



**Injury Prevention Center**  
of Greater Dallas

**Infant mortality and injury-related deaths in  
Dallas County  
A five year review**

September 20, 2013





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## Dallas County Child Death Review Team

*A mechanism to describe the causes and circumstances of death among our children.*

### **GOAL:**

- To provide accurate information on how and why children are dying;
- To improve the response to child fatalities;
- To reduce the number of preventable child deaths.

- ❖ Established in 1992
- ❖ Texas Family Code, Chapter 264
- ❖ Multidisciplinary agencies review and share information on each child death
  - Law enforcement
  - Medical examiner
  - Child protective services
  - Health care providers
  - District Attorney



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## Dallas County Child Death Review Team

- ❖ Review more than 400 child deaths each year
- ❖ Cases include:
  - 0-17 year olds
  - Natural, homicide, suicide, unintentional or undetermined deaths
  - Natural deaths, if child's residence is Dallas County
  - All other child deaths, if incident occurred in Dallas County
  - If still birth is determined, the case is *not* included
- ❖ Data entered into the National Maternal Child Health Center for Child Death Review



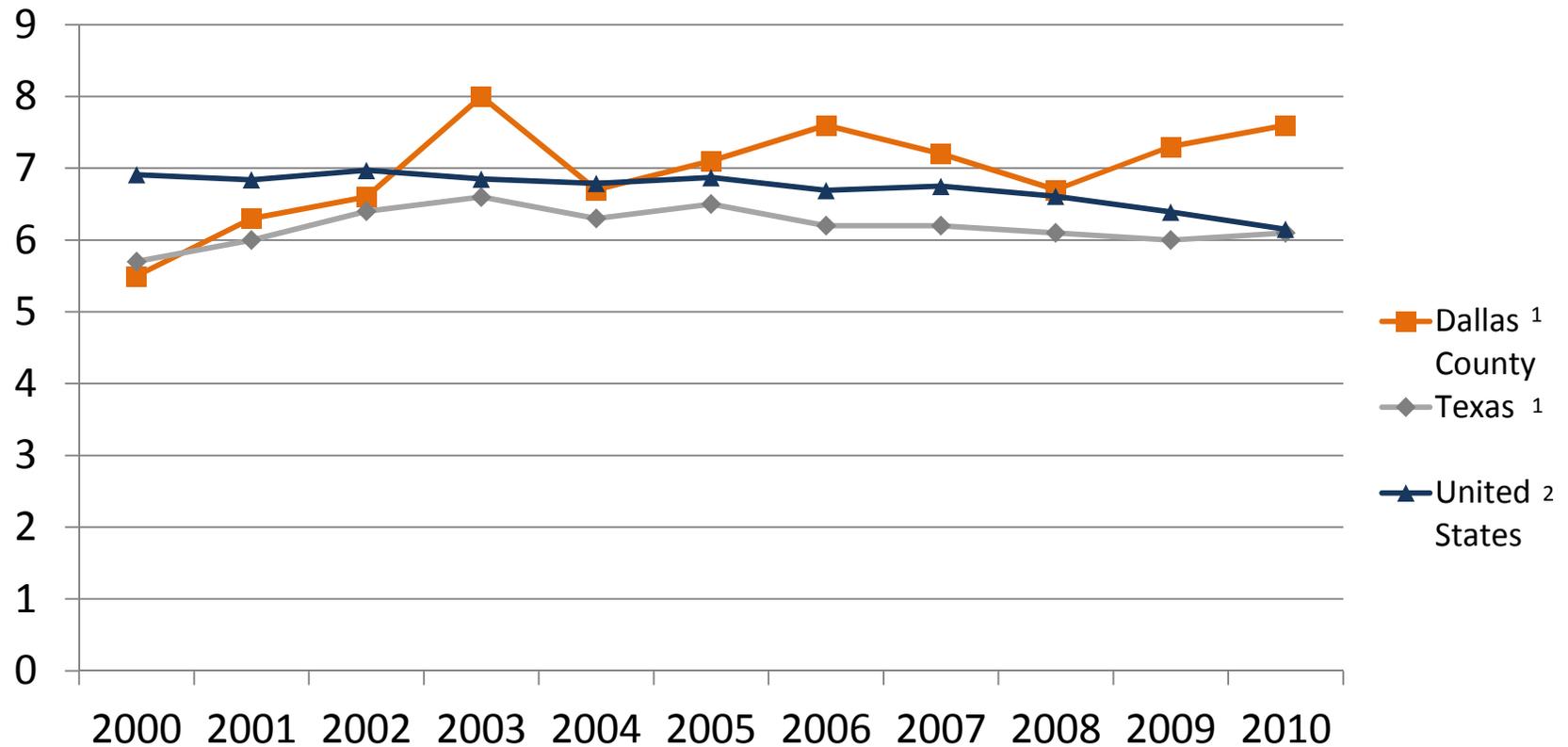
**NATIONAL MCH CENTER  
FOR CHILD DEATH REVIEW**  
KEEPING KIDS ALIVE





## Infant mortality rates

< 1 year, 2000-2010



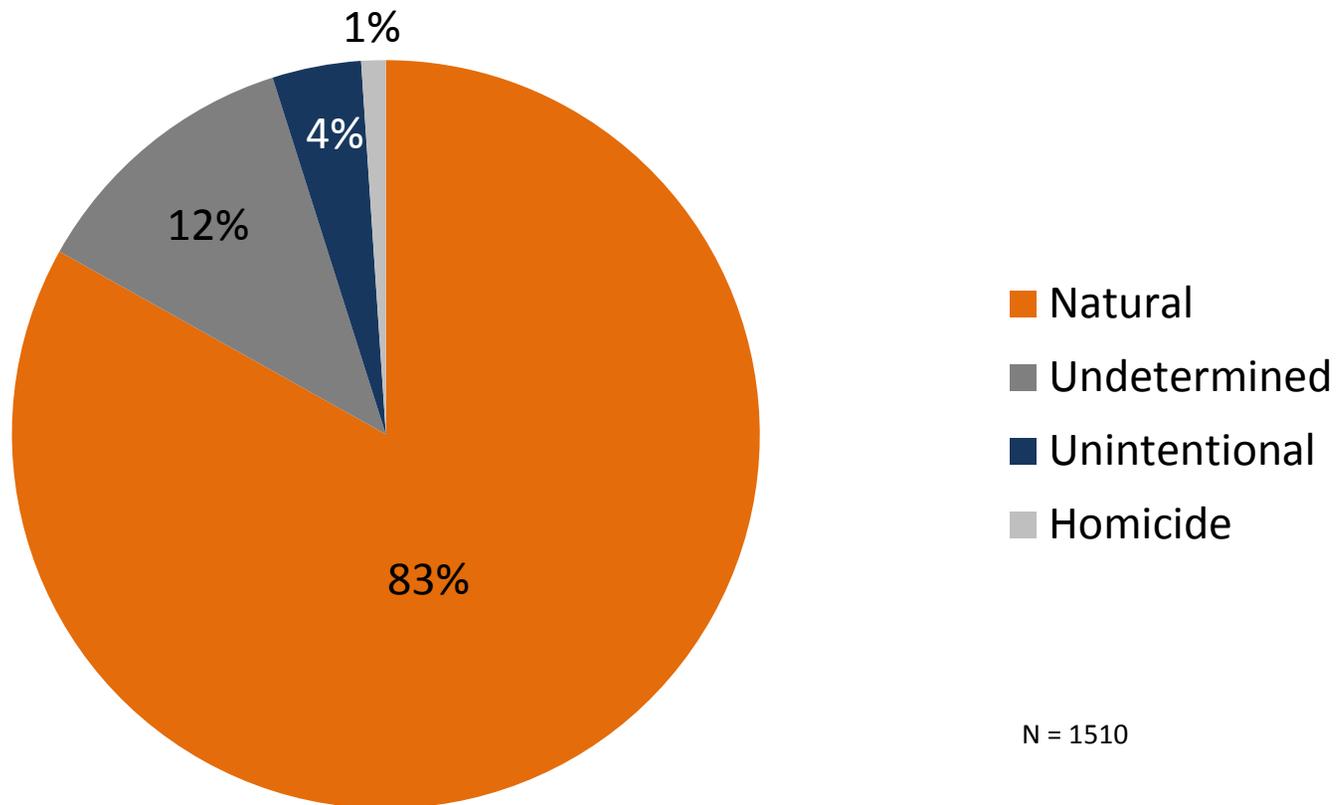
1 Texas Department of State Health Services.

2 NCHS data brief, no 120. National Center for Health Statistics. 2013



## Infant mortality by manner

<1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011





## Infant mortality demographics

<1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011

	Number	Rate*
Total = 1510		
<b>Race</b>		
Black	545	13.52
Hispanic	664	5.77
Other	31	1.57
White	225	5.34
Unknown	44	---
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	872	8.20
Female	638	6.22

73%  
received  
some  
prenatal  
care

20% had  
medical  
complications  
during  
pregnancy

\*rate per 1000



## 5 Leading Causes of Infant Mortality Injury Death

< 1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011

Rank	
1	Unintentional Asphyxia 41
2	Homicide Blunt force trauma 13
3	Unintentional Motor vehicle 7
4	Unintentional Drowning 2
5	Unintentional Hyperthermia 2



## Sleep-related infant deaths

< 1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011

Sleep-related infant deaths include deaths classified by the Medical Examiner's office as unintentional, undetermined or natural manners of death

### Sleep-related infant deaths (216 deaths)

**Other sleep-related infant deaths = 194 deaths (90 percent)**

Positional asphyxia/unintentional suffocation = 41 cases  
(21 percent)

Undetermined/SUDI = 153 (79 percent)

**Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) = 22 cases (10 percent)**

Death of an infant that cannot be explained after death scene investigation, complete autopsy, and review of medical history



## Sleep-related deaths by place found

Dallas County, 2007-2011



**Adult bed 51%**



**Crib 22%**



**Couch 8%**



**Bassinet 5%**



**Car seat 2%**

**Other 7%**

**Unknown 5%**

N = 216



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## Crib Bedding





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## Crib Bedding





## Safe to Sleep Campaign

Use a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved\* crib, covered by a fitted sheet.

Do not use pillows, blankets, sheepskins, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area.

Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area.

Do not smoke or let anyone smoke around your baby.



Make sure nothing covers the baby's head.

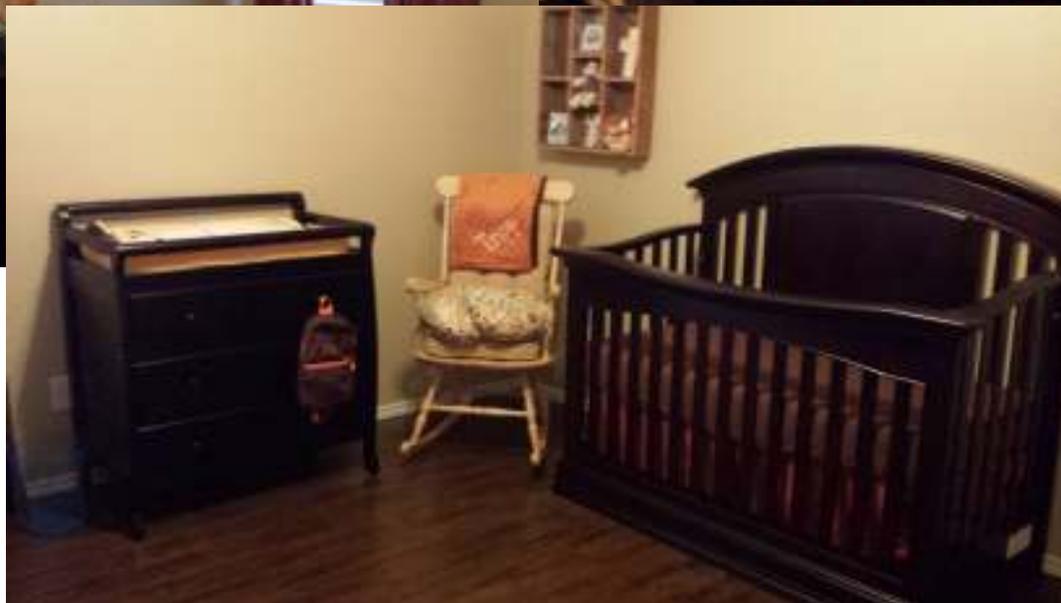
Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night.

Dress your baby in light sleep clothing, such as a one-piece sleeper, and do not use a blanket.

Baby should not sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair alone, with you, or with anyone else.



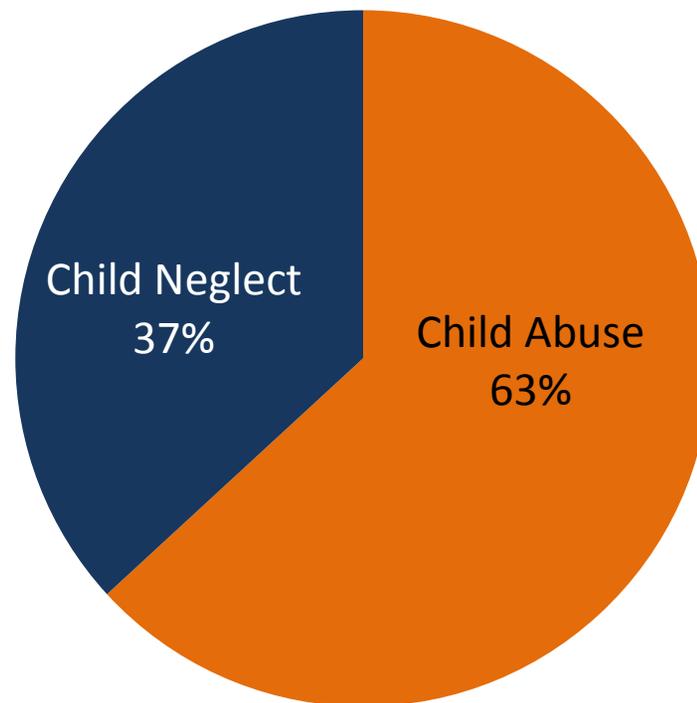
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## Child maltreatment by type

< 1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011



N = 38



## Demographics of child maltreatment victims

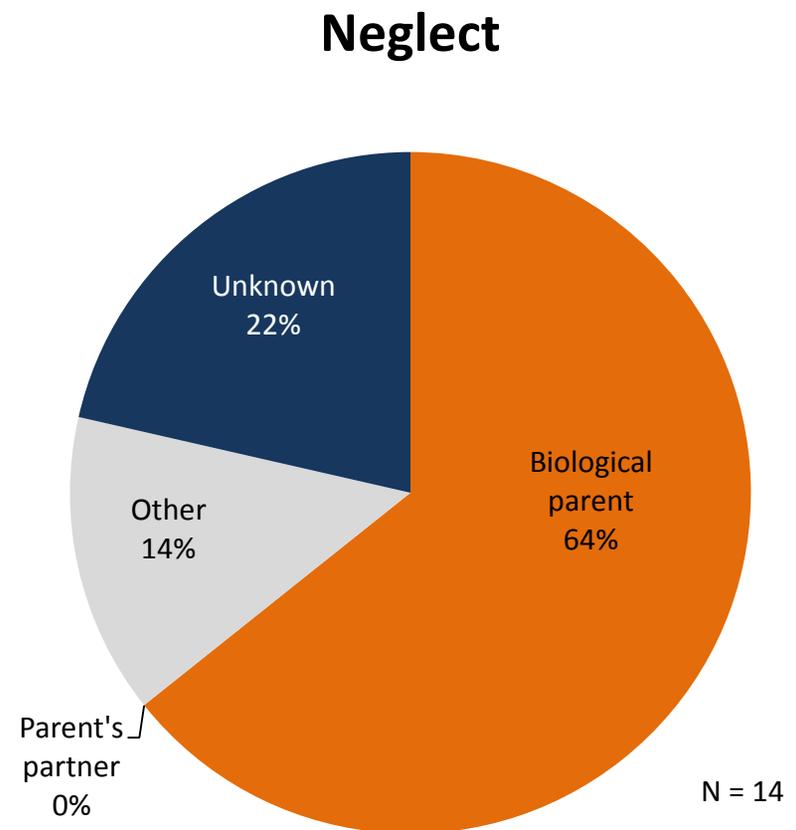
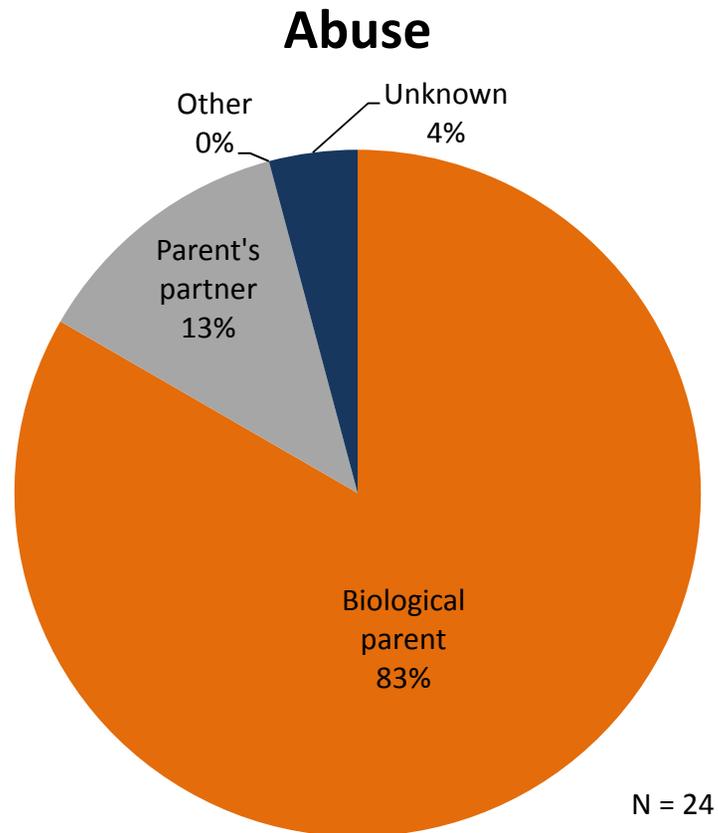
< 1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011

	Number	Percentage
<b>Race</b>		
Black	16	42%
White	4	10%
Hispanic	17	45%
Other	0	0
Unknown	1	3%
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	18	47%
Female	20	53%
<b>Age</b>		
< 6 months	20	53%
≥ 6 months	18	47%



## Perpetrators of child abuse and child neglect

< 1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011





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## Infant deaths from motor vehicle crashes

<1 year, Dallas County, 2007-2011

**5 infants died in Dallas County from 2007-2011 from motor vehicle crashes  
100% were motor vehicle occupants**



3 out of 5 were improperly restrained



3 out of 5 involved speeding



2 out of 5 involved drivers of  
other vehicle who were impaired



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## Recommendations from the Dallas County CDRT

**Child Abuse Prevention:** Current Texas Family Code 261.102 states that professionals must report a death to Child Protective Services (CPS) if they believe a child had been abused or neglected.

The Dallas County CDRT identified **57 child deaths** that occurred between 2007-2011 that were **not reported to CPS but should have been**.

Child deaths resulting from possible abuse and/or neglect may have been missed due to the lack of notification and investigation by CPS. In addition, CPS and other social service organizations may miss the opportunity to provide services to the families of children who have died. Therefore, it is recommended that the current Texas Family Code be amended to add that **any child less than 6 years old that dies due to non-natural or unexplained causes**, excluding motor vehicle occupant deaths unless there is suspected substance abuse, **be reported to CPS to better identify possible cases of abuse and/or neglect**.



## Recommendations from the Dallas County CDRT

**Ban the sale of baby bumper pads:** Ban the sale of baby bumper pads that are made of a non-mesh type material resting directly above the mattress running along the length of each of the interior sides of the crib (legislation language from Maryland).

- There is a precedent for the ban of bumper pads. This year, the state of **Maryland banned the sale of baby bumper pads**. This **includes online sales** to residents of Maryland.
- From 2007-2011, there were 216 sleep-related infant deaths in Dallas County, which is 14.3 percent of the infant deaths in Dallas County during this time.
- Unsafe sleep surfaces include: an adult bed, couch, soft pillows, **crib with bumpers, pillows or blankets**, or air mattress.



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**Questions?**

