

**MINUTES**  
*of the*  
**Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children**  
*held on*

**November 20, 2024**

via Microsoft Teams

[Meeting Link](#)

Call-in number: 1(775) 321-6111; Extension: 984356024#

**1. Call to Order**

Melinda Rhoades called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM.

**2. For Information Only: Roll Call**

- Executive Committee members present:
  - Denise Tyre, Human Services at Washoe County
  - Amber Hurtado, Human Services at Washoe County
  - Vickie S. Ives, DPBH-MCH
  - Misty Vaughan Allen, DPBH – Suicide Prevention
  - Sheri McPartlin, CCSD
  - Jorge Montano, Safe Kids
  - Marla McDade Williams, HHS Director's Office
  - Melinda Rhoades, SAFY
  - Nikki Mead, Office of Vital Records
  - Cody Phinney, DPBH
  - Megan Soracco, DCFS
  - Jill Marano, Clark County DFS
  - Kathie McKenna, Children of Rural Nevada
  - Ashley Lawrentz proxy for Kandee Mortenson DCFS
  - Desiree Mattice, Department of Public Safety
  - Jill Marano, Clark County DFS
  - Kandee Mortenson, DCFS
  - Izaac Rowe, DA's office
  
- Executive Committee members absent:
  - Christine Eckles, Washoe County JJ
  - Michelle Sandoval, DPBH – Rural Clinics
  - Amanda Haboush-Deloye, NICRP/Prevent Child Abuse NV
  - Clayden Porter, DCFS
  
- Staff and guests:
  - Orjola Merkaj, NICRP
  - Dawn Davidson, NICRP
  - April Stahl, DCFS

- Beverly Brown, DCFS
- Jordan Lancaster, Department of Human Services

- 3. Initial Public Comment (Discussion only):** Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled on an agenda for action at a later meeting.

There was no public comment.

- 4. For Information Only:** Review the purpose Of the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children

- 5. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action to approve September 25, 2024, meeting minutes

Melinda Rhoades asked if there was comment or discussion pertaining to the September 25, 2024 meeting minutes. There was no comment or discussion.

- MOTION: Made by Vickie Ives seconded by Nikki Mead to approve the meeting minutes from September 25, 2024.  
UNANIMOUS VOTE; MOTIONED CARRIED.

- 6. For Information Only:** Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) Recommendations Subcommittee Yearly Meeting Reminder

Denise Tyre stated that an email was sent out as a reminder that it is time to draft new recommendations to send to DCFS. If anyone is interested in serving on that subcommittee, contact April Stahl. Anyone who is on the subcommittee should look out for an email for a meeting invite.

- 7. For Information Only:** Regional Child Death Review (CDR) Team Quarter 3 report out on regional trends, number of reviews, and their recommendations to the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children

- Carson Region (Carson City, Douglas, and Storey counties)
- Clark County
- Elko Region (Lander and Elko counties)

- Ely Region (White Pine and Eureka counties)
- Fallon Region (Churchill, Lander, Mineral, Pershing, and Humboldt counties)
- Nye County Region (Nye, Esmeralda, Lincoln counties)
- Lyon County
- Washoe County

Meagan Soracco from District 2 stated that only one child fatality case was reviewed due to suicide. The team had no recommendations for this quarter.

Orjola Merkaj from Clark County stated that this quarter, between July 1st and September 30th, the Clark team had 92 cases referred to it for review and reviewed 77 cases. Cases that were not reviewed will be reviewed during the next quarter. Reasons for not being reviewed include the team members presenting the case not being available at the meeting, or the team requesting additional case information. This quarter, the team reviewed 48 natural deaths, 19 accidents, which included seven motor vehicle deaths, three homicides, which included three due to firearms, three suicides caused by asphyxia, and four undetermined deaths. Nine of the deaths reviewed by the team were mandatory reviews because the deaths were alleged to be from abuse or neglect of the child. Two of the deaths required a review because the children died of SIDS. The team had no recommendations this quarter.

Kathie McKenna from Nye County stated that they did not review any cases in Quarter 3.

Ashley Lawrentz from Lyon County stated that they did not review any cases in Quarter 3.

Amber Hurtado from Washoe County stated that two cases were reviewed in Quarter 3. One case was due to suicide and another case was due to a fentanyl overdose. The team recommended a campaign and distribution of educational materials for middle school and high school youth and parents surrounding the dangers of fentanyl use.

**8. For Possible Action:** Discussion and consideration of the Quarter 3 Regional Child Death Review Team recommendations and possible approval of recommendations considered in Item 7.

April Stahl asked the Executive Committee if they wanted to take action on any recommendations discussed in the previous agenda item. Amber Hurtado elaborated more about Washoe County's recommendation. She stated that she has educational material regarding fentanyl and the dangers of it. She stated that she found toolkits and prevention websites that could be distributed to children. There has been an increase in accidental overdoses involving fentanyl, particularly among young adolescents using the drug or encountering other substances laced with it. The recommendation was to provide materials or information to youth and families to bring awareness to and show the dangers associated with fentanyl. Amber stated that she provided a few different types of materials that could be used. Jorge stated that he has a risk-behavior presentation available to local high schools.

April Stahl stated that Washoe County is offering education in schools regarding fentanyl overdoses. She asked if this was occurring in other regions. Sheri McPartlin stated that Clark

County School District (CCSD) has an internal program for safe and drug-free schools. She stated that public service announcements bring awareness to the emergency services available in schools regarding naloxone. April asked the Executive Committee if they have any actions they want to take regarding the recommendation. Denise Tyre asked if Jorge Montano and Amber Hurtado would be interested in being placed on the agenda for the next Executive Committee meeting to provide information on what they have learned or what current information already exists. Amber and Jorge both agreed that it was a good idea. Denise Tyre asked if a representative from CCSD would be willing to share how Clark County contributes to the matter. Sheri McPartlin stated that CCSD is applying for a grant to increase their naloxone. CCSD is trying to bring back a program for elementary schools that helps bring awareness to drug use. April asked Sheri if the newsletters that go out to parents have information regarding fentanyl. Sheri stated that an announcement that mentions emergency procedures goes out at the beginning of the school year. April asked the Executive Committee if they would be interested in having a presentation from the state that could coincide with what is going on. Vickie Ives stated that she reached out to Stephanie Cook at the Bureau of Behavioral Health and Wellness at the Division of Public and Behavioral Health to confirm that they do have youth-facing content around fentanyl. Vickie stated that she could send April her contact information. Sheri stated that she presented for the Nevada Department of Education this past August regarding opioid use and the impact it has on students. She stated that an individual who works for the Department of Education also had an informative presentation. She stated that she would send April her contact information. April stated that at the upcoming Executive Committee meetings there would be a presentation about opioids and fentanyl specific resources.

Amber Hurtado stated that material should be provided to children and parents just in case they cannot access e-mail or the internet. Melinda Rhoades stated that she has not seen information that teaches the symptoms of fentanyl or opioid use. Sheri McPartlin stated that CCSD has a district-wide presentation that 42,000 employees view, outlining the symptoms and what to look for. Denise Tyre stated that regional teams should be tasked with gathering information from the school district and including it in their report for their next Child Death Review meetings.

- MOTION: Made by Izaac Rowe seconded by Nikki Mead to create a campaign and distribution of educational materials for middle school and high school youth and parents surrounding the dangers of fentanyl and fentanyl use.  
UNANIMOUS VOTE; MOTIONED CARRIED.

**9. For Possible Action:** Consideration, discussion, and possible action regarding modifying the process that the Executive Committee uses to respond to the Regional Child Death Review Team reports and recommendations.

April Stahl explained that, according to NRS 432B.408, the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children is responsible for reviewing and responding to the reports and recommendations provided by the Child Death Review teams. As part of this responsibility, the Executive Committee is required to review the reports and recommendations and provide a written response to the teams within 90 days of receiving their reports. April stated there has

been confusion over what type of response to the teams is needed and if the Executive Committee needs to approve the response. The current process is for her to send the regional team chairs an email stating that the Executive Committee received the recommendation. If the committee decides to take action on a recommendation, then that response is in letter form that is approved by the Executive Committee but that, due to timing, the letter isn't received by the team chair until the following quarter. Denise Tyre asked that if the Executive Committee decided to move forward with a recommendation, is it about a six- to nine-month process. April stated yes, but it could be at least three months. Beverly Brown stated that the response does not have to be an e-mail or letter. The Executive Committee should decide how they would like the response to look. Cody Phinney asked if the Executive Committee could approve the letter being sent without approving the draft of the letter. Beverly stated yes that could be an option. Vicki Ives stated that in the past, it used to be an email to let the receiver know that their recommendation had been reviewed and accepted. Sheri McPartlin and Nikki Mead stated that they agree with Vicki's method. April clarified the process with the team. She stated that once the Executive Committee receives recommendations from the regional CDR teams, she sends an email to the teams letting them know that the Executive Committee has received the recommendation(s) and what action the committee wants to take further.

- MOTION: Made by Vicki Ives seconded by Nikki Mead for the Executive Committee to support staff in communicating recommendations with regional Child Death Review teams.
- UNANIMOUS VOTE; MOTIONED CARRIED.

**10. For Information Only: Pediatric Child Abuse Specialist Subcommittee report out.**

April Stahl stated that Clark County team recommended hiring, training, and funding a pediatric child abuse specialist practitioner. She stated that Intermountain Health is working to build a children's hospital in Las Vegas and that she is trying to get a representative from Intermountain Health to join the subcommittee. She stated that Dr. Yaron Ivan from Sunrise Hospital is leading and managing their child abuse team. She stated that the subcommittee is trying to figure out a way to provide a subsidized fellowship. She stated that the subcommittee would have a recommendation to present to the Executive Committee by the next meeting date.

**11. For Information Only: Updates to the Executive Committee on activities and spending of funds by current grantees for the prevention of child fatalities**

- Baby's Bounty
- Community Chest
- Nevada Medical Center, Hope Means Nevada
- Suicide Prevention Network
- NyE

April Stahl presented on the screen the form that the Executive Committee approved for grantees to use to show the committee their progress with their awarded grant money. She stated that Hope Means Nevada spent \$10,830.30. Their work is related to teen suicide. She stated that they engaged with the community through social media and participating in local events. At the beginning of the grant timeline, Hope Means Nevada had 4,300 visitors on their website, and their social media had received over 195,000 impressions.

Next, April Stahl presented the information received from the Suicide Prevention Network. The network participates in community-based initiatives regarding suicide prevention, suicide risk factors, and available resources and warning signs. It hosted the second annual Memorial and Awareness Walk during September's Suicide Prevention Month and participated in and created multiple activities regarding suicide prevention and awareness.

Next, April Stahl presented the information received from Community Chest. They were awarded \$12,000 and spent approximately \$2,000. They had 60 children between the ages of 5 and 15 participate in the Comstock Kids Program, which focuses on building protective factors. Nine families participated in safe sleep training, completed an in-home safe sleep assessment, and were provided with a safe sleep kit. There were 42 families that participated in injury prevention education sessions.

April Stahl stated that she did not receive information from Baby's Bounty or NyE. She informed the Executive Committee that this would be an item on the agenda from now on.

**12. For Information Only: Presentation from the Family Navigation Network – Director Diane Thorkildson**

The presenter was not available, but will be asked to give their presentation at the next Executive Committee meeting.

**13. Final Public Comment and Discussion: (Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled on the agenda for a later meeting)**

There was no public comment.

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 AM.