

From: Licensing [mailto:DSS_LICENSING@LISTSERV.COV.VIRGINIA.GOV] **On Behalf Of** Williams, Edwina (VDSS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 04, 2015 9:08 AM
To: DSS_Licensing
Subject: Materials for Child Care Providers and Licensing Inspectors.docx

This attached file is being sent to providers of child day centers, family day homes, religiously exempted child day centers, voluntarily registered family day homes, certified preschools and family day systems from the Virginia Department of Social Services Email Distribution Service.

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DATE: July 30, 2015

TO: Children's Licensing Inspectors; Child Care Providers

FROM: Rita L. Katzman, Child Protective Services (CPS) Program Manager
Virginia Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) has implemented five regional Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs) that are chaired by the CPS regional consultants. These teams are charged with reviewing cases of child deaths investigated by local departments of social services. Child fatality review is a process that strives to understand the specific circumstances surrounding child deaths in order to prevent harm to other children. Each team identifies risk factors, makes findings regarding trends or patterns, and develops recommendations.

In 2013, the teams reviewed 109 deaths where the majority of cases (86%) involved a child less than five years of age. The most common act of commission was identified as Shaken Baby Syndrome, also called Abusive Head Trauma (AHT). AHT describes the injuries that occur when an adult violently shakes an infant. This usually occurs when a parent or other caretaker becomes frustrated when a baby keeps crying.

The CFRTs also gathered specific information regarding infant deaths which were sleep-related. There were 52 (48%) cases reviewed that were identified as being sleep-related and the teams determined that 95% of those deaths were preventable. The CFRT's conclusion clearly supports one of the findings of the state CFRT's Report of Sleep Related Infant Deaths in Virginia that infant sleep-related deaths is an urgent public health problem across the State.

Several high risk factors were identified by the regional CRFTs. There were 101 persons identified as being responsible for the decedent child at the time of the fatal incident. While the majority of the caregivers were biological parents, there were 12 persons identified as child care providers/babysitters. The Northern Regional CFRT recommended that VDSS incorporate safe sleep information in application requirements for regulated, unregulated and registered child care providers.

Information and resources on AHT and Safe Sleep are available on the VDSS Public website. Please include this information in the materials that you provide to child care providers. If you need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at 804-726-7554 or at rita.katzman@dss.virginia.gov.