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NSW Ombudsman

## **Child Death Review Team – Annual report 2011**

The NSW Child Death Review Team annual report for 2011 was tabled in Parliament today by the Team's Convenor, the NSW Ombudsman.

The report examines the deaths of 581 children registered in NSW in 2011.

**'The rate of child deaths for 2011 – 35.47 deaths per 100,000 children – represents the lowest child death rate in NSW for 15 years'** the Ombudsman, Bruce Barbour, said. **'This is a positive sign. However, there are still too many children dying in circumstances that are preventable.'**

The Team's role is to learn from child deaths to help prevent other children dying in similar circumstances. In 2011, the Team identified a number of areas where there is clearly scope for more, and possibly better targeted, prevention efforts.

**'This report highlights two areas that are of particular concern: children being run over by vehicles travelling at low speed, and drowning deaths in private swimming pools'** said the Ombudsman.

- From 2002 to 2011, 24 children under five died after being run over by a vehicle travelling at low speed. These were often in or near their own home by vehicles driven by a family member or a person they knew.
- From 2007 to 2011, 40 children, most under five, drowned in a private swimming pool. In most cases, the pool was at their home or the home of relatives or friends.

**'These are very tragic circumstances that warrant concerted prevention efforts'** Mr Barbour said.

The Team supports the NSW Government's plans to introduce new legislation to better protect young children around swimming pools. The Ombudsman said **'the Team has made a number of recommendations to ensure the effective implementation of a system for registration and inspection of private swimming pools.'**

The Team has also called for better information to be captured about driveway and other low-speed vehicle accidents, and for a coordinated approach in NSW to identifying what needs to be done to reduce the risk of death and injury to children.

On behalf of the Team, Mr Barbour extended condolences to the families and friends of the children and young people who died.