

**C** HILD  
**F** ATALITY  
**R** EVIEW

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**CHILD DEATHS  
FOR THE YEAR 2002**

**REPORT PREPARED BY:**

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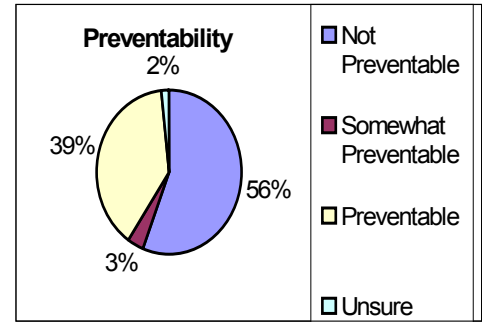
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## ***STARK COUNTY CHILD FATALITY REVIEW OF 2002 CHILD DEATHS***

When a child dies it is usually a tragic and unexpected event. A child's death is an indicator of a problem that must be addressed in the community. It is important to remember that for every child that dies, there are many others who are injured or disabled. During 2002, 59 deaths were reported to children from birth through 17 years of age. Natural deaths accounted for the majority of these deaths, followed by accidents, homicide and suicide. Causes of death included: natural deaths, such as prematurity, cancer, SIDS, child abuse, motor vehicle accidents, house fires, and deaths caused by fire/arms and weapons. As you can see by the graph to the right, many of these deaths could have been prevented. In fact, 42% of the 59 deaths are believed to have been at least somewhat preventable. Even one preventable death is too many. As a society we need to find ways to stop the useless deaths of our county's youth in order to assure a successful future.



### ***PURPOSE***

In October of 2000, legislation was enacted that required every county in Ohio to create a Child Fatality Review Board to review the deaths of all children aged 17 and under. The ultimate purpose of this Review Board is to decrease the incidence of preventable child deaths.

- Promoting cooperation, collaboration, and communication between all groups, professions, agencies, or entities that serve families and children.
- Maintaining a comprehensive database of all fetal and child deaths that occur in Stark County in order to develop an understanding of the causes and incidence of those deaths.
- Recommending the development of plans for implementation of local services and program changes to the groups, professions, agencies or entities that serve families and children that might prevent fetal and child deaths.
- Advising the Ohio Department of Health of aggregate data, trends, and patterns concerning child deaths.

### ***CHILD FATALITY TEAM MEMBERS***

The mandated board members include: county coroner; chief of police or sheriff; executive director of a public children services agency; public health official; executive director of a board of alcohol, drug addiction, or mental health board; and a physician.

After reviewing the child deaths for the year 2000, the original board members of the Stark County Child Fatality Review Team decided that additional members from various specialty fields would benefit the review process. Individuals from several different agencies from different areas of the county were invited to join the review team.

Those agencies that joined the team in 2002 include experts from areas such as hospital administration, public health— Child and Family Health Services, emergency medical services, and fire prevention services. A local retired pediatrician has also volunteered his time to help with the team.

## NUMBER OF CHILD DEATHS BY GENDER, RACE AND AGE GROUP

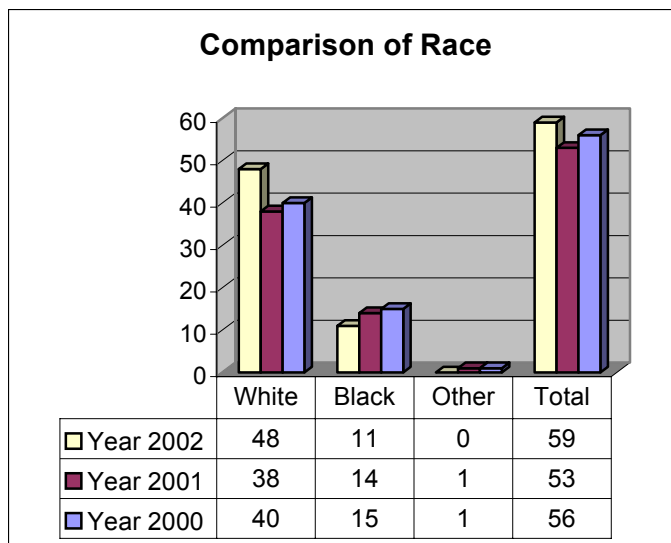
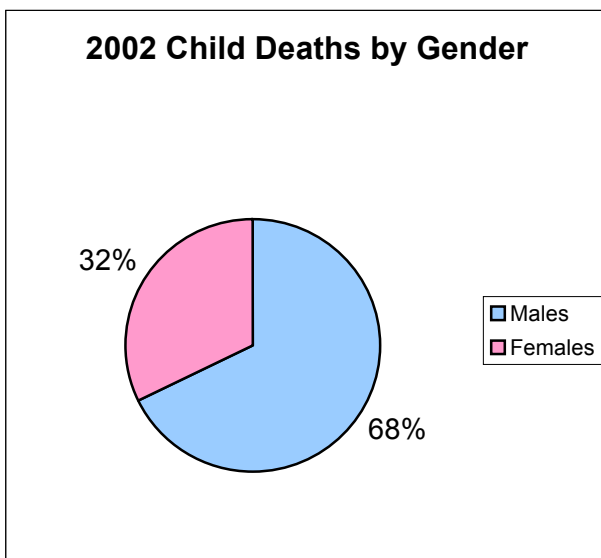
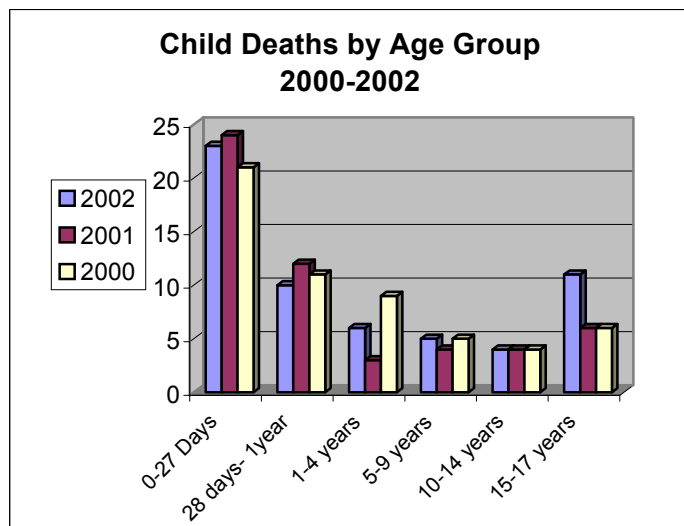
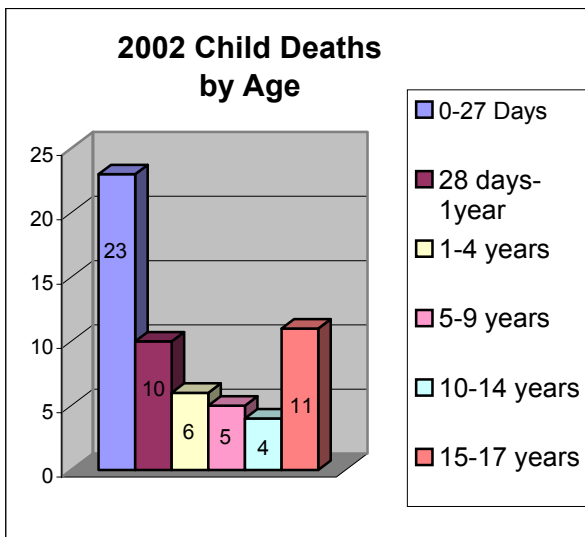
The chart to the right and the graphs below show the child deaths by gender, race and age.

- 56% of deaths were under 1 year of age
- 66% of deaths were under 5 years of age
- More than twice as many males (68%) died as females (32%)
- For 2002, of the 59 child deaths in Stark County, 81% were white, and 19% were black. However, based on the 2000 census information, the death rates per 100,000 population under the age of 18 would be: White= 60.32    Black= 118.67

Ages	Males	Females	Child Deaths 2002
0-27 Days	16	7	23
28 days-1 year	7	3	10
1-4 years	3	3	6
5-9 years	3	2	5
10-14 years	3	1	4
15-17 years	8	3	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>59</b>

$$\text{*Death rate} = \frac{\text{Number of Deaths in specific population}}{\text{Specific Population}} \times 100,000$$

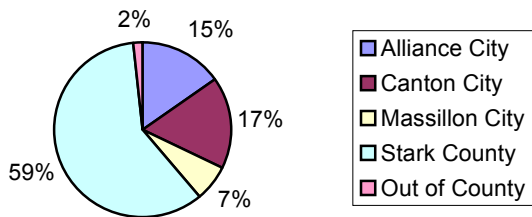
- This year there has been a considerable increase in the number of deaths in the 15-17 year old age range.





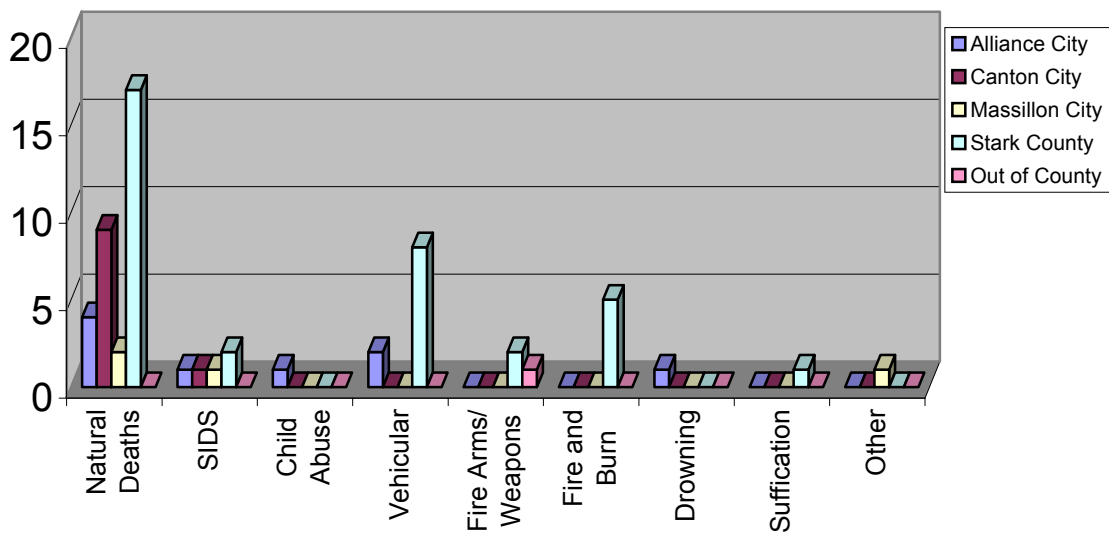
## RESIDENCE

**2002 Deaths by Residency**



Residence	2002 Deaths	Rate/1000 Population <18 years of Age
Alliance City	9	1.65
Canton City	10	1.07
Massillon City	4	0.50
Stark County	35	0.60
Out of County	1	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>0.62</b>

## Cause of Death & Residency

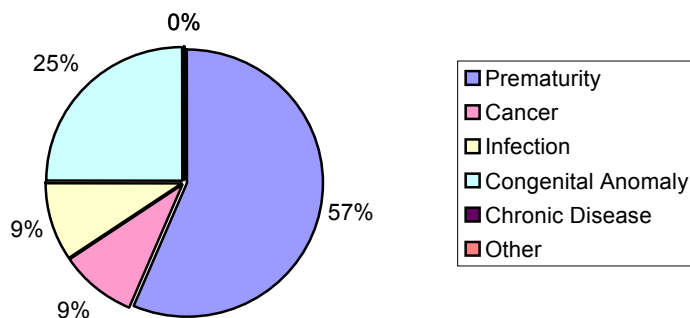


## NATURAL DEATHS

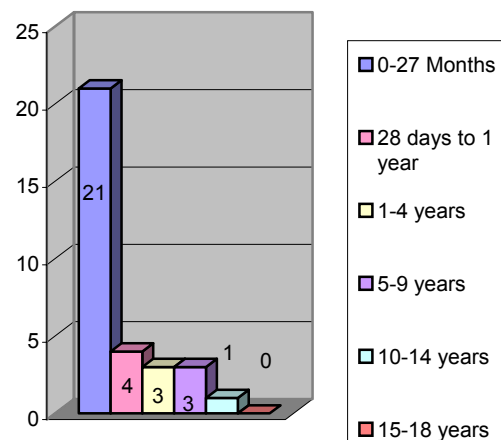
January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2002

- 61% of the 168 deaths were due to natural causes.
- Premature birth was the leading cause of natural deaths.
- 78% of natural deaths were children less than one year of age.

**Types of Natural Deaths**



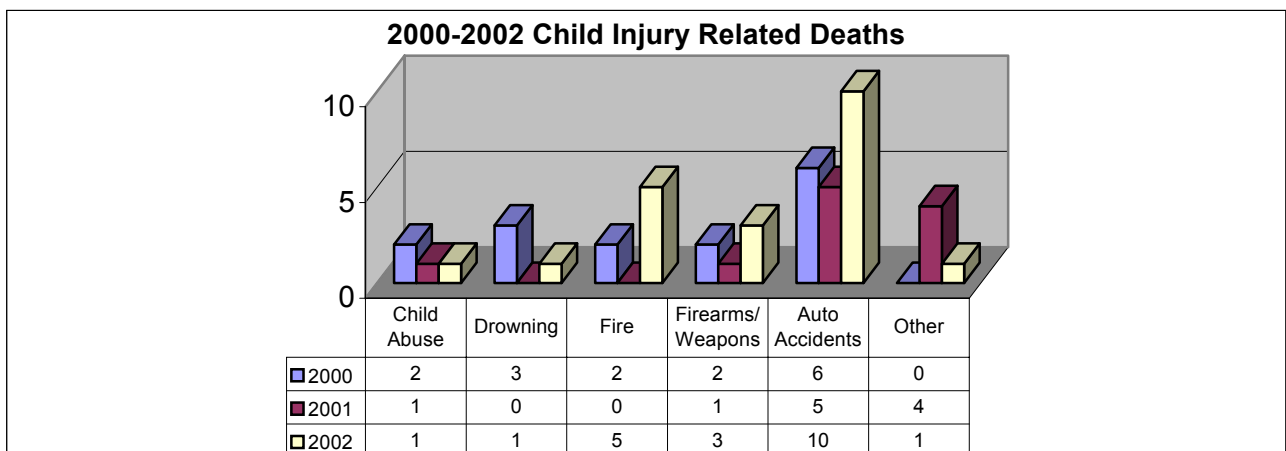
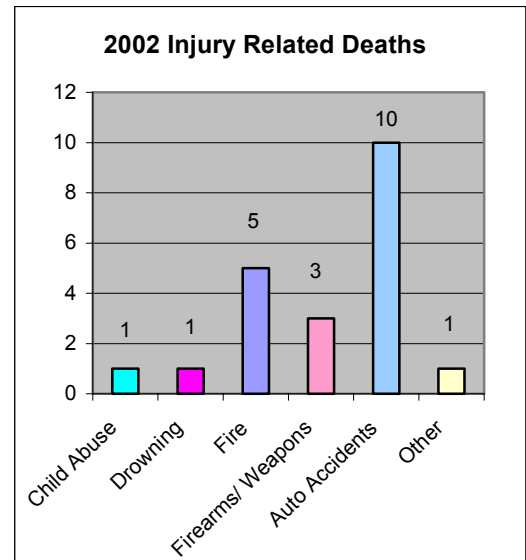
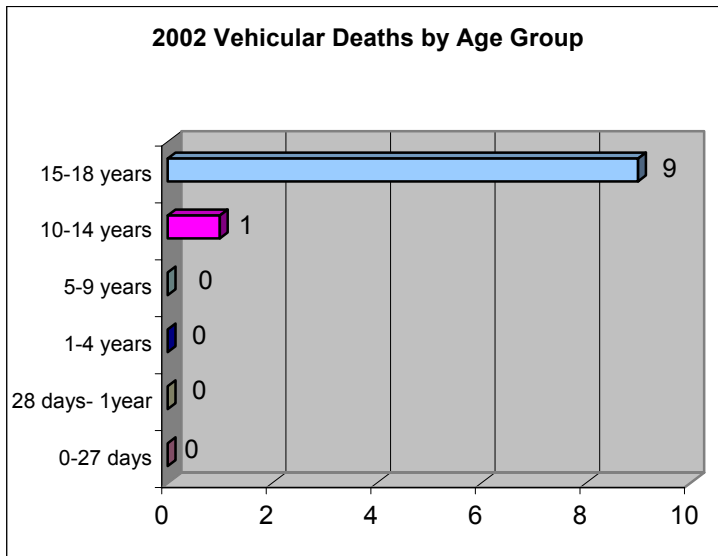
**Natural Deaths**



## INJURY RELATED DEATHS

Injuries were again the leading cause of death for children 1 through 17 years of age in Stark County during 2002, accounting for 21 of the 26 deaths in this age range. Injury related deaths include deaths from: child abuse, drowning, fire and burn, fire arms and weapons, auto accidents and any other forms of injury. A comparison of injury related deaths for the years 2000-2002 is located below.

- 36% of the total deaths for the year 2002 were due to injuries.
- 48% of these deaths were due to motor vehicle accidents.

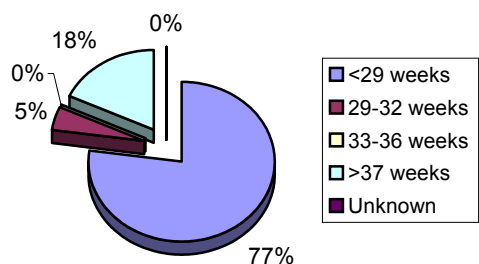


## SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

The Journal of Pediatrics reported a study in May of 1999 noting the risk factors for death due to injury. This study found that between 1983 and 1991 homicide was the leading cause of death from injury for children under five years of age. Shaken Baby Syndrome is the term used to describe the collection of symptoms that result from a child being violently shaken. These symptoms can range from the very mild, such as vomiting or diarrhea, to severe, such as coma and death. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 300 children died in the United States in 2002 as a result of Shaken Baby Syndrome. During 2002, there were two deaths in Stark County that were the result of Shaken Baby Syndrome. Only one of these deaths is reported in the statistics above, the other is still an open investigation. The more important question to ask at this point is, how many children were so severely injured from being shaken during 2002 that their injuries may result in death in the future? No one knows! These tragedies of Shaken Baby Syndrome can and should be prevented.

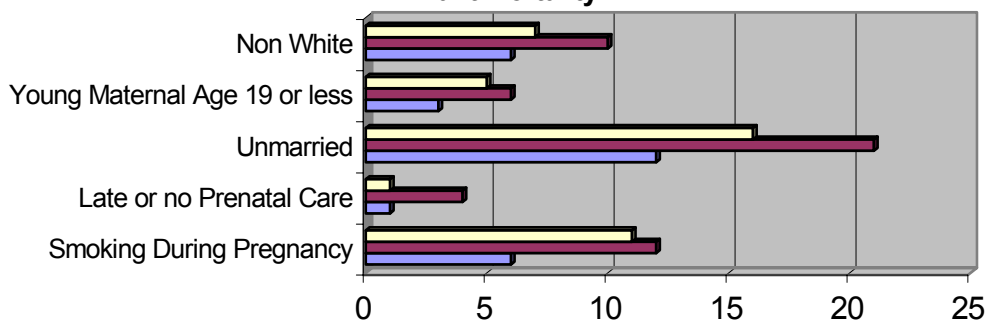
## INFANT MORTALITY

**Infant Mortality and Gestational Age 2002**



- Adolescent births per 1,000 females ages 15-17. (three year average)  
Stark County- 22.9 Ohio- 23.6 Healthy People 2010- N/A
- Infant mortality rate- deaths < 1 year of age/ 1, 000 live births. (three year average)  
Stark County- 7.7 Ohio- 7.8 Healthy People 2010- 4.5
- Neonatal mortality rate– deaths <28 days/1,000 live births. (three year average)  
Stark County- 5.2 Ohio- 5.2 Healthy People 2010- 2.9

**Comparison of Maternal Risk Factors for Infant Mortality**



	Smoking During Pregnancy	Late or no Prenatal Care	Unmarried	Young Maternal Age 19 or less	Non White
2000	11	1	16	5	7
2001	12	4	21	6	10
2002	6	1	12	3	6

## SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexplained death of an infant under one year of age. After 30 years of research there is still no known cause of SIDS. Researchers have found some similarities which are listed below:

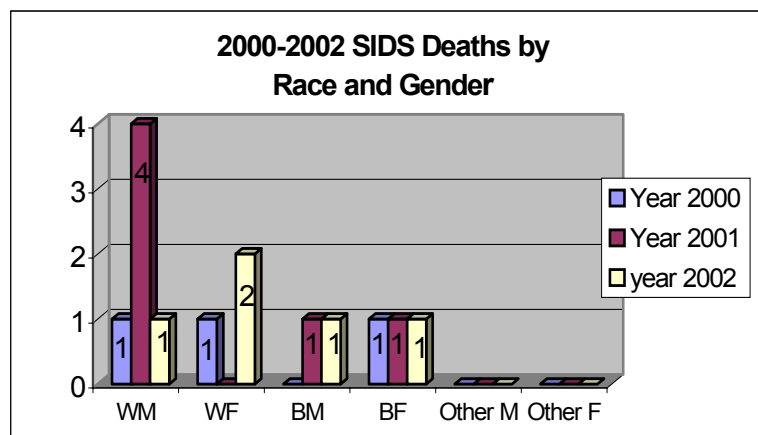
Similarities found in National research:

- Most children who die from SIDS are between 1 month and 4 months old.
- More boys die than girls.
- Most deaths occur during fall, winter and early spring.

Stark County 2000-2002= 14 SIDS deaths

- SIDS deaths between 1 month & 4 months old= 8
- SIDS deaths Male= 8
- SIDS deaths in fall, winter, spring= 12

**2000-2002 SIDS Deaths by Race and Gender**



## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

- Five of the fifty-nine deaths in 2002 were to children in one house fire. These deaths prompted the SAFE KIDS Coalition to develop a video to educate parents about ways to escape their home in the event of a fire. It is the Board's recommendation at this time to increase the availability of the video 'Instilling Positive Fire Safety Reactions' developed by the Stark County SAFE KIDS Coalition.
- With one death due to suicide in 2002 the Board again recommends that teen suicide prevention programs be provided to all teens in Stark County schools. Programs such as Teen Screen & Red Flags. Another recommendation is that the availability of mental health services for children be increased in this county.
- Over the three year time frame that the Stark County Child Fatality Review Board has been in existence, there has been a total of six deaths to children under the age of eighteen that involved a gun. Some of the weapons were in locked cabinets and some were not. In the instances when the cabinets were locked the child knew where the key was and had access to it. It is the recommendation of the Board that some form of gun safety education be provided to families.
- The ten motor-vehicle related deaths during 2002 were as follows: one motorcycle accident, one four-wheeler accident, two pedestrians struck by cars, and 6 of the 10 were teens riding in automobiles where teenagers were driving. It is the recommendation of this Board that legislation be considered which prohibits teenagers from riding in cars with other teenage drivers. Additional recommendations regarding motor vehicles include increasing the driving age, and increasing education in helmet usage for motorcycle and four-wheeler riders.
- Currently, one in four Americans are infected with a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD). According to the Ohio Department of Health's Data Warehouse, rates of STD's in Stark County appear to be on the rise. The rate of chlamydia infection increased from 209.8 in 1998 to 298.1 in 2002, and gonorrhea infection rates increased from 177.5 to 209.0 during the same time frame. Infection from sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, syphilis, and HIV can have mild to devastating effects on a woman and her newborn child. The Board recommends increased STD education before, during, and after the prenatal period.
- The phrase Shaken Baby Syndrome may sound new to many of us, but documentation of the symptoms surrounding it extend back to the 1500's. Conservative estimates state that 50,000 children are shaken yearly. The Centers for Disease Control estimated that 300 children died in the United States in 2002 as a result of being shaken. To most individuals it would seem common sense not to forcefully shake a child, however, the two deaths which occurred in 2002 in Stark County show that it is still happening on a regular basis. It is the recommendation of the Board that an education program on the prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome be initiated. In February of 2004, the Stark County Health Department began to research funding options for the initiation of an education program on this topic.
- The Board recommends continued education regarding infant sleeping position, with emphasis on the "Back to Sleep Program". This will help to potentially decrease the number of SIDS deaths. Public education on the dangers of co-bedding (infant sleeping in bed or couch, with an adult or larger child) is also an important issue to be addressed.
- Placing a child in a daycare setting is a big decision for most parents. The desire to be sure that their child is safe should be the foremost question in selecting a daycare. The Board recommends education for parents on daycare selection and the advantages of selecting a licensed daycare.
- Swimming is a fun pastime for both children and adults, but it can be dangerous, even deadly, if children are not supervised or if proper attire is not worn. Swimming in baggy heavy clothing increases the resistance and weight of a child's body and can make it difficult, even impossible, to swim. With one death in 2002 due to improper swimming attire, the Board recommends community education on swimming safety.

***STARK COUNTY CHILD FATALITY REVIEW***

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