



What is SUDC?

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) is a category of death in children between the ages of 1 and 18 that remains unexplained after a thorough investigation, including an autopsy. Most often, a seemingly healthy child goes to sleep and never wakes up. At this time, we do not know what causes SUDC, how to predict it or how to prevent it. A medical examiner or coroner could rule a child's death SUDC when s/he completes a thorough evaluation and finds no other cause of death.

SUDC Facts

SUDC is believed to be rare; occurring in about one in every 100,000 children. Every year in the United States, approximately 400 children are lost to SUDC. It is most common in young children and is the fifth leading category of death among children between the ages of 1 and 4. We do not know exactly how often SUDC occurs—in the U.S. or around the world. Because the World Health Organization (WHO) lacks a specific way to record sudden and unexplained deaths in children that have been thoroughly investigated, it is impossible to know how widespread the problem is.

The SUDC Foundation

The SUDC Foundation envisions a world where no more children are lost to Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood. The SUDC Foundation is the only organization worldwide whose purpose is to promote awareness, advocate for research and support those affected by SUDC.

The SUDC Foundation:

Funds and promotes research. The SUDC Foundation provides grants for and conducts research that will further our understanding of the cause(s) and ways to prevent SUDC.

Supports Families. The SUDC Foundation currently supports over 800 families in 18 countries. It provides personalized, comprehensive care from licensed clinical social workers and cultivates a community of support for bereaved families so no one grieves alone. The Foundation also helps families navigate the difficult and often confusing investigation into their child's death by being a liaison between families and the medical examiner or coroner. It also assists families in accessing research and DNA banking services which could lead to answers on what may have happened to their child.

Assists Medical Professionals. The Foundation provides resources to help medical examiners and coroners, pediatricians and other doctors care for and communicate with families experiencing the sudden, unexpected and unexplained loss of a child.

Advocates for the SUDC Community. The Foundation supports efforts, including legislative, to ensure comprehensive and standardized death investigations. It also advocates for fair treatment of and appropriate medical care for families and thorough data collection to improve our understanding of SUDC.

The SUDC Foundation provides all services at no cost to the people it serves. To learn more, please visit SUDC.org.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2017, SUDC affected:

- 243 children ages of 1-4 years;
- 33 children ages of 5-9 years;
- 39 children ages of 10-14 years; and
- 74 teens ages of 15-18 years.

