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## **P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Child Death Review Team Issues Report**

The Child Death Review Team has issued a report of child deaths in Santa Barbara County for January 2015 through December of 2016. The report reflects the deaths of children through the age of 17 and recommendations made to prevent future deaths.

The Child Death Review Team is a county-wide interagency team established in concert with Penal Code Section 1174.32. Child Death Review Teams identify and review suspicious child deaths and facilitate communication among persons involved in child abuse and neglect cases. Teams also provide information about child deaths to the state for integration of information about how to prevent child deaths at the state level.

In Santa Barbara County the number of deaths to children aged 17 years old or younger was 35 for 2015 and 29 for 2016. This is a similar number of child deaths as seen in prior years.

The majority of child deaths in both years were due to medical conditions or unpreventable disease.

- In 2015, 71.4% (25/35) of all deaths were due to medical conditions;
- In 2016, 69.0% (20/29) of all deaths were due to medical conditions;

Over the two years, 18 (42.9%) of the 42 deaths due to medical conditions for children under the age of 1, were due in some part to prematurity. Accidents encompassed a variety of accidents such as motor vehicle accidents, and asphyxiation. Parents co-sleeping with young children or maternal overlying are factors in some accidents and undetermined deaths.

As a result of reviews by the Child Death Review Team in Santa Barbara County, a number of actions have been taken to prevent future deaths. These actions largely relate to educating individuals in our community about the prevention of SIDS and appropriate parenting. The Child Death Review Team will continue to review child deaths. The team remains committed to addressing barriers to safety, and learning from child deaths to prevent future deaths of children in our community.

For a copy of the full report, please see the Public Health Department website at [www.sbcphd.org](http://www.sbcphd.org)

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