



How 65 vulnerable children and teenagers known to child protection authorities died in one year

– as the harrowing story of a baby boy's tragic end is revealed

- **Vulnerable children in Victoria dying at the rate of one per week in 2019-20**
- **Child protection services overwhelmed; secret report reveals**

Excerpts from an article originally published by Levi Parsons For Daily Mail Australia

Shocking new figures show 65 children and teenagers known to Victoria's child protection authorities died in just one year.

The state's welfare failure during 2019-20 was exposed by Victorian Coroners Court figures released to *The Australian*.

It showed of the 65 deaths, 26 cases were still active while 39 were inactive.

The horror stories that lie beneath the statistics have been laid bare in a separate, secret report by the Commissioner for Children and Young People, also obtained by *The Australian*.

The highly classified 59-page document reveals child protection services are overwhelmed in the state and too slow to act in many cases.

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Among the most harrowing examples uncovered in the report is the story of Baby M - an unwanted child whose mother sought an abortion while eight months pregnant but was turned away as she was too close to birth.

The newborn boy barely survived and was treated for neonatal abstinence syndrome due to his mother's drug use.

He was then placed in the care of his grandfather after the mother told hospital staff she did not want to look after him.

Baby M's grandfather had a history of family violence, ice abuse, homelessness and depression.

Eventually the child tragically died on November 24, 2019 after five separate investigations by Child Protection.

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It is believed the cause of death was SIDS.

'The system is not coping; kids are being left in at-risk environments,' a Victorian Government whistleblower said.

With more than one vulnerable child dying every week in Victoria, the source said a royal commission into child protection is now warranted.

'They are the kind of numbers that should at least raise the possibility of a royal commission being a reasonable response,' the child and adolescent psychiatrist said.

The Coroners Court data revealed SIDS, suicide, car accidents, suffocation, drugs and assaults were the most common causes of death among the 65 children and teens.

Daily Mail Australia have contacted Victoria's Child Protection services for comment.

A government spokesman told *The Australian* 'we know we need to do more to protect young Victorians' and that 'every death of a child is a terrible tragedy'.

If you or anyone you know is in need of mental health support you can call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636