



North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Medical Examiner Child Toxicology Report – 2021, Ages 0 through 17 years

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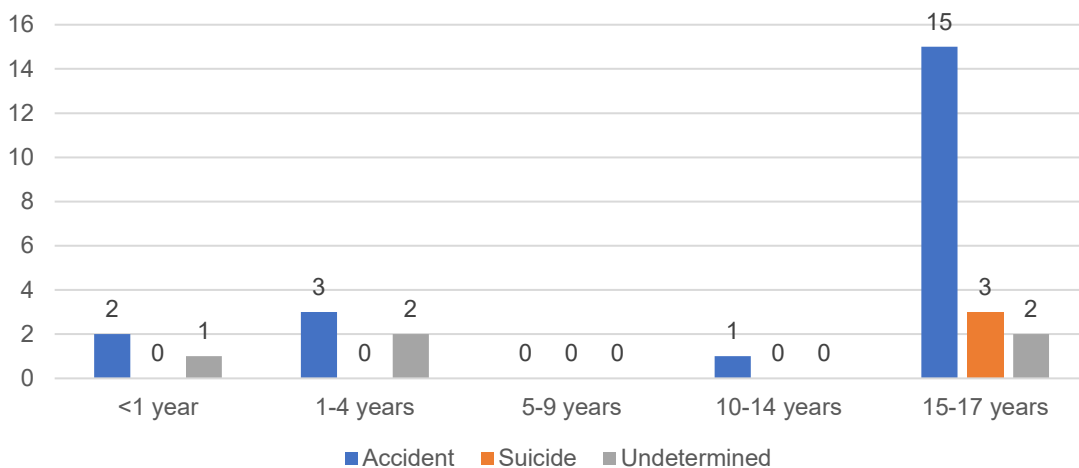
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According to N.C. General Statutes § 130A-383, a medical examiner is notified to investigate the circumstances surrounding deaths due to violence, poisoning, accident, suicide, or homicide; occurring suddenly when the deceased had been in apparent good health or when unattended by a physician; or occurring under any suspicious, unusual, or unnatural circumstance. The data represented in this report are deaths that are under the medical examiner's jurisdiction.

The North Carolina Medical Examiner system investigated the cause and manner of death for 614 children in 2021. Of these 614 cases, 24 fatalities were children that were non-North Carolina residents. Deaths reviewed under Medical Examiner jurisdiction will be included in the total number of child fatalities within the 'Child Deaths in North Carolina: Annual Report' produced by the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics (SCHS). This report publishes the total number of child deaths attributed to drug intoxication in North Carolina annually.

The staff at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner reviews all child deaths investigated by the Medical Examiner System statewide. With a total of 614 cases within medical examiner jurisdiction, excluding pending cases (34), a total of **580** child death cases are represented below. Due to pending cases, final numbers for 2021 are subject to change. It is possible that the small number of cases not included have characteristics that differ from the majority summarized here. This report will be updated periodically.

2021 Child Fatalities by Age & Manner -
(Toxin/Poisoning Means)

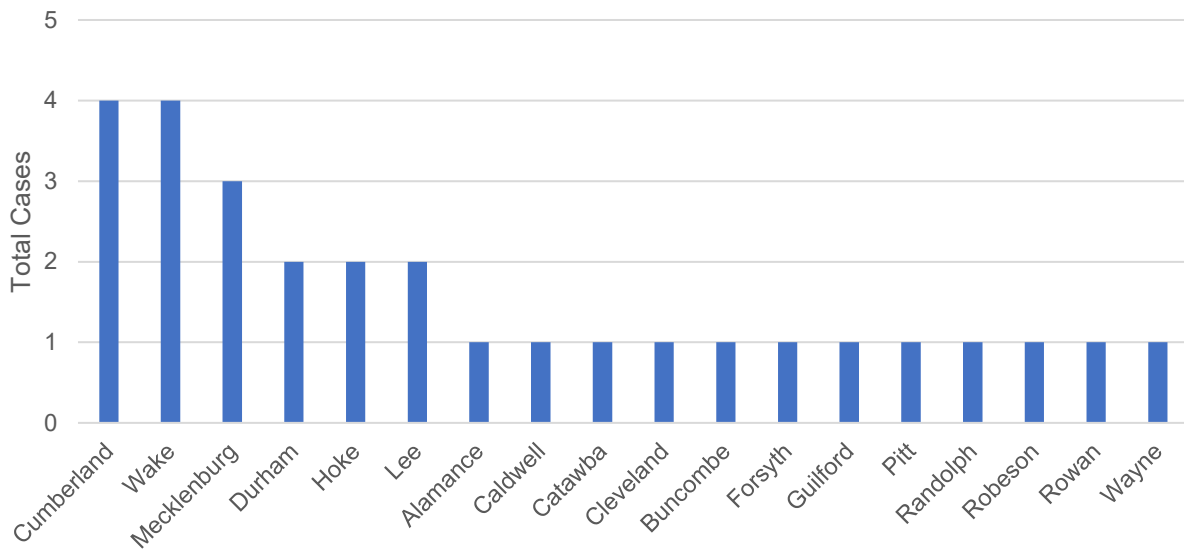


The Medical Examiner System assigns a means of death for each case. For the purposes of this child death toxicology report, the means of death are limited to toxin/poisoning. In 2021, 29 child fatalities were attributed to toxin/poisoning. Of these 29 cases investigated by the North Carolina Medical Examiner system, the manners of death include 21 cases as accident, 3 cases as suicide, and 5 cases as undetermined.

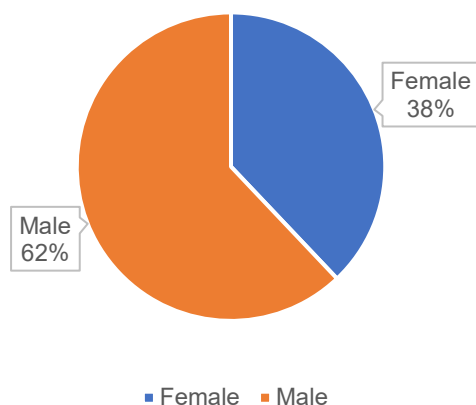
County of Death of Decedent – Toxin/Poisoning Means of Death (Counties with 0 Toxicology-Related Child Fatalities for 2021 are not listed):

County	Total Cases	% Change from 2020
Alamance	1	0%
Buncombe	1	No cases in 2020
Caldwell	1	No cases in 2020
Catawba	1	No cases in 2020
Cleveland	1	No cases in 2020
Cumberland	4	No cases in 2020
Durham	2	0%
Forsyth	1	-66%
Guilford	1	-50%
Hoke	2	No cases in 2020
Lee	2	No cases in 2020
Mecklenburg	3	0%
Pitt	1	0%
Randolph	1	No cases in 2020
Robeson	1	0%
Rowan	1	No cases in 2020
Wake	4	-50%
Wayne	1	No cases in 2020

County of Death of Decedent - Toxin/Poisoning Means of Death, 2021



Gender Distrubition - Toxin/Poisoning Means of Death, 2021



A single substance was determined by the pathologist to be the cause of death in 22 cases (76%). The single substances are listed below:

Single Substance	Number of Cases	% of Cases ¹
Fentanyl	15	51.7%
Carbon Monoxide	2	6.9%
Acetaminophen	1	3.4%
Clonazepam	1	3.4%
Methadone	1	3.4%
Nitrates/Nitrites	1	3.4%
Threohydrobupropion ²	1	3.4%

Substance combinations were determined by the pathologist to be the cause of death in 7 cases (24%). The substance combinations are listed below:

Substance Combinations	Number of Cases	% of Cases ³
Fentanyl, Methamphetamine	1	3.4%
Fentanyl, Alprazolam	1	3.4%
Fentanyl, Ethanol	1	3.4%
Fentanyl, Cocaine, Clonazepam	1	3.4%
Quetiapine, Lamotrigine	1	3.4%
Fentanyl, Cocaine	2	6.9%

¹ Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.

² Metabolite of Bupropion.

³ Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.