

*State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*  
OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE



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**PRESS RELEASE**

***For Release on Tuesday, April 05, 2017***

The Office of the Child Advocate is issuing this press release pursuant to *R.I.G.L. § 42-73-2.3* to announce that the Office of the Child Advocate has re-convened the Child Fatality Review Panel after receiving notice from the Department of Children, Youth and Families of a recent near fatality of a three (3) month old child and another near fatality of a five (5) month old child. The Office of the Child Advocate (hereinafter "OCA") is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing any child fatality or near fatality where a child was in the care and custody of the Department of Children, Youth and Families or the child's family had recent contact with the Department of Children, Youth and Families (hereinafter "DCYF" or "Department"). The OCA may also complete a review of a fatality or near fatality when a sibling, household member, or day care provider has been the subject of a child abuse and neglect investigation within the previous twelve (12) months.

Pursuant to *R.I.G.L. § 42-73-2.3*, the OCA may work with a voluntary and confidential child fatality review panel, which may vary for each case under review. The Child Advocate, Jennifer Griffith has asked the following individuals from the previous review panel to return to the newly convened panel: Dr. Adam Pallant, a pediatrician at Hasbro Children's Hospital; Ken Fandetti, a retired DCYF administrator; Darlene Allen, Executive Director of Adoption Rhode Island; Attorney Molly Kapstein Cote, a former Attorney General and a criminal defense attorney; Lisa Guillette, Executive Director of Foster Forward and Detective Michael Iacone, a Cranston Special Victims Unit Detective. In addition to these six returning panel members, Ms. Griffith has asked Catherine Lewis, a former DCYF Social Worker to join this panel.

In addition, Griffith, along with three members of her staff, Attorney Katelyn Medeiros, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Kathryn Cortes and Senior Planning and Program Development Specialist, Jacqueline Sanchez, will serve as advising members of the review panel.

Upon the conclusion of the review, the Office of the Child Advocate will issue a public report outlining the panel's findings and recommendations, without identifying the children or families involved in the cases under review.