
**MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

2011

**Analysis of Child Fatalities
& Near Fatalities**

April 2014



Child Near Fatalities in 2011

The DCF Case Investigation Unit (CIU) receives notification of all reports of abuse or neglect that meet the definition of “near fatality.” DCF defines a “near fatality” as any case where a doctor or hospital has filed a 51A report and determined the child named in the report to be in “serious” or “critical” condition as a result of physical and/or sexual abuse or neglect, and that the condition is considered to be life threatening. Upon receiving notification of a near fatality from an area office, CIU staff review all information about the case contained in FamilyNet (DCF’s automated case management system). This preliminary data collection serves as the basis for their investigation. The CIU process for near fatalities is a paper review; there are no meetings with area office managers or staff. However, CIU investigators may call area office managers or staff for additional information.

There were 25 near fatalities reported to DCF during 2011 (14 boys and 11 girls). Abusive head trauma injuries¹ were diagnosed in 13 of the 25 near fatalities. Seven (7) of the 13 abusive head trauma victims also had bodily injuries (fractures and bruises). The remaining 12 near fatalities had the following injuries: blunt abdominal trauma (5), fractures of skull and body (3), near drowning (2), ingestion of methadone (1), and severe injuries from a car accident (1).

Neglect was a factor in the near fatalities of 2 children, physical abuse was a factor for 1 child, and both physical abuse and neglect were factors for 22 children. The victimized children included 14 (56%) infants (less than 1 year old), 3 one-year olds, 2 two-year olds, 3 three-year olds, 2 five-year olds, and 1 eight-year old. Seven (7) of the children were White, 5 were Black, and 1 was multi-racial. Race was unknown for 12 children. Eight (8) of the 25 children with near fatal injuries were identified as Hispanic.

Of the 24 families (2 child victims were siblings), 15 were known to DCF (8 open protective and 7 closed cases) and 9 were unknown (no prior history). Two (2) of the children were in DCF custody (temporary) and both of these were in placement (unrelated foster care). Median ages of the perpetrators were 24 years for mothers and 29 years for fathers. Current family issues were mental illness (4), domestic violence (8), and substance abuse (2). (**Tables A1 and A2**)

¹ Abusive head trauma is defined as brain, skull, and spinal injuries associated with shaking and other injuries inflicted on infants (new terminology from the American Academy of Pediatrics) (Christian, C.W. and R. Block. 2009. Abusive Head Trauma in Infants and Children. Pediatrics 123: 1409-1411).

Table A1. CY2011 Child Near Fatalities: 25 Children from Families Known and Unknown to DCF

CHILD'S AGE	FAMILY CASE STATUS	DURATION OPENED/CLOSED	INJURIES	ABUSE/NEGLECT	DCF CUSTODY	PLACEMENT TYPE
24 days	no previous history	-----	abusive head trauma; rib fractures	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
34 days	no previous history	-----	fractured ribs/jaw/ankles/toe/femur/scapula; blunt abdominal trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
40 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma; rib, leg, shoulder fractures	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
44 days	open protective	6 mos. or less	near drowning in bathtub; older healing fractures	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
49 days	open protective	6 mos. or less	fractures of the skull, leg, and fingers	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
52 days	no previous history	-----	abusive head trauma; rib fractures	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
88 days	no previous history	-----	abusive head trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
100 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
111 days	no previous history	-----	abusive head trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
126 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
182 days	no previous history	-----	abusive head trauma; bruises	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
202 days	open protective	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma	NEG/PHY	TEMP	UNREL
205 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma	PHY	NO	N/A
303 days	no previous history	-----	fell 20 ft. from window -- multiple fractures of skull/pelvis/rib; head abrasions; older healing fractures	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
1 year	open protective	6 mos. or less	numerous fractures to legs and arms; slight bleeding to the brain	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
1 year	open protective	6 mos. or less	blunt abdominal trauma; rib fractures; bruises	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
1 year*	closed	more than 6 mos.	numerous bruises; blunt abdominal trauma; crushed and infected toes; burns; missing toenails	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
2 years	open protective	6 mos. or less	near drowning in pool	NEG	TEMP	UNREL
2 years	no previous history	-----	blunt abdominal trauma; burns	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
3 years*	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma; numerous bruises; blunt abdominal trauma; mutilation; burns; missing hair and toenails	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
3 years	open protective	6 mos. or less	severe head trauma; numerous bodily injuries and bruises; blunt abdominal trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
3 years	closed	more than 6 mos.	blunt abdominal trauma	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
5 years	closed	more than 6 mos.	multiple severe injuries from car accident	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
5 years	open protective	6 mos. or less	abusive head trauma; blunt abdominal trauma; bruises; abrasions	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
8 years	no previous history	-----	child consumed methadone	NEG	NO	N/A

CODES: NEG = neglect; PHYS = physical abuse; TEMP = temporary custody; N/A = not in placement; UNREL = unrelated foster care

NOTE: **Abusive Head Trauma** = brain, skull, and spinal injuries associated with shaking and other head injuries inflicted on infants (American Academy of Pediatrics).

* = siblings

Table A2. CY'2011 Child Near Fatalities: Perpetrators (25 Children from Families Known or Unknown to DCF)

CHILD'S AGE	PERPETRATOR	NEGLECT	PHYSICAL ABUSE	INJURIES	CURRENT FAMILY ISSUES	TEENAGE MOTHER AT 1ST BIRTH
24 days	mother father	X X	X X	abusive head trauma; rib fractures	DV	NO
34 days	mother father	X X	X X	fractured ribs/jaw/ankles/toe/femur/scapula; blunt abdominal trauma	MI	YES
40 days	mother father	X X	X X	abusive head trauma; rib, leg, shoulder fractures	-----	NO
44 days	mother father	X X	X X	near drowning in bathtub; older healing fractures	-----	NO
49 days	mother father	X X	----- X	fractures of the skull, leg, and fingers	SA/DV	YES
52 days	mother father	X X	----- X	abusive head trauma,; rib fractures	-----	YES
88 days	mother father	X -----	----- X	abusive head trauma	DV	NO
100 days	mother father unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	abusive head trauma	-----	NO
111 days	mother father unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	abusive head trauma	DV/MI	NO
126 days	mother father	X X	X X	abusive head trauma	-----	NO
182 days	mother male partner	X X	X X	abusive head trauma; bruises	-----	NO
202 days	foster mother unknown	X -----	----- X	abusive head trauma	DV	NO
205 days	day care provider	-----	X	abusive head trauma	-----	NO
303 days	mother father unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	fell 20 ft. from window -- multiple fractures of skull/pelvis/rib; head abrasions; older healing fractures	DV	NO
1 year	mother male partner	X -----	----- X	numerous fractures to legs and arms; slight bleeding to the brain	-----	UNKOWN
1 year	mother male partner	X X	X X	blunt abdominal trauma; rib fractures; bruises	-----	YES
1 year*	mother	X	X	numerous bruises; blunt abdominal trauma; mutilation; crushed and infected toes; burns; missing toenails	-----	YES
2 years	foster mother	X	-----	near drowning in pool	-----	YES
2 years	mother babysitter unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	blunt abdominal trauma; burns	-----	NO
3 years*	mother	X	X	abusive head trauma; numerous bruises; blunt abdominal trauma; mutilation; burns; missing hair and toenails	-----	YES
3 years	mother male partner unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	severe head trauma; numerous bodily injuries and bruises; blunt abdominal trauma	DV/MI	UNKOWN
3 years	mother male partner unknown	X X -----	----- ----- X	blunt abdominal trauma	MI	YES
5 years	male relative	X	X	multiple severe injuries from car accident	-----	UNKOWN
5 years	mother male partner	X X	----- X	abusive head trauma; blunt abdominal trauma; bruises; abrasions	SA/DV	NO
8 years	unknown	X	-----	child consumed methadone	-----	NO

CODES: DV = domestic violence; MI = mental illness; SA = substance abuse

NOTE: Omissions under "Current Family Issues" and "Teen Mother" indicate "None" or "Unknown." Issues apply to the children and their caretaker(s).

Abusive Head Trauma = brain, skull, and spinal injuries associated with shaking and other head injuries inflicted on infants (American Academy of Pediatrics).

* = siblings

Child Fatalities in 2011

Child Fatalities for Families Open or Recently Involved with DCF

All child deaths in families open or recently involved (“known”) with DCF are reported to the Case Investigation Unit, regardless of how the child died.² CIU staff conduct investigations that focus on a review of the services provided to the family and the circumstances surrounding the death. Each investigation includes, but is not limited to, a comprehensive review of the case record and a visit to the DCF Area Office to interview social work staff involved with the case. The purpose of this review is to determine if DCF needs to address any case practice or policy issues.

Since its formation in the late 1980s, the CIU has collected information on deceased children whose families had the following status with DCF:

- families with an open case;
- families being investigated as the result of a 51A report³ received prior to the child’s death;
- families with cases that closed within the six months preceding the child’s death; and
- families who had a supported 51A report within six months preceding the child’s death, but the case was not opened for services.

Thirty-seven (37) children in families with an open or recently⁴ closed DCF case status died in 2011. As determined by the medical examiner, twelve (12) of these children died from natural causes, 3 were homicides, 5 were suicides, and 6 died in accidents. Four (4) deceased children have undergone an autopsy but as of the writing of this report, the manner of death remains pending the completion of the forensic investigation. For an additional 7 children, the manner of death was “undetermined” following an autopsy by a medical examiner.⁵ Child maltreatment (neglect/physical abuse) was found by DCF to be the cause or contributing factor in 10 of the 37 deaths. **(Table A3)**

Forty-one percent (41%) of these deceased children were infants (less than one-year old), 11% were 1-6 years old, 22% were 7-11 years old and 27% were adolescents (12-17 years old). Five (5) of the 37 children were in DCF custody at the time of their death. Of the 5 children in DCF custody, 3 were in placement: two (2) were adolescents placed in non-kinship foster homes and 1 adolescent was in residential placement. **(Table A3)**

²Manner of death may be natural causes, unintentional injuries, homicide, suicide, pending investigation/autopsy, or undetermined following an autopsy.

³ Massachusetts Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A (reporting of abuse and neglect of children).

⁴ Families with cases that closed within the six months preceding the child’s death

⁵ The medical examiner has performed a full forensic evaluation (toxicology screens, investigation of the scene at death, autopsy, etc.) but cannot determine if the manner of death was due to natural causes or an accident.

- 2 adolescents (1 residential, 1 foster care): manner of death “suicide”
- 1 adolescent (foster care): manner of death “homicide” (unspecified firearm discharge while walking from school)

Over the past 23 years, DCF child deaths (on open or recently closed cases) have ranged from a high of 89 to a low of 30 fatalities per year, with a median of 41 fatalities. The most notable change in 2011 was the number of suicides (n=5), there were no suicides in 2010. Four (4) of the infant deaths were determined by the medical examiner to be from natural causes, 2 were accidents, 1 was a homicide, 2 were pending an investigation, and 6 were undetermined. A finding of “undetermined” is utilized when it is impossible for the medical examiner to establish the circumstances of death with reasonable medical certainty after a thorough investigation. DCF determined that the sleeping conditions for 6 of the 15 infants did not meet the standards set in the MA Department of Public Health’s Safe Sleep policy. **(Tables A3 and A5)**

During the past 11 years (2001-2011), there have been 2 maltreatment-related fatalities in foster care and none in residential care. There was an accidental death in 2001 when a child died while in unrelated foster care (neglect). In 2005, a child in unrelated foster care was a homicide victim (physical abuse and neglect).

Child Fatalities for Families with a Non-Current or No DCF History

In 2001, the CIU began collecting information on all deceased children for whom a 51A report was filed including those from families previously unknown to DCF and families with cases closed more than six months prior to the child’s death. This group of child fatalities is limited to those children where abuse/neglect was the direct cause of death or was a contributing factor to the cause of death. The data collected on these maltreatment deaths are not as comprehensive as the data collected on families with current or recent DCF involvement. Data are gathered via phone calls to area office staff and a review of case information in the DCF case management information system (FamilyNet).

The deaths of an additional 13 children were reported to DCF and found to be maltreatment-related. Ten (10) children were from families not previously known to DCF and 3 were from families whose cases had been closed for more than six months at the time of death. **(Table A4)**

Unsafe Sleep

Of the aforementioned 50 child fatalities (37 for families known to DCF and 13 for families with non-current or no DCF history), 10 involved children where the sleep environment did not meet the standards recommended in the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) Safe Sleep Policy or as referred throughout this report as “unsafe sleep.” This includes 6 families known to DCF and 4 unknown to DCF. The medical examiner was not able to determine the manner of death for 9 (90%) of these fatalities. The manner of death for the 1 remaining child was determined by the medical examiner to be accidental. DCF investigators supported neglect as a contributing factor in 8 of the 10 fatalities of children in unsafe sleep settings. **(table below, Tables A3 and A4)**

Year & Manner of Death	Cause of Death (Families Known and Unknown to DCF)			
	SIDS	SIDS/ Unsafe Sleep	Asphyxiation/ Unsafe Sleep	Ill-Defined & Unspecified Cause/ Unsafe Sleep
2007:				
Natural Causes	1	---	---	---
Accident	---	1 (1 neglect)	---	---
Undetermined/Pending	1	4 (3 neglect)	---	---
2008:				
Natural Causes	1	---	---	---
Accident	---	---	3 (2 neglect)	---
Undetermined/Pending	---	4 (1 neglect)	---	---
2009:				
Natural Causes	2	---	---	---
Accident	---	---	---	---
Undetermined/Pending	1	7 (3 neglect)	---	3 (1 neglect)
2010:				
Natural Causes	1	---	---	---
Accident	---	---	---	---
Undetermined	4 (1 neglect)	2 (1 neglect)	---	---
2011:				
Natural Causes	1	---	---	---
Accident	---	---	1 (1 neglect)	---
Undetermined	---	7 (5 neglect)	---	2 (2 neglect)
Pending Investigation	---	---	---	---

Note: (# neglect) = number of neglect-related deaths as ascertained by DCF investigators

Table A3. CY'2011 Child Fatalities: 37 Children from Families with an Open or Recently Open DCF Case Status

AGE (YEARS)	FAMILY CASE STATUS	DURATION OPENED/CLOSED	MANNER* OF DEATH	FACTORS CAUSING OR CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH	NEGLECT/ ABUSE	DCF CUSTODY	PLACEMENT TYPE
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Congenital heart abnormalities & other internal organ disorder		No	N/A
<1	Case Closed	6 months or less	P	multiple medical complications (pre-mature birth), mother's subs. abuse	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	A	newborn affected by maternal use of drugs of addiction		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	NC	SIDS		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	U	Ill-defined and unspecified cause		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	A	Asphyxiation, unsafe sleeping conditions	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Case Closed	6 months or less	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		No	N/A
<1	Case Closed	6 months or less	U	other cerebrovascular disease (co-sleeping with mother)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Epidermolysis bullosa letalis		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	H	ill-defined and unspecified cause, drug exposure (heroin)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/siblings)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/mother)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		No	N/A
<1	Open Protective	6 months or less	NC	Other specified congenital malformations of skin		No	N/A
1	Open Protective	more than 6 months	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause, unexplained brain injury	NEG/PHY	No	N/A
2	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Other specified disorder of the brain		No	N/A
2	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Other specified respiratory disorder		No	N/A
5	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Myocarditis, Unspecified		No	N/A
7	Case Closed	6 months or less	A	Alveolar and parietoalveolar conditions, drowning in bath tub	NEG	No	N/A
7	Open Protective	6 months or less	NC	Hypothalamic dysfunction		No	N/A
8	Open Protective	more than 6 months	H	Homicide, by drugs, medicaments and biological substances	NEG/PHY	No	N/A
9	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Congenital malformation of heart		No	N/A
9	Open Protective	more than 6 months	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause		No	N/A
9	Open Protective	6 months or less	NC	Systemic involvement of connective tissue, unspecified		Temp	N/A
9	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Unspecified convulsions		No	N/A
11	Case Closed	6 months or less	S	Suicide, asphyxiation		No	N/A
14	Open Protective	more than 6 months	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause		No	N/A
15	Open Protective	more than 6 months	NC	Neuroblastoma		No	N/A
15	Open Voluntary	more than 6 months	S	Suicide, by jumping from a high place		CRA	Res
16	Case Closed	6 months or less	A	head injury from MVA		No	N/A
16	Open Protective	more than 6 months	H	Homicide, by an unspecified firearm discharge while walking from school		Perm	Unrel
16	Open Protective	6 months or less	A	MVA		No	N/A
16	Open Protective	6 months or less	A	head injury from MVA		No	N/A
16	Open Protective	more than 6 months	S	Suicide, asphyxiation		Temp	N/A
16	Open Protective	more than 6 months	S	Suicide, gunshot wound	NEG	No	N/A
16	Open Protective	more than 6 months	S	Suicide, asphyxiation		Temp	Unrel

CODES: NC = natural causes; A = accident; H = homicide; P = pending investigation; U = undetermined by medical examiner; NEG = neglect; PHY = physical abuse; CRA = Children Requiring Assistance; TEMP = temporary custody; PERM = permanent custody; N/A = not in placement; HOSP = hospital; KIN = kinship foster home; UNREL = unrelated foster home; ONRUN = on the run from placement

* Manner of death as determined by medical examiner;

Table A4. CY'2011 Child Fatalities: 13 Children from Families Unknown to DCF or with Cases Closed more than Six Months

AGE (YEARS)	FAMILY CASE STATUS	DURATION OPENED/CLOSED	MANNER	FACTORS CAUSING OR CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH	NEGLECT	DCF	PLACEMENT
			* OF DEATH		/		
<1	Unknown Family	-----	NC	Anencephaly, mother's substance abuse	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Unknown Family	-----	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Case Closed	more than 6 months	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Unknown Family	-----	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	Case Closed	more than 6 months	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
1	Unknown Family	-----	A	left unattended in hot bus (over exposure to heat)	NEG	No	N/A
1	Unknown Family	-----	A	drowning in bath tub	NEG	No	N/A
1	Unknown Family	-----	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause, unexplained brain injury	PHY	No	N/A
2	Unknown Family	-----	A	drowning in bath tub	NEG	No	N/A
3	Unknown Family	-----	H	homicide, by hanging, strangulation, and suffocation	NEG/PHY	No	N/A
4	Unknown Family	-----	H	homicide, by unspecified means	PHY	No	N/A
6	Case Closed	more than 6 months	A	head injury from MVA, no seatbelt	NEG	No	N/A
7	Unknown Family	-----	A	drowning in pool	NEG	No	N/A

CODES: NC = natural causes; A = accident; H = homicide; P = pending investigation; U = undetermined by medical examiner; NEG = neglect; PHY = physical abuse; N/A = not in placement;
TEMP = temporary custody

* Manner of death as determined by medical examiner

Analysis of DCF Child Fatalities: 1989 – 2011 (Open or Recently Closed Cases)

Thirty-seven (37) children “known” to DCF died in 2011. Over the past 23 years, DCF child deaths (on open or recently closed cases) have ranged from a high of 89 to a low of 30 fatalities per year, with a median of 41 fatalities. Other than in 2008 (n=50), for the last ten years, the number of child fatalities has fallen below the median.

Table A5. Age of Children (1989 – 2011): Counts of Children

Calendar Year	Age of Children						Total
	Less than 28 days	28 days to < 1 yr.	1 yr. to < 2 yrs.	2 yrs. to < 5 yrs.	5 yrs. to < 12 yrs.	12 yrs. or Older	
1989:	No. 16	26	5	9	10	18	84
	19%	31%	6%	11%	12%	21%	100%
1990:	10	30	7	12	9	21	89
	11%	34%	8%	13%	10%	24%	100%
1991:	8	21	4	6	9	18	66
	12%	32%	6%	9%	14%	27%	100%
1992:	8	23	8	8	5	15	67
	12%	34%	12%	12%	7%	22%	100%
1993:	10	17	11	6	6	18	68
	15%	25%	16%	9%	9%	26%	100%
1994:	1	25	7	9	8	15	65
	2%	38%	11%	14%	12%	23%	100%
1995:	8	21	6	5	10	3	53
	15%	40%	11%	9%	19%	6%	100%
1996:	3	14	3	6	13	16	55
	5%	25%	5%	11%	24%	29%	100%
1997:	6	11	3	5	2	15	42
	14%	26%	7%	12%	5%	36%	100%
1998:	4	5	5	6	4	17	41
	10%	12%	12%	15%	10%	41%	100%
1999:	6	9	1	4	4	15	39
	15%	23%	3%	10%	10%	38%	100%
2000:	5	6	7	3	5	15	41
	12%	15%	17%	7%	12%	37%	100%
2001:	3	12	1	4	8	18	46
	7%	26%	2%	9%	17%	39%	100%
2002:	1	9	4	8	6	4	32
	3%	28%	12%	25%	19%	12%	100%
2003:	3	10	4	3	5	11	36
	8%	28%	11%	8%	14%	31%	100%
2004:	4	6	2	4	4	10	30
	13%	20%	7%	13%	13%	33%	100%
2005:	5	10	1	2	4	9	31
	16%	32%	3%	6%	13%	29%	100%
2006:	--	11	2	5	4	9	31
	--	35%	6%	16%	13%	29%	100%
2007:	4	13	2	2	5	8	34
	12%	38%	6%	6%	15%	24%	100%
2008:	6	15	1	2	2	12	38
	16%	39%	3%	5%	5%	32%	100%
2009:	4	13	4	5	10	14	50
	8%	26%	8%	10%	20%	28%	100%
2010:	6	7	3	3	2	9	30
	20%	23%	10%	10%	7%	30%	100%
2011:	4	11	1	2	9	10	37
	11%	30%	3%	5%	24%	27%	100%

Child Maltreatment-Related Fatalities: 2001 – 2011

The following data are limited to child fatalities where maltreatment was a direct cause of death or a contributing factor to the cause of death. While DCF has maintained data on maltreatment-related deaths since 1989, data collection was limited to children in families with an open or recently closed DCF case. Beginning in 2001, DCF began compiling data on maltreatment-related deaths of children whose families were unknown to DCF and children whose families had their DCF cases closed more than six months prior to the child's death. The following analysis includes maltreatment-related deaths for children in families known and unknown to the Department.

Of the 50 child fatalities in 2011 (37 for families known to DCF and 13 for families with non-current or no DCF history), there were 23 (46% of 50) child fatalities with supported allegations of neglect or physical abuse by a caretaker. **(Table A7)**

- Neglect was a factor in 18 deaths, physical abuse was factor in 2 deaths, and both neglect and physical abuse were factors in 3 deaths. **(Table A7)**
- Five (5) of the deaths involved multiple perpetrators **(Table A6)**. Perpetrators of neglect included 16 mothers, 4 fathers, 1 mother's boyfriend, 1 male relative, 1 female relative, and 2 unrelated adult caretakers. Perpetrators of physical abuse were 4 mothers, 2 boyfriends of mother and 1 unrelated adult caretaker. **(Table A8)**
- Maltreatment-related deaths have ranged from 7 to 23 per year, with a median of 17 deaths from 2001-2011. **(Table A7)**
- Maltreatment-related deaths of children under age one-year have ranged from 4 to 19 per year, with a median of 8 deaths from 2001-2011. **(Table A7)**
- All of the 23 victims of maltreatment were living at home/kin at the time of death. **(Table A7)**
- DCF case statuses of the 23 families:
 - Three (3) were open protective cases for 6 months or less.
 - Four (4) were open protective cases for more than 6 months.
 - Three (3) cases had been closed for 6 months or less.
 - Three (3) cases had been closed for more than 6 months.
 - Ten (10) families were unknown to DCF. **(Table A7)**

Summary of 23 Maltreatment-Related Child Fatalities in 2011

18 Neglect-Related Deaths:

- Seven (7) infants were at risk due to unsafe sleeping conditions (4 were possible SIDS).
- Three (3) premature infants had medical complications due to prenatal drug exposure (heroin/ cocaine/marijuana). One (1) six month old infant was exposed to drugs (heroin).
- Four (4) children drowned (bathtub, pool).
- One (1) child died from hyperthermia left unattended by driver on transportation (bus) for day care.
- One (1) child died from a head injury and lack of seat belt in a MVA.
- One (1) child died from gunshot wound using an unsecured weapon.

2 Physical Abuse-Related Deaths:

- One (1) child was victim of homicide.
- One (1) child died from unexplained brain injuries.

3 Physical Abuse- and Neglect-related Deaths:

- Two (2) children were victims of homicide.
- One (1) child died from unexplained brain injuries.

TABLE A6. CY'2011 Child Fatalities: Perpetrators of Child Maltreatment (23 Children from Families Known or Unknown to DCF)

AGE OF CHILD	PERPETRATOR	NEGLECT	PHYSICAL ABUSE	FACTORS CAUSING OR CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH	CURRENT* FAMILY ISSUES	MANNER** OF DEATH	TEEN MOTHER AT 1ST BIRTH
3 days	Mother	X		Anencephaly, mother's substance abuse		NC	Unknown
7 days	Mother	X		mult. medical issues (pre-mature birth), mother's subs. abuse	SA/MI	P	No
9 days	Mother	X		newborn affected by maternal use of of drugs of addiction	SA/MI	A	No
49 days	Parents	X		SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		U	Unknown
52 days	Mother	X		SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		U	Unknown
55 days	Mother	X		SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		U	Unknown
57 days	Mother	X		Asphyxiation, unsafe sleeping conditions		A	No
89 days	Mother	X		ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	DV	U	Yes
120 days	Parents	X		other cerebrovascular disease (co-sleeping with mother)	MI	U	No
175 days	Parents	X		ill-defined and unspecified cause, drug exposure (heroin)	SA	H	Yes
192 days	Mother	X		SIDS (co-sleeping w/siblings)		U	No
1 year	Caretaker	X		left unattended in hot bus (over exposure to heat)		A	Unknown
1 year	Maternal grandmother	X		drowning in bath tub		A	No
1 year	Caretaker		X	ill-defined and unspecified cause, unexplained brain injury		U	Unknown
1 year	Mother/Male Partner	X	X	ill-defined and unspecified cause, unexplained brain injury	SA/DV	P	Yes
2 years	Father	X		drowning in bath tub		A	Unknown
3 years	Mother	X	X	homicide, by hanging, strangulation, and suffocation		H	Unknown
4 years	Mother/Male Partner		X	homicide, by unspecified means		H	Unknown
6 years	Mother	X		head injury from MVA, no seatbelt		A	Unknown
7 years	Mother	X		Alveolar an parietoalveolar conditions, drowning in bath tub		A	No
7 years	Caretaker	X		drowning in pool		A	Unknown
8 years	Mother	X	X	Homicide, by drugs, medicaments and biological substances	MI	H	No
16 years	Self/Legal Guardian (uncle)	X		Suicide, gunshot wound	MI	S	Yes

CODES: NC = natural causes; A = accident; H = homicide; P = pending investigation; U = undetermined by medical examiner; SA = substance abuse; DV = domestic violence; MI = mental illness

* Applies to child's caretaker (mother, father, other) and child

** Manner of death as determined by medical examiner

Table A7. Profile of Child Neglect/Physical Abuse Deaths

2001-2011		Calendar Year										Total	
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		2011
Total Child Maltreatment Fatalities		19	17	16	8	7	10	19	18	15	18	23	170
Family Case Status:													
current protective case open 6 months or less		3	--	1	1	2	1	4	5	2	3	3	25
current protective case open more than 6 months		3	7	4	1	--	2	6	3	4	3	4	37
current CRA case (Children Requiring Assistance)		--	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	--	--	--	3
current voluntary open more than 6 months		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1
case closed 6 months or less		1	2	--	1	2	--	--	3	--	2	3	14
case closed more than 6 months		3	2	4	2	1	3	1	2	2	5	3	28
unknown to DCF		9	6	7	3	2	4	5	5	6	5	10	62
Maltreatment:													
neglect		11	12	10	6	5	8	13	15	9	10	18	117
physical abuse		3	4	1	2	1	1	3	1	3	2	2	23
neglect and physical abuse		5	1	5	--	1	1	3	2	3	6	3	30
Gender:													
male		10	11	9	7	6	7	7	8	9	11	11	96
female		9	6	7	1	1	3	12	10	6	7	12	74
Age (years):													
less than 1		11	9	6	6	4	5	11	10	7	8	11	88
1 - 5		6	6	6	--	2	3	3	4	3	9	8	50
6 - 11		2	2	2	--	1	1	5	1	3	--	3	20
12 - 17		--	--	2	2	--	1	--	3	2	1	1	12
Race:													
White		3	3	12	2	2	4	6	8	5	6	8	59
Black		2	2	--	--	2	2	4	2	4	4	5	27
Asian		--	--	1	--	--	--	--	1	2	--	1	5
multi-racial		1	7	1	1	--	1	2	1	1	4	1	20
unknown		13	5	2	5	3	3	7	6	3	4	8	59
Hispanic Origin:													
yes		1	4	3	3	--	3	6	4	4	3	7	38
no		6	5	11	2	4	7	9	11	11	12	5	83
unknown		12	8	2	3	3	--	4	3	--	3	11	49
Placement Status:													
not in placement		16	14	16	7	5	9	19	14	15	17	23	155
unrelated foster home		1	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
institution (hospital/nursing home)		2	3	--	1	1	1	--	4	--	1	--	13
Manner of Death:													
natural causes*		4	3	3	4	1	2	--	5	--	1	1	24
accident		6	7	7	2	3	4	8	8	4	6	8	63
suicide		--	--	1	--	1	--	--	--	1	--	1	4
homicide		8	5	5	2	2	3	7	3	6	8	4	53
undetermined/pending**		1	2	--	--	--	1	4	2	4	3	9	26

* Premature babies dying from congenital conditions (neglect) or placental abruption (physical abuse) due to their mothers' use of substances during pregnancy.

** Manner of death could not be determined following an autopsy by a medical examiner (or pending completion of an investigation).

Table A8. Perpetrators of Child Neglect/Physical Abuse		Calendar Year											Total
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
2001-2011													
*Perpetrator:	mother	10	11	13	4	5	6	15	13	9	13	16	117
(Neglect)	father	2	3	6	2	1	2	3	4	7	6	4	40
	stepfather	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1
	mother's boyfriend	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	1	1	4
	father's girlfriend	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	3
	grandmother	--	1	2	--	1	1	--	1	2	--	1	9
	grandfather	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1
	aunt	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
	uncle	1	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	3
	female legal guardian	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	2
	foster parent	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
	day care provider	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	provider (after school program)	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	baby sitter	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	2	--	1	--	4
	unrelated adult caretaker	--	--	--	1	--	2	--	--	--	--	2	5
	nursing home/rehab staff	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	1
*Perpetrator:	mother	1	3	2	1	1	--	2	1	2	4	4	21
(Physical Abuse)	father	4	1	1	1	--	--	1	--	4	3	--	15
	mother's boyfriend	1	1	2	--	--	--	3	--	1	1	2	11
	father's girlfriend	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	uncle	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	foster parent	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	baby sitter	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	1
	unrelated adult caretaker	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
	**non-caretaker	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	2
	unknown	1	--	1	--	--	2	--	--	--	1	--	5

* Perpetrators who neglect and physically abuse a child are counted under each category. If more than one perpetrator victimized a child, each perpetrator is counted under the appropriate category(ies).

** Non-caretaker was the mother's former female partner (2 siblings died in arson fire).