



Learning Together, Protecting Tomorrows



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Greetings from the Staff



Greetings,

This December's newsletter is an opportunity to reflect on my history with the National Center before I retire from my 18-year position as a data analyst. When I was hired in 2007, my time was split between working for the National Center and the Michigan CDR and FIMR programs. The Pediatric NFR-CRS had been available for only two years, and data was being entered by only 28 states. A nationwide, web-based data collection resource for FIMR teams didn't exist. When I started, Heather Dykstra and I were the only data team members, and we each worked part-time to make one full-time position. Today, we have CDR and/or FIMR teams entering data into the Pediatric NFR-CRS from all 50 states. The National Center data team will consist of 5 full- and part-time staff after my retirement. We've come a long way.

I tell people that the best thing that could happen in my job is that it wouldn't be

needed anymore because there would be no child deaths to be reviewed. Until that happens, I want to leave you with the message that your work is recognized. Alone, it may not seem like data entry contributes much to preventing future deaths, but when we compile the numbers from all over the U.S., we can see emerging trends or patterns that aren't as visible in a smaller sample.

The collection and entry of data is seen in our National Center Quick-Looks, our journal publications and presentations, and in publications by outside authors. Without you, these analyses wouldn't be possible. In addition to the data, the amazing work on prevention initiatives has been impressive.

With thanks for your work and wishing you the best,
Esther Shaw

Upcoming Events



2026 Office Hours with the National Center

We are excited to continue offering Office Hours in 2026!

Please note, **registration is required for each individual session**. The first part of each Office Hours meeting will highlight a specific topic. The remaining time will be reserved for open discussion.

- [Meaningful Data Visualization](#)
January 20, 2026, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm ET
- [Grief and Bereavement](#)
February 17, 2026, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm ET
- [Public Fatality Review Data](#)
March 17, 2026, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm ET

[Click here](#) to visit our website and see additional Office Hour sessions for 2026. Please email info@ncfrp.org if you have any questions or ideas for future topics.

Changing Tides: New Opportunities in Drowning Prevention

The National Center has been working with several fatality review programs regarding drowning prevention efforts within Death Scene Investigation (DSI) protocols. In this webinar, two programs will share their experience with the DSI pilot project. The opportunity to participate for state- and county-level teams is available, and details to join the pilot will be discussed.

December 18, 2025, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET

[Click here to register.](#)

Kudos Corner

Indiana FIMR Team Launches Safe Sleep Campaign

The St. Joseph County FIMR Community Action Team launched the “Babies Need to Breathe” campaign in October in recognition of Safe Sleep Awareness Month.

This campaign is a two-year initiative aiming to reduce sleep-related infant deaths as much as possible. The team plans to share data with healthcare partners and track local outcomes for the duration of the local initiative.

Sally Dixon, the FIMR coordinator for St. Joseph County, says, "We know that moms, dads, and families love their babies and want to keep them safe. I hope this campaign helps our community understand that sleep-related deaths are preventable. They have the power to protect their babies by remembering and practicing the steps that help their babies breathe easy during every sleep."

More information on the campaign and safe sleep practices is [available here](#). Congratulations to Sally and the FIMR Community Action Team on the successful launch of their campaign!

For materials or training, Sally can be contacted at sadixon@beaconhealthsystem.org.

Cook County, Illinois is Recognized for their Safe Sleep Work



Gina Lowell in Cook County, Illinois received the Dr. Martin R. Eichelberger Community Organization Award for her work with Community Partnership Approaches for Safe Sleep (CPASS) Chicago.

“CPASS Chicago is working tirelessly to address prevention efforts through community-based partnerships and leveraging their SUID surveillance data to drive outreach to communities most impacted,” said Torine Creppy, president of Safe Kids Worldwide. “They are leading the way when it comes to safe sleep.”

This award, given to Dr. Lowell during PrevCon in October, recognizes exceptional efforts to protect kids from preventable injuries, the leading cause of death to children in the U.S.

Congratulations to Dr. Lowell and the Cook County team on this incredible recognition!

Data Matters

Child DASH Goes Public: Explore the Power of National Fatality Review Data

The National Center is excited to announce that Child DASH (Child Dynamic Analysis and Statistics Hub) is now publicly available! This interactive data visualization tool brings together insights from over 175,000 child death reviews documented by 40 states in the Pediatric NFR-CRS.

The public version of Child DASH features eight dynamic dashboards that highlight national patterns in child deaths—presented as proportions to protect confidentiality. Data are not shown by state or as raw counts. While these dashboards offer a powerful lens into the circumstances surrounding child deaths, data in Child DASH are not intended for official reporting and should not be cited. Instead, Child DASH is designed to support prevention efforts, inform policy, guide programs, and inspire research through our Data Dissemination process.

Ready to explore? Visit fatalityreviewdata.org and select the “Child DASH” button. Be sure to check out the [Public Child DASH User Guide](#) to understand what’s included and how to interpret the data.

Resources for Prevention

Pennsylvania Releases SUID Toolkit for CDR Teams



A toolkit has been developed by Pennsylvania's state CDR team to provide local teams with tools and resources for reviewing Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUIDs).

Per the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, "Although this toolkit was primarily developed for the review of SUID cases by CDR teams, its overall approach and many of the included resources can also be applied to the review of any child death, including those examined by child welfare agencies."

The toolkit provides opportunity for each fatality review team member the opportunity to understand the CDR process, learn their important role, and learn what information they need for data entry into the Pediatric NFR-CRS.

The toolkit is available for free and can be downloaded and shared with CDR teams for guidance on reviewing SUIDs. [Click here to view the toolkit.](#)

Michigan Grief and Bereavement Resources

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is working to address the critical need for support following the death of a mother or infant and to provide linkages to ongoing support for grieving families, communities, and care providers.

MDHHS, in partnership with Michigan 2-1-1, launched a [website](#) dedicated to increasing access to grief and bereavement support services by ZIP code

through the website or by calling 2-1-1.

Additionally, a free [online bereavement training course](#) for maternal and child health professionals is available. The training is designed to support health care professionals and employees who have experienced a patient death.

Individuals who complete the course will learn how to better identify types of grief, factors affecting the grief response, self-care strategies, and where to find additional support.

Continuing education credit can be awarded for successful completion of the course: 1.0 Nursing contact hour, 1.0 Social Work clock hour, and 1.0 Health Educator contact hour.

For any questions or comments, please reach out to Audra Brummel, Michigan FIMR Coordinator, at BrummelA@michigan.gov.

Resources for Keeping Recreational Spaces Safe

Ready, Set, Safe! is an initiative that aims to give parents, caregivers, and school personnel the tools they need to keep educational and recreational spaces safe for children. These spaces include playgrounds, after-school program spaces, and other areas where children play.

Resources from Ready, Set, Safe! include questions to ask in a school setting regarding safety protocols, data on gate-related fatalities, and opportunities to learn about federal, bipartisan legislation that can keep kids happy and safe during recreational time.

[Click here to learn more about Ready, Set, Safe!](#)

Staff Out & About

With the transition from fall into winter, and a new year on the horizon, the National Center wanted to take a moment to say thank you to our amazing network of coordinators, fatality review professionals, and public health colleagues. The work we do is hard, and support for each other makes our efforts all the more impactful.

In the new year, we have plans to create an online module for fatality review

meeting facilitation, publish Version 7.0 of the Pediatric NFR-CRS, and continue to support teams across the country. We are available for you and your program in the form of tailored technical assistance, and to help your team thrive. We'll see you in 2026!



National Center staff at the *Learning Together, Protecting Tomorrows* National Meeting in National Harbor, Maryland in October.

If you have a training need, the National Center will be happy to connect with you to find a creative solution and provide technical assistance or training to your program. Reach out to us at info@ncfrp.org!



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