 interventions impact this death?
  - How did COVID-19 highlight any underlying social determinants of health in this case?
  - Was the child impacted more severely than others?





# During Case Review: Pregnancy and Prenatal Care

- Consider the following questions about prenatal care:
  - Was this pregnancy intended?
  - Did the childbearing parent have decreased variety of adequacy of medical care, resources and/or support?
  - Were the family's mental health and stress issues identified and addressed?
  - Were there any differences in the hospitals policies around delivery?



# During the Case Review: Injury-Related Deaths

- Consider the following questions about injury-related deaths:
  - Were there limited community resources to respond to the incident due to COVID-19?
  - Did mandatory or voluntary closures affect the outcome?
    - Schools, business, community centers, courts and child welfare
  - Was social isolation a risk factor?
  - Was the family hesitant to seek medical care due to COVID-19?



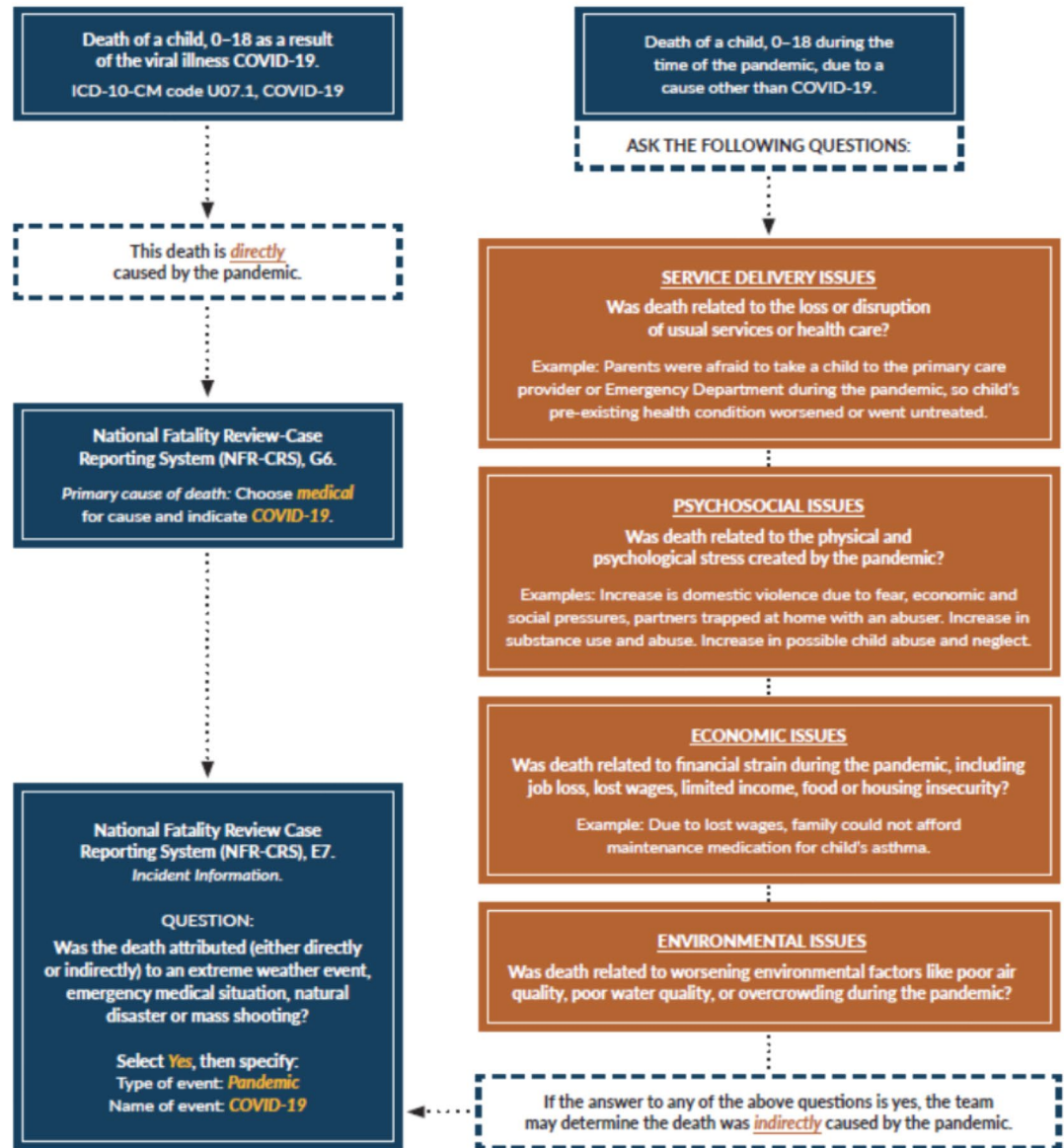
# During Case Review: Deaths due to COVID-19

- Consider the following questions when discussing deaths directly related to COVID-19
  - Was the child/family able to comply with social distancing guidelines?
  - Was contact tracing conducted?
  - What type of information was provided to the family regarding COVID-19 symptoms, risk, and need to seek treatment?

# COVID-19 Algorithm

- Determine if cases were directly or indirectly related to the outbreak
- Appropriate to consider for all deaths that occurred during the pandemic

## Collecting Data on Child Deaths During the COVID-19 Pandemic



# National Fatality Review-Case Reporting System

7. Was the death attributed (either directly or indirectly) to an extreme weather event, emergency medical situation, natural disaster or mass shooting? ⓘ

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unknown

Specify the type of event (e.g., tornado, heat wave, flood, medical crisis, etc) and general circumstances surrounding the death:

pandemic

Specify the name of the event if applicable (e.g., Paradise Wild Fire, Hurricane Irma, COVID-19, etc):

COVID-19

x

[Deselect answer](#)

# National Fatality Review-Case Reporting System

6. Primary cause of death: Choose only 1 of the 4 major categories, then a specific cause. For pending, choose most \_\_\_\_\_ likely cause. ⓘ

- ☐ From an external cause of injury
- ☒ From a medical condition
- ☐ Undetermined if injury or medical cause
- ☐ Unknown

Deselect answer

Deselect answer

- ☐ Asthma/respiratory
- ☐ Cancer
- ☐ Cardiovascular
- ☐ Congenital anomaly
- ☒ COVID-19
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Influenza



# Conducting Remote Fatality Reviews

- Identifies key questions to ask before moving to remote meetings
- Identifies key questions for conducting remote meetings
- Provides tips for ensuring meetings are professional, productive and efficient
- Provides resources for self-care
- [View Remote Fatality Review Factsheet](#)



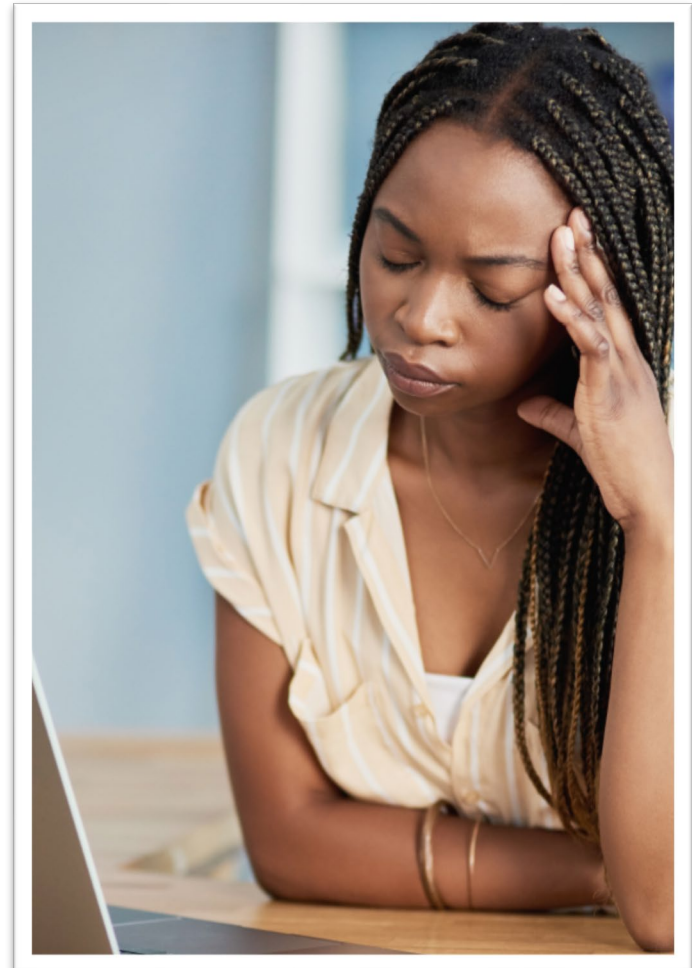
# Conducting High Volume Reviews

- Identifies strategies and key questions for conducting a large number of reviews at one meeting
- Provides self-care resources
- [View High Volume Reviews Factsheet](#)

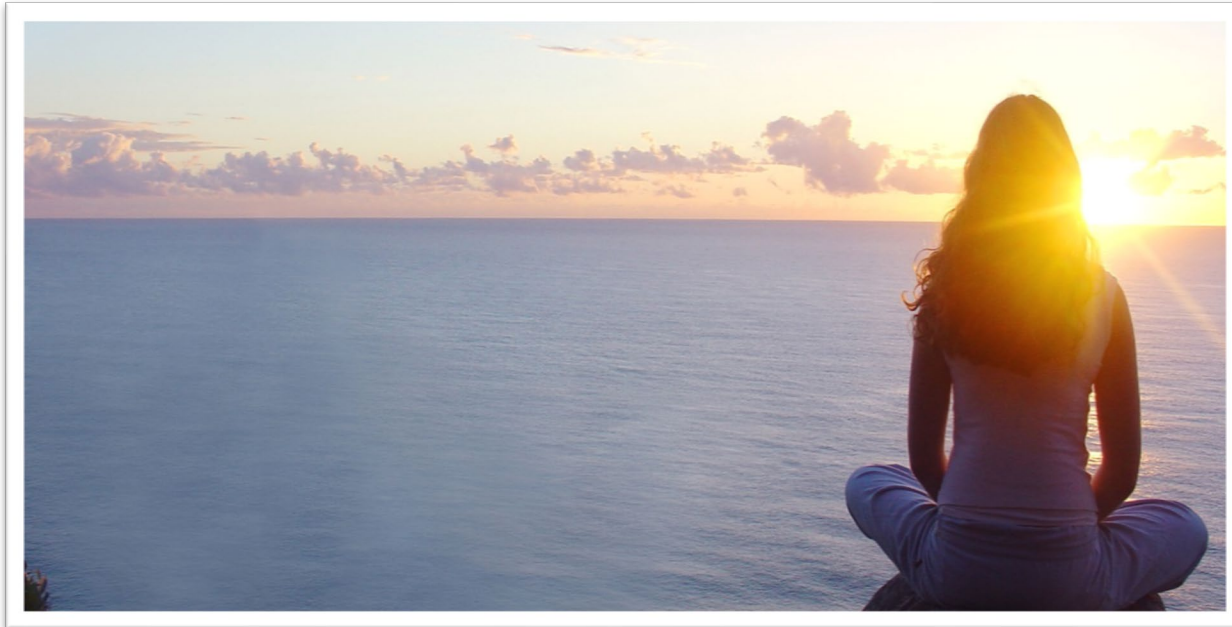


# Self-Assessment Tools

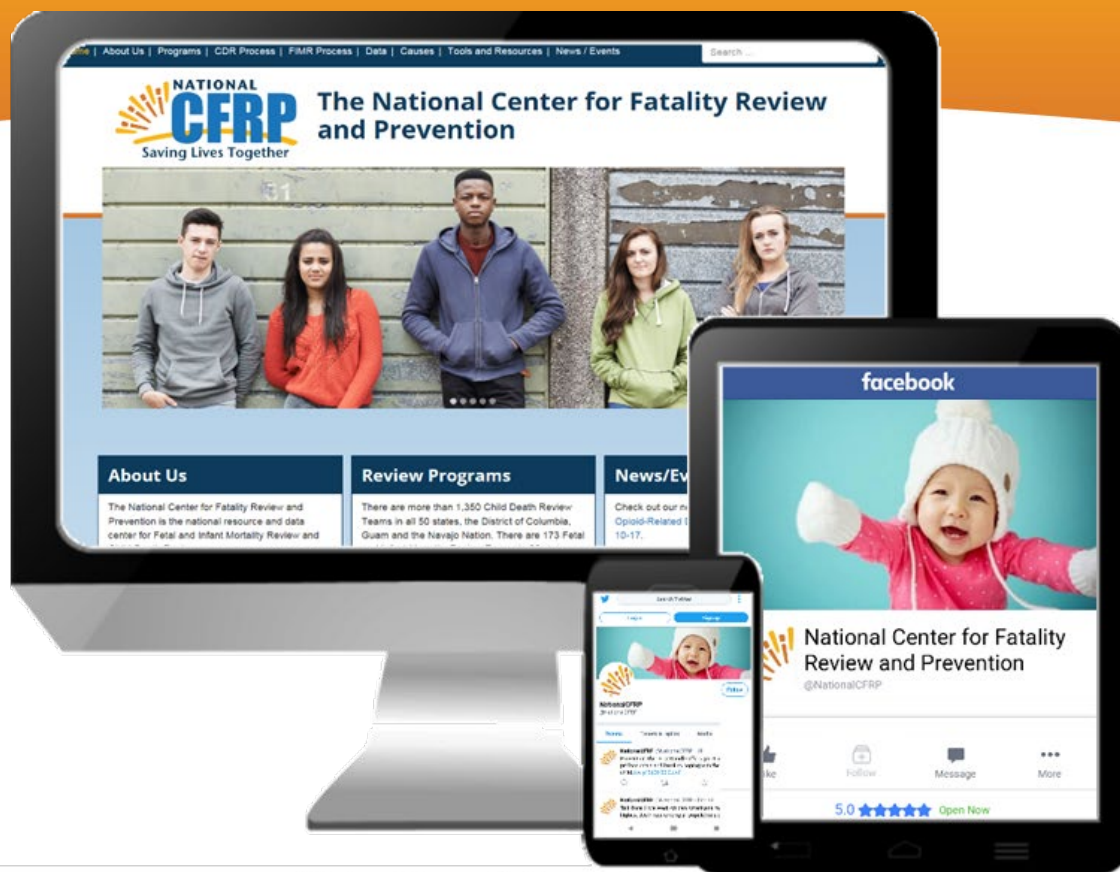
- Compiled a list of self-assessment tools for team members
- Focus on self-care and promoting resiliency
- [View Self-Assessment Tools](#)



# Self Care



# For More Information



**National Center for Fatality Review & Prevention**  
Supporting Fetal and Infant Mortality Review and Child Death Review Teams

There are many ways to stay in touch with the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention:

