**Motor Vehicle Case Review Report:**

The Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team (WCDRPT) seeks to improve Wyoming communities’ prevention of and response to major injuries and fatalities in cases of child maltreatment. We will evaluate visible trends in Wyoming’s child fatalities and actively advocate for child victims of maltreatment and make recommendations for change through prevention, intervention, training, education, legislation and public policy.

The WCDRPT reviewed all child fatalities in Wyoming related to motor vehicle incidents for 2015 (children 0-17 years old). The team also evaluated data and trends in incapacitating traumatic injuries of children in Wyoming related to motor vehicles for 2015. The following is a summary of findings and recommendations relating to this review:

**2015 Child Fatalities – Motor Vehicle:** 9

**2015 Child Incapacitating Injuries – Motor Vehicle:** 47

- 100% of the fatality cases were found to have at least 1 preventable component.
- 56% of the fatalities involved improper or lack of use of a child safety seat, restraint, or safety belt. In 3 fatality cases the use of a safety restraint was determined to have been properly installed.
- 56% of the fatalities occurred on Wyoming Highways and Interstates.
- 51% of the incapacitating injuries involved improper or lack of use of a child safety seat, restraint, or safety belt.
- 60% of the fatalities that occurred, in which proper safety belts were not used or child safety restraints were not installed properly, involved a rollover accident.
- 100% of the fatalities involved a Sport Utility Vehicle or Pickup/Truck as the Vehicle Type. (*Proportion of these vehicle types to passenger and other vehicles types may be higher in Wyoming, as compared to other states.
- 17 of the 23, or 74% of Wyoming counties were affected by a motor vehicle incident in which a child was killed or traumatically injured.
Team Recommendations:

- The Wyoming Safety Belt Law should become a primary offense, at least for children up to 18 years of age.

- If the Wyoming Safety Belt law remains a secondary offense, children under the age of 14 should be covered under the Wyoming Child Restraint Law. Those children above the size and age requirements of a booster seat should be required to wear a safety belt up to the age of 14.

- There should be consideration made to increasing the fines for not wearing safety belts.

- There should be efforts made into removable license plate stickers or other identifying marker, in regards to acknowledging a teen driver is behind the wheel. This would have to be an effort of WYDOT, with support from other entities.

- Education and awareness efforts should be made surrounding apps and devices that parents can use, that assist in tracking their teen driver’s location and some devices that even allow a personal vehicle’s maximum speed to be governed. These types of technology could assist in the reduction of reckless driving by some teens, leading to a decreased risk of incapacitating injury or fatality.

- Greater education efforts surrounding the importance of safety seats and seat belt usage in the back seats of vehicles, or any row of seats behind the front driver and passenger. Too often, there seems to be a belief that these positions in a vehicle are safer and need fewer precautions taken.

- Rules and restrictions surrounding graduated drivers’ licenses should be evaluated and strengthened. It would be the suggestion of this team that the “Alive at 25” course be a requirement for any child wanting to acquire a hardship or graduated license. The requirements of these licenses needs to include education and requirements similar to a full drivers’ license.

- Educational programs, including “Alive at 25” and – Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), should be continued and further promoted on a statewide basis for young drivers. Particular focus on wearing safety belts, ensuring passengers wear safety belts, reducing loose objects that may shift inside a vehicle, driving with too many people in a vehicle, and additional safety concerns of high-profile vehicles (SUV’s, Pickups) should be involved in all types and levels of driver’s education trainings and classes.

- Educational programs surrounding child safety restraints, including Safe Kids Wyoming programming reaching all of Wyoming, should be continued and supported to ensure all Wyoming drivers know the proper restraints needed if they are traveling with children. Child safety restraint education should reach all Wyoming counties. This education should also include safety information about leaving children in a vehicle unattended. In addition, increased outreach on proper child safety restraints to law enforcement entities, particularly city and county-level officials, would benefit their knowledge if helping a community
member, as well as during any vehicle accident investigations they may be involved in.

- Continued quality and performance improvement for law enforcement regarding crash report documentation is recommended. Mistakes and/or missing information in this documentation hinders truly understanding the cause and possible prevention efforts that could be applied to future incidents of a similar nature.

- Strengthen state requirements surrounding driver's license renewal procedures, particularly involving certain medical conditions (i.e. serious vision issues). Encourage doctors to notify the Wyoming Department of Transportation if concerns regarding driving are noted at time of a doctors’ visits.

- Efforts will be made to establish consistent inclusion of Coroner’s reports with all motor vehicle case files that are reviewed by this team, to ensure recommendations and documentation included with case reviews are consistent and accurate.

- Local efforts addressing trauma care within communities is supported and encouraged. Support should be given to the designation of trauma programs across the state.

**Wyoming Motor Vehicle Fatalities in Children (0-18) Compared to the Nation:**

From 2013-2014 the US motor vehicle death rate among children 0-18 was 4 per 100,000 kids and the Wyoming motor vehicle death rate among children 0-18 was 7 per 100,000 children. So, during that time period the Wyoming fatality rate was 75% higher than the US rate for children 0-18 years of age.

**The Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team is coordinated by the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, Inc. For questions or comments regarding this report, please contact(307)632-0032.**