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**MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

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**2012**

**Analysis of Child Fatalities  
& Near Fatalities**

**April 2014**



## Child Near Fatalities in 2012

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 18 near fatalities reported to DCF during 2012 (13 boys and 5 girls). Abusive head trauma injuries<sup>1</sup> were diagnosed in 12 of the 18 near fatalities. Four (4) of the 12 abusive head trauma victims also had bodily injuries (fractures and bruises). The remaining 6 near fatalities had the following injuries: skull fracture (2), traumatic neck/throat injuries (2 siblings), internal injuries/bruises/fracture (1), and abdominal injuries from a motor vehicle accident (1).

Neglect was a factor in the near fatalities of 2 children, physical abuse was a factor for 6 children, and both physical abuse and neglect were factors for 10 children. The victimized children included 13 (72%) infants (less than 1 year old), 1 two-year old, 2 three-year olds, 1 five-year old, and 1 eight-year old. Nine (9) of the children were White and 2 were Black. Race was unknown for 7 children. Seven (7) of the 18 children with near fatal injuries were identified as Hispanic.

Of the 17 families (2 child victims were siblings), 8 were known to DCF (3 open protective and 5 closed cases) and 9 were unknown (no prior history). None of the children were in DCF custody and none were in placement. Median ages of the perpetrators were 23.5 years for mothers and 27 years for fathers. Seven mothers and 5 fathers had a prior history with DCF. Current family issues were mental illness (6), domestic violence (5), and substance abuse (6). **(Tables A1 and A2)**

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<sup>1</sup> 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. CY2012 Child Near Fatalities: 18 Children from Families Known and Unknown to DCF**

CHILD'S AGE	FAMILY CASE STATUS	DURATION OPENED/CLOSED	INJURIES	ABUSE/NEGLECT	DCF CUSTODY	PLACEMENT TYPE
26 days	open protective	more than 6 mos.	skull fracture, bruises and abrasions	NEG	NO	N/A
40 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
52 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma, shoulder fracture	PHYS	NO	N/A
55 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS	NO	N/A
68 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
100 days	closed	6 mos. or less	abusive head trauma, bruises to body	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
109 days	open protective	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma, bruises, fractured ribs	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
128 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS	NO	N/A
141 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
192 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
211 days	no previous history	----	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
236 days	closed	more than 6 mos.	abusive head trauma	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
278 days	no previous history	----	skull fracture	PHYS	NO	N/A
2 years	closed	6 mos. or less	abusive head trauma, bruises, rib and spinal fractures	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
3 years *	open protective	more than 6 mos.	traumatic neck/throat injuries	PHYS	NO	N/A
3 years	closed	more than 6 mos.	internal injuries, bruises, fracture	PHYS/NEG	NO	N/A
5 years	no previous history	----	abdominal injuries from MVA	NEG	NO	N/A
8 years *	open protective	more than 6 mos.	traumatic neck/throat injuries	PHYS	NO	N/A

CODES: NEG = neglect; PHYS = physical abuse; SEX = sexual abuse; N/A = not in placement

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'2012 Child Near Fatalities: Perpetrators (18 Children from Families Known or Unknown to DCF)**

CHILD'S AGE	PERPETRATOR	NEGLECT	PHYSICAL ABUSE	INJURIES	CURRENT FAMILY ISSUES	TEENAGE MOTHER AT 1ST BIRTH
26 days	mother	X	----	skull fracture, bruises and abrasions	SA	----
40 days	father	X	X	abusive head trauma	SA/DV/MI	----
52 days	mother	----	X	abusive head trauma, shoulder fracture	DV/MI	----
	father	----	X			
55 days	father	----	X	abusive head trauma	----	----
68 days	mother	X	X	abusive head trauma	----	----
	male partner	X	X		----	----
100 days	mother	X	----	abusive head trauma, bruises to body	DV	YES
	step-father	X	X			
109 days	mother	X	----	abusive head trauma, bruises, fractured ribs	SA/DV/MI	
	father	----	X		----	----
128 days	father	----	X	abusive head trauma	----	----
141 days	mother	X	----	abusive head trauma	----	YES
	father	X	----		----	----
	unrelated babysitter	----	X		----	----
192 days	day care provider	X	X	abusive head trauma	----	----
211 days	mother	X	X	abusive head trauma	----	----
	father	X	X			
236 days	father	X	X	abusive head trauma	SA/MI	
278 days	unknown	----	X	skull fracture	----	----
2 years	mother	X	----	abusive head trauma, bruises, rib and spinal fractures	DV/MI	YES
	male partner	----	X			
3 years *	mother	----	X	traumatic neck/throat injuries	MI	YES
3 years	mother	X	----	internal injuries, bruises, fracture	SA	----
	male partner	X	X			
5 years	male partner	X	----	abdominal injuries from MVA	SA	----
8 years *	mother	----	X	traumatic neck/throat injuries	MI	YES

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 2012

### Child Fatalities for Families Open or Recently Involved with DCF

All child deaths in families open or recently involved (“known”) to DCF are reported to the Case Investigation Unit, regardless of how the child died.<sup>2</sup> 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 report<sup>3</sup> received prior to the child’s death<sup>4</sup>;
- 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-nine (39) children in families with an open or recently<sup>5</sup> closed DCF case status died in 2012. As determined by the medical examiner, 10 of these children died from natural causes, 3 were homicides, and 7 died in accidents. Ten (10) 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 9 children, the manner of death was “undetermined” following an autopsy by a medical examiner.<sup>6</sup> Child maltreatment (neglect/physical abuse) was found by DCF to be the cause or contributing factor in 7 of the 39 deaths. **(Table A3)**

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of these deceased children were infants (less than one-year old), 13% were 1-6 years old, and 21% were adolescents (12-17 years old). Six (6) of the 39 children were in DCF custody at the time of their death. Of the 6 children in DCF custody, 5 were in placement: two (2) were hospitalized infants, 2 were infants in foster homes (unrelated and kinship) and 1 was a 14-year-old boy on the run from placement. **(Table A3)**

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

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

<sup>4</sup> This 51A report under investigation must be independent of, and filed prior to, the 51A report filed on the child’s death or the factors directly contributing to the child’s death.

<sup>5</sup> Families with cases that closed within the six months preceding the child’s death

<sup>6</sup> 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.

- Hospitalized infant: manner of death “pending investigation” (prenatal drug exposure, premature birth, congenital); supported allegations of neglect by parents
- Hospitalized infant: manner of death “accidental” (prenatal drug exposure, premature birth); supported allegation of neglect by mother
- Foster care infant (unrelated home): manner of death “undetermined” (SIDS/unsafe sleeping conditions)
- Foster care infant (kinship home): manner of death “pending completion of investigation” (ill-defined and unspecified cause)
- Teenage boy on the run from placement: manner of death “accidental” (injuries from motor vehicle accident)

Over the past 24 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 was the rise in infant deaths, which in 2012 was 67% (n=26) of the 39 deaths. Eight (8) of the infant deaths were determined by the medical examiner to be from natural causes, 2 were accidents, 1 was a homicide, 7 were pending an investigation, and 8 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 10 of the 26 infants did not meet the standards set in the MA Department of Public Health’s Safe Sleep policy. **(Tables A3 and A5)**

Regardless of setting, most deaths have been due to natural causes and to a lesser degree accidents. In the past 12 years (2001-2012), 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 12 children were reported to DCF and found to be maltreatment-related. Six (6) children were from families not previously known to DCF and 6 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 51 child fatalities (39 for families known to DCF and 12 for families with non-current or no DCF history), 17 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 10 families known and 7 families unknown to DCF. The medical examiner was not able to determine the manner of death for 12 (71%) of these fatalities. Of the remaining fatalities of children in unsafe sleep settings, 1 was determined by the medical examiner to be accidental and 4 were pending the completion of an investigation by the police and medical examiners. DCF investigators supported neglect as a contributing factor in 9 of the 17 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	---	---	---	---
2012:				
Natural Causes	---	---	---	---
<b>Accident</b>	---	---	1 (1 neglect)	---
Undetermined	---	6 (4 neglect)	---	6 (3 neglect)
Pending Investigation	---	---	---	4 (1 neglect)

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



**Table A3. CY'2012 Child Fatalities: 39 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	6 months or less	P	prenatal drug exposure (cocaine), premature, congenital	NEG	TEMP	HOSP
<1	open protective	more than 6 months	A	prenatal drug exposure (cocaine poisoning), premature	NEG	TEMP	HOSP
<1**	open protective	more than 6 months	NC	bacterial sepsis in newborn, extreme prematurity, congenital		NO	N/A
<1**	open protective	more than 6 months	NC	bacterial sepsis in newborn, extreme prematurity, congenital		NO	N/A
<1	open voluntary	more than 6 months	NC	hypoplasia and dysplasia of lung (congenital malformations)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/parents)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	NC	extreme prematurity, chronic lung disease (congenital), and other medical issues		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/father)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	more than 6 months	NC	hydrops fetalis (fetal edema), congenital, premature		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	more than 6 months	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/parents)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	SIDS (unsafe sleeping conditions)		TEMP	UNREL
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/mother)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	NC	pulmonary hypertension of newborn, congenital, premature		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	more than 6 months	U	ill-defined and unspecified (co-sleeping w/mother and brother), premature		NO	N/A
<1	case closed	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/mother)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	NC	congenital malformations of heart		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause		TEMP	KIN
<1	open protective	6 months or less	H	hyperthermia, mother's substance abuse	NEG	NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleep conditions)		NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	U	head and neck injuries (undetermined intent)		NO	N/A
<1	case closed	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause		NO	N/A
<1	case closed	6 months or less	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (hypoxic brain injury)	NEG/PHY	NO	N/A
<1	open protective	6 months or less	A	hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy from near drowning in pond	NEG	NO	N/A
<1	open protective	more than 6 months	NC	metabolic disorder		NO	N/A
1	open protective	more than 6 months	U	acute tracheitis		NO	N/A
1	open protective	more than 6 months	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (seizure history), congenital		NO	N/A
3	open protective	more than 6 months	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause		NO	N/A
5	open protective	more than 6 months	A	head injury from MVA (pedestrian)		NO	N/A
6	case closed	6 months or less	P	injuries from house fire		NO	N/A
12	open protective	more than 6 months	A	head injury from MVA		NO	N/A
14	open protective	more than 6 months	A	head injury from MVA		TEMP	ONRUN
15	case closed	6 months or less	H	gunshot wounds (assaulted police)		NO	N/A
15	open CRA	more than 6 months	H	stab wounds		NO	N/A
15	open protective	more than 6 months	A	head injury from fall off 20-30 ft. wall		TEMP	N/A
16	open voluntary	more than 6 months	NC	renal failure, congenital		NO	N/A
17	open protective	6 months or less	A	drowning in pool		NO	N/A
17	open protective	6 months or less	NC	seizure disorder		NO	N/A

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; \*\* Twin boys

**Table A4. CY'2012 Child Fatalities: 12 Children from Families Unknown to DCF or with Cases Closed more than Six Months**

AGE (YEARS)	FAMILY CASE STATUS	DURATION OPENED/CLOSED	MANNER* OF DEATH	FACTORS CAUSING OR CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH	NEGLECT/ ABUSE	DCF CUSTODY	PLACEMENT TYPE
<1	case closed	more than 6 months	P	asphyxiation from a grape	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	U	ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	case closed	more than 6 months	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	case closed	more than 6 months	P	ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/parents)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/mother)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	U	SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	A	asphyxiation (unsafe sleeping conditions)	NEG	No	N/A
<1	case closed	more than 6 months	H	drowning in bathtub	NEG	No	N/A
<1	unknown family	-----	A	left unattended in hot car (hyperthermia)	NEG	No	N/A
2	case closed	more than 6 months	A	drowning in pool	NEG	No	N/A
7	case closed	more than 6 months	H	gunshot wounds	PHY	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 – 2012 (Open or Recently Closed Cases)

Thirty-nine (39) children “known” to DCF died in 2012. Over the past 24 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. Higher than prior years, fatalities involving children under the age of one-year represented 67% of 2012 fatalities.

**Table A5. Age of Children (1989 –2012): 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 19%	26 31%	5 6%	9 11%	10 12%	18 21%	84 100%
1990:	10 11%	30 34%	7 8%	12 13%	9 10%	21 24%	89 100%
1991:	8 12%	21 32%	4 6%	6 9%	9 14%	18 27%	66 100%
1992:	8 12%	23 34%	8 12%	8 12%	5 7%	15 22%	67 100%
1993:	10 15%	17 25%	11 16%	6 9%	6 9%	18 26%	68 100%
1994:	1 2%	25 38%	7 11%	9 14%	8 12%	15 23%	65 100%
1995:	8 15%	21 40%	6 11%	5 9%	10 19%	3 6%	53 100%
1996:	3 5%	14 25%	3 5%	6 11%	13 24%	16 29%	55 100%
1997:	6 14%	11 26%	3 7%	5 12%	2 5%	15 36%	42 100%
1998:	4 10%	5 12%	5 12%	6 15%	4 10%	17 41%	41 100%
1999:	6 15%	9 23%	1 3%	4 10%	4 10%	15 38%	39 100%
2000:	5 12%	6 15%	7 17%	3 7%	5 12%	15 37%	41 100%
2001:	3 7%	12 26%	1 2%	4 9%	8 17%	18 39%	46 100%
2002:	1 3%	9 28%	4 12%	8 25%	6 19%	4 12%	32 100%
2003:	3 8%	10 28%	4 11%	3 8%	5 14%	11 31%	36 100%
2004:	4 13%	6 20%	2 7%	4 13%	4 13%	10 33%	30 100%
2005:	5 16%	10 32%	1 3%	2 6%	4 13%	9 29%	31 100%
2006:	-- --	11 35%	2 6%	5 16%	4 13%	9 29%	31 100%
2007:	4 12%	13 38%	2 6%	2 6%	5 15%	8 24%	34 100%
2008:	6 16%	15 39%	1 3%	2 5%	2 5%	12 32%	38 100%
2009:	4 8%	13 26%	4 8%	5 10%	10 20%	14 28%	50 100%
2010:	6 20%	7 23%	3 10%	3 10%	2 7%	9 30%	30 100%
2011:	4 11%	11 30%	1 3%	2 5%	9 24%	10 27%	37 100%
2012:	5 13%	21 54%	2 5%	1 3%	2 5%	8 21%	39 100%

## Child Maltreatment-Related Fatalities: 2001 – 2012

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 51 child fatalities in 2012 (39 for families known to DCF and 12 for families with non-current or no DCF history), there were 19 (37% of 51) child fatalities with supported allegations of neglect or physical abuse by a caretaker. **(Table A7)**

- Neglect was a factor in 17 deaths, physical abuse was factor in 1 death, and both neglect and physical abuse were factors in 1 death. **(Table A7)**
- Ten (10) of the deaths involved multiple perpetrators **(Table A6)**. Perpetrators of neglect included 15 mothers, 11 fathers, 1 female relative, and 1 male relative. Perpetrators of physical abuse were 1 father and 1 male relative. **(Table A8)**
- Maltreatment-related deaths have ranged from 7 to 23 per year, with a median of 17-18 deaths from 2001-2012. **(Table A7)**
- Maltreatment-related deaths of children under age one year have ranged from 4 to 19 per year, with a median of 8-9 deaths from 2001-2012. **(Table A7)**
- Seventeen (17) of the 19 victims of maltreatment were living at home/kin at the time of death **(Table A7)**. Two (2) were in hospitals.
- DCF case statuses of the 19 families:
  - Five (5) were open protective cases for 6 months or less.
  - One (1) was an open protective case for more than 6 months.
  - One (1) case had been closed for 6 months or less.
  - Six (6) cases had been closed for more than 6 months.
  - Six (6) families were unknown to DCF. **(Table A7)**

## **Summary of 19 Maltreatment-Related Child Fatalities in 2012**

### **17 Neglect-Related Deaths:**

- Three (3) children drowned (bathtub, pool, pond).
- Nine (9) infants were at risk due to unsafe sleeping conditions (4 were possible SIDS).
- Two (2) premature infants had medical complications due to prenatal drug exposure (cocaine).
- Two (2) children died from hyperthermia while left unattended in cars.
- One (1) child asphyxiated on a grape.

### **1 Physical Abuse-Related Death:**

- Child died from gunshot wounds (father perpetrator)

### **1 Physical Abuse- and Neglect-related Death:**

- Infant: ill-defined and unspecified cause (unexplained brain injury)

**TABLE A6. CY'2012 Child Fatalities: Perpetrators of Child Maltreatment (19 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
<1 day	parents	x		prenatal drug exposure (cocaine), premature, congenital	SA/MI	P	UNKNOWN
1 day	mother	x		prenatal drug exposure (cocaine poisoning), premature	SA/MI	A	NO
31 days	parents	x		asphyxiation from a grape		P	UNKNOWN
38 days	parents	x		ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	MI	U	UNKNOWN
45 days	parents	x		SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)	MI	U	UNKNOWN
61 days	parents	x		SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)	SA	U	UNKNOWN
79 days	parents	x		ill-defined and unspecified cause (co-sleeping w/parents)	SA	P	UNKNOWN
88 days	parents	x		ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	SA	U	NO
118 days	mother	x		SIDS (co-sleeping w/mother)	MI	U	UNKNOWN
130 days	parents	x		SIDS (co-sleeping w/parents)		U	UNKNOWN
153 days	parents	x		ill-defined and unspecified cause (unsafe sleeping conditions)	SA/DV	U	YES
178 days	aunt	x		asphyxiation (unsafe sleeping conditions)		A	UNKNOWN
187 days	mother	x		hyperthermia, mother's substance abuse	SA/MI	H	YES
275 days	mother	x		drowning in bathtub		H	UNKNOWN
281 days	legal guardian (uncle)	x	x	ill-defined and unspecified cause (hypoxic brain injury)	MI	P	YES
289 days	parents	x		left unattended in hot car (hyperthermia)	MI/DV	A	UNKNOWN
332 days	mother	x		hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy from near drowning in pond		A	NO
2 years	father	x		drowning in pool		A	UNKNOWN
7 years	father		x	gunshot wounds	MI/DV	H	UNKNOWN

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**

	Calendar Year												Total
	2001-2012												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
Total Child Maltreatment Fatalities	19	17	16	8	7	10	19	18	15	18	23	19	189
Family Case Status:													
current protective case open 6 months or less	3	--	1	1	2	1	4	5	2	3	3	5	30
current protective case open more than 6 months	3	7	4	1	--	2	6	3	4	3	4	1	38
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	1	15
case closed more than 6 months	3	2	4	2	1	3	1	2	2	5	3	6	34
unknown to DCF	9	6	7	3	2	4	5	5	6	5	10	6	68
Maltreatment:													
neglect	11	12	10	6	5	8	13	15	9	10	18	17	134
physical abuse	3	4	1	2	1	1	3	1	3	2	2	1	24
neglect and physical abuse	5	1	5	--	1	1	3	2	3	6	3	1	31
Gender:													
male	10	11	9	7	6	7	7	8	9	11	11	13	109
female	9	6	7	1	1	3	12	10	6	7	12	6	80
Age (years):													
less than 1	11	9	6	6	4	5	11	10	7	8	11	17	105
1 – 5	6	6	6	--	2	3	3	4	3	9	8	1	51
6 – 11	2	2	2	--	1	1	5	1	3	--	3	1	21
12 - 17	--	--	2	2	--	1	--	3	2	1	1	--	12
Race:													
White	3	3	12	2	2	4	6	8	5	6	8	8	67
Black	2	2	--	--	2	2	4	2	4	4	5	1	28
Asian	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	1	2	--	1	--	5
multi-racial	1	7	1	1	--	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	21
unknown	13	5	2	5	3	3	7	6	3	4	8	9	68
Hispanic Origin:													
yes	1	4	3	3	--	3	6	4	4	3	7	9	47
no	6	5	11	2	4	7	9	11	11	12	5	9	92
unknown	12	8	2	3	3	--	4	3	--	3	11	1	50
Placement Status:													
not in placement	16	14	16	7	5	9	19	14	15	17	23	17	172
unrelated foster home	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
institution (hospital/nursing home)	2	3	--	1	1	1	--	4	--	1	--	2	15
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	5	68
suicide	--	--	1	--	1	--	--	--	1	--	1	--	4
homicide	8	5	5	2	2	3	7	3	6	8	4	3	56
undetermined/pending**	1	2	--	--	--	1	4	2	4	3	9	11	37

\* 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	2012	
<b>2001-2012</b>														
*Perpetrator:	mother	10	11	13	4	5	6	15	13	9	13	16	15	132
(Neglect)	father	2	3	6	2	1	2	3	4	7	6	4	11	51
	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	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	3
	uncle	1	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	4
	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	--	1	16
	mother's boyfriend	1	1	2	--	--	--	3	--	1	1	2	--	11
	father's girlfriend	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
	uncle	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	2
	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).