



Gaston County

Gaston County
Board of Commissioners
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DHHS - Public Health Division Board Action

File #: 26-214

Commissioner Keigher - DHHS - Health Division - To Accept the Gaston County Public Health Department's Local Child Fatality Prevention Team's Annual Report

STAFF CONTACT

Brittain Kenney - Public Health Director - DHHS - Public Health Division - 704-853-5139

BUDGET IMPACT

No budget impact.

BACKGROUND

See 2024-387, 2024-423, 2025-009, 2025-340.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §7B-1406, Local Child Fatality Prevention Teams in North Carolina are required to submit an annual report to their Board of County Commissioners, focusing on recommendations for systemic improvements, identified resource gaps, and prevention strategies.

This report includes information about local child fatalities and the Local Team's recommendations and activities for years 2024 and 2025 (2024 data was not previously shared due to the state transitioning this work to the new Office of Child Fatality Prevention). It was presented to the Gaston County Board of Health & Human Services on May 7, 2026.

POLICY IMPACT

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

CFPT Annual Report 2025

DO NOT TYPE BELOW THIS LINE

I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

NO.	DATE	M1	M2	JBailey	CBrown	CCloninger	AFraley	BHovis	TKeigher	SShehan	Vote
2026-161	05/26/2026	AF	JB	A	A	AB	A	A	AB	A	U

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Child Fatality Prevention Team

2025 Annual Report



Disclaimer

This report contains all cases reported by the State for Gaston County review in 2024 and 2025, including cases that were not reviewed due to various holds.





Purpose

- Overview of cases that occurred in 2023 and 2024 and reviewed in the subsequent years
- Understand causes of childhood deaths
- Identify system gaps or deficiencies
- Develop and implement recommendations for policy and practice changes

Child Fatality Team Membership



- Social Services
- Public Health
- Community Support Services
- District Attorney's Office
- DHHS Board
- Alliance for Children & Youth
- CaroMont
- Sheriff's Office
- Care Coordination for Children
- Juvenile Justice
- The Lighthouse Gaston County Courts
- Gaston County Schools
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Partners Behavioral Health
- Behavioral health providers
- Nurse Family Partnership
- Community Members
- GEMS
- Medical Examiner's Office



2024 and 2025 CFPT At a Glance

2024

- 26 deaths reported for Gaston County during the 2023 calendar year to be reviewed during 2024 reviews
- 24 cases reviewed by the team
- 2 cases held for various reasons (DA and state holds)

2025

- 37 deaths reported for Gaston County during the 2024 calendar year to be reviewed during 2025 reviews
- 25 cases reviewed by the team
- 12 cases held for various reasons (DA hold, state hold, etc.)

2024 Cases



Cause of Death	Number of Deaths
Perinatal Conditions	8
Birth Defects	4
Illness	5
Homicide	1
Accidents	1
Infant Sleep-Related Death	2
Suicide	1
Overdoses	3
Other	1

- Compared to 2023 reviews:**
- Birth defects decreased from 20% to 18%.
 - Largest category remains perinatal conditions, 30% last year and 31% this year.
 - Increase in overdoses from 5% to 12%

2025 Cases



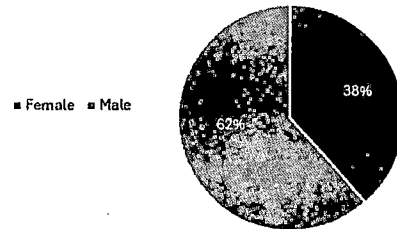
Cause of Death	Number of Deaths
Perinatal Conditions	8
Birth Defects	2
Illness	6
Homicide	3
Accidents	10
Overdoses	1
Other	7

- Compared to 2024 cases:**
- Birth defects continued to **decrease** for third year, decreasing from 18% to 5%.
 - Largest category in the previous two years was perinatal condition, however this year it was **accidents**.
 - **Decrease** in overdoses from 12% to 3%.

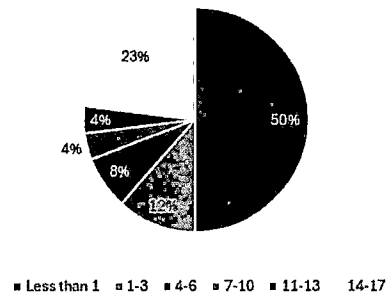
2024 Demographic Breakdown



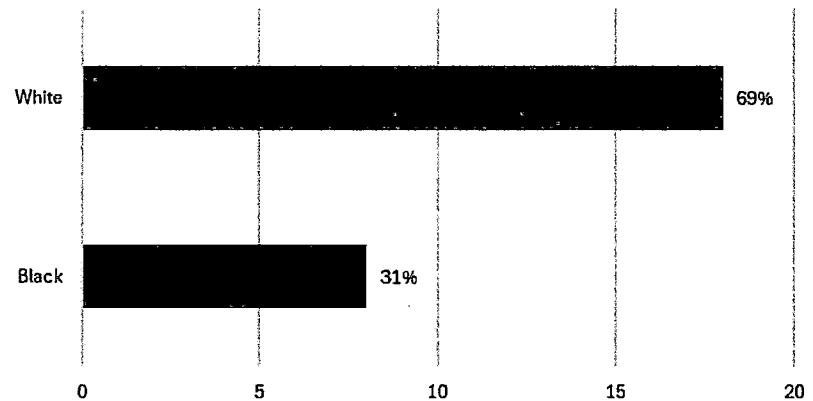
Cases by Sex



Cases by Age



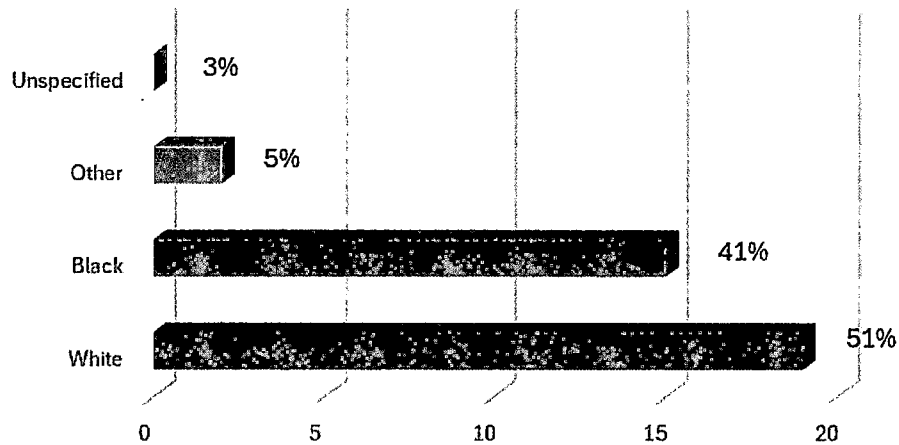
Race of Death Percentage



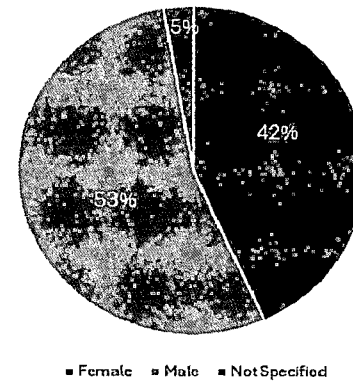
2025 Demographic Breakdown



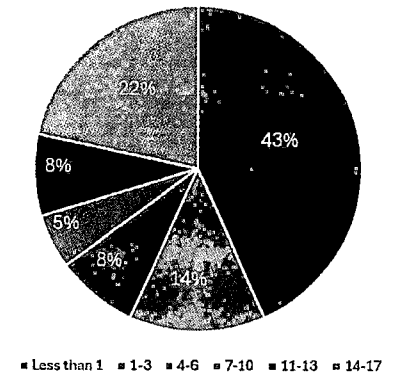
Race of Death Percentage



Cases by Sex



Cases by Age



2024 Resulting Recommendations



- Highway Patrol texting while driving program
- Public awareness campaign regarding unsafe nature of Boppy pillows for sleeping
- Wait-time issues in hospital systems related to ED visits.
- Benefits of influenza vaccines

2025 Resulting Recommendations



- Ongoing unsafe sleep education efforts.
- Continued water safety campaigns.

Questions?

