

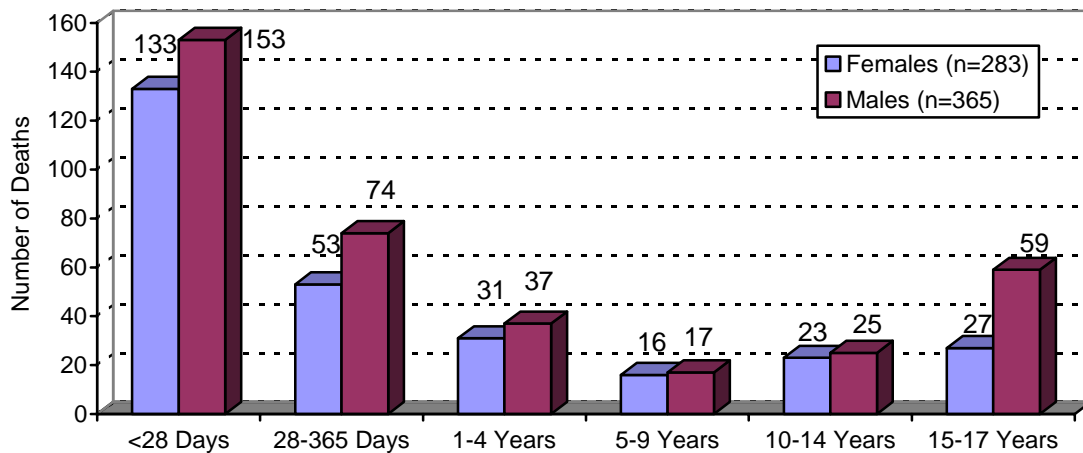


2007 CHILD FATALITY REVIEW FOR MARICOPA COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

During 2007, 648 children who resided in Maricopa County died before reaching their 18th birthdays. Males accounted for 56 percent of child deaths in this county (n=365) and females accounted for 44 percent (n=283). More males than females died in each age group, with the greatest disparity among children ages 15 through 17 years. Figure 1 shows deaths among children by sex and age group.

Figure 1. Deaths Among Children by Sex and Age Group, Maricopa County, Arizona 2007 (n=648)

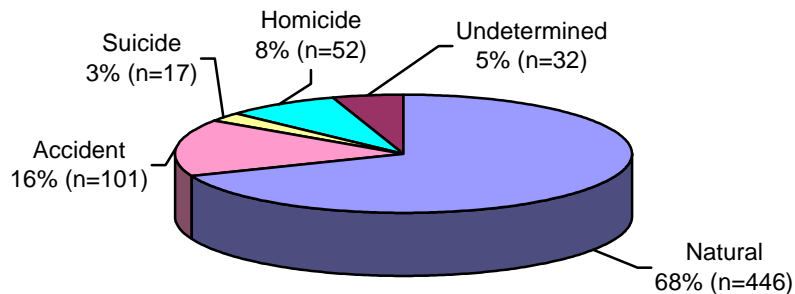


Deaths were over-represented among African American and Hispanic children in Maricopa County. African American children comprised six percent of the population but eight percent of the fatalities (n=52). Hispanic children comprised 40 percent of the population but 53 percent of the fatalities (n=341). Non-Hispanic White children comprised 48 percent of the population and 33 percent of the fatalities (n=213). The remaining deaths were among other races/ethnicities (six percent, n=42).

CAUSE AND MANNER OF CHILD FATALITIES

Sixty-eight percent of deaths were due to natural manners (n=446), 16 percent were due to accidents (n=101), eight percent were homicides (n=52), three percent were suicides (n=17), and five percent were of undetermined manner (n=32). Figure 2 shows deaths among children by manner.

Figure 2. Deaths Among Children by Manner, Maricopa County, Arizona 2007 (n=154)



There were 446 child deaths classified as natural causes of death, including 252 from medical causes, 187 from prematurity, and 12 from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Forty-three children died in motor vehicle crashes, and 37 children died due to firearm-related injuries (including two accidents, 25 homicides, eight suicides, and two deaths of undetermined intent). There were 15 drowning fatalities. Table 1 shows deaths among children by cause and manner.

Table 1. Deaths Among Children by Cause and Manner, Maricopa County, Arizona 2007 (n=648)

Cause	Accident	Homicide	Suicide	Natural	Undetermined	Total
Medical*		2		247	3	252
Prematurity				187		187
Motor vehicle crash	43					43
Firearm	2	25	8		2	37
Undetermined		1			24	25
Suffocation/strangulation	17	2				19
Drowning	14	1				15
Blunt force trauma		14				14
Poisoning	11	2	1			14
Other injury	6	2	2		2	12
SIDS				12		12
Hanging			6		1	7
Fall/crush	5					5
Exposure	3					3
Stabbing		3				3
Total	446	52	17	101	32	648

*Excluding SIDS and prematurity

Among the 43 motor vehicle crash deaths, 30 children were passengers, three children were driving, nine children were pedestrians, and one child's position was not identified. Of the 30 vehicle passengers who died in crashes, 20 were in back seats, five were in front seats, and three children were riding in the bed of a truck. For two children, the location in the vehicle was unknown. Six of the nine pedestrians who died in motor vehicle crashes were struck on public roadways. Two pedestrians were struck in driveways or parking areas.

PREVENTABILITY

Child Fatality Review Teams consider a child's death preventable if something could have been done (by an individual such as the caregiver or supervisor, or by the community as a whole) that would have prevented the death. Local Child Fatality Review Teams determined that 34 percent of the deaths among Maricopa County children could have been prevented (n=218).

During the review of each child's death, teams identify factors believed to have contributed to the death. Although the presence of a contributing factor typically led to the determination that a death was preventable, this was not always the case. For example, the team might have concluded that an unsafe sleep environment (e.g. infant left sleeping on a couch) was a contributing factor in an unexpected infant death. However, the team may not have had sufficient information (e.g. autopsy report, adequate scene investigation) to determine if the death could have been prevented.

In Maricopa County, substance use was a contributing factor in 150 child deaths (23 percent), and lack of supervision contributed to 96 deaths (15 percent). Access to firearms was a contributing factor in 37 deaths (six percent). Unsafe infant sleeping environments contributed to 54 deaths (eight percent), and lack of vehicle restraints was a factor in 21 deaths (three percent). More than one factor may have been identified for each death. Table 2 shows the most common factors contributing to the deaths of child residents of Maricopa County.

Factor*	Number	Percent
Drugs/alcohol	150	23%
Lack of supervision	96	15%
Supervision impaired by drugs/alcohol	51	8%
Unsafe infant sleep environment	54	8%
Access to firearms	37	6%
Co-sleeping	39	6%
Excessive driving speed	23	4%
Lack of vehicle restraint	21	3%
Infant sleep position	17	3%
*More than one factor may have been identified for each death		

CHILD FATALITIES IN MARICOPA COUNTY COMPARED TO OTHER ARIZONA COUNTIES

This section provides comparisons between the deaths of children who resided in Maricopa County and the deaths of children who resided in the remaining 14 Arizona counties. During 2007, 648 children who were residents of Maricopa County died, and 442 children died who were residents of the other 14 counties.

Maricopa County had a crude rate of 61.6 child deaths per 100,000 residents, a lower rate than the remaining Arizona counties (69.2 deaths per 100,000 residents). Thirty-four percent of the deaths of Maricopa County children could have been prevented (n=218), and 33 percent of the child deaths in the remaining counties were determined to have been preventable (n=144).

Medical conditions were the leading cause of child deaths in Maricopa County (39 percent), as well as for the remainder of Arizona (35 percent). Prematurity accounted for 29 percent of deaths in Maricopa County and comprised 28 percent of child deaths in the rest of Arizona. Motor vehicle crashes accounted for only seven percent of deaths in Maricopa County but 14 percent in the remaining counties. Table 3 shows the leading causes of child deaths for Maricopa County compared to the rest of Arizona.

Maricopa County (n=648)		Arizona, Excluding Maricopa County (n=442)	
Cause	Percent of Deaths	Cause	Percent of Deaths
Medical	39%	Medical	35%
Prematurity	29%	Prematurity	28%
Motor vehicle crash	7%	Motor vehicle crash	14%

In Maricopa County, the largest percentage of deaths were natural (69 percent), and in the remaining counties, natural deaths accounted for 68 percent of child deaths. Accidents accounted for 16 percent of child deaths in Maricopa County, but 23 percent in the remaining counties. There was a larger percentage of homicides in Maricopa County (eight percent), compared to the rest of the state (three percent). Suicides accounted for three percent of child deaths in Maricopa County, and two percent in the remaining counties. Table 4 shows deaths among children by manner for Maricopa County compared to the rest of Arizona.

Table 4. Deaths Among Children by Manner,
Maricopa County, Arizona 2007

Maricopa County (n=648)		Arizona, excluding Maricopa County (n=442)	
Manner	Percent of Deaths	Manner	Percent of Deaths
Natural	69%	Natural	68%
Accident	16%	Accident	23%
Homicide	8%	Undetermined	4%
Undetermined	5%	Homicide	3%
Suicide	3%	Suicide	2%