



Child Maltreatment 2007: Summary of Key Findings

This factsheet presents excerpts from *Child Maltreatment 2007*, a report based on data submissions by State child protective services (CPS) agencies for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2007. The full *Child Maltreatment 2007* report is available on the Children's Bureau website: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/index.htm

How many children were reported and received an investigation or assessment for abuse and neglect?

During FFY 2007, an estimated 3.2 million referrals, involving the alleged maltreatment of approximately 5.8 million children, were made to CPS agencies. An estimated 3.5 million children received an investigation or assessment.

- Approximately 62 percent (61.7 percent) of referrals were screened in for investigation or assessment by CPS agencies.
- Approximately 25 percent (25.2 percent) of the investigations or assessments found at least one child to be a victim of abuse or neglect, with the following report dispositions: 24.1 percent substantiated, 0.6 percent indicated, and 0.5 percent alternative response victim.¹

¹The NCANDS disposition category of "alternative response victim" is defined as a conclusion that the child was identified as a victim when a response other than an investigation was provided.



- Almost 75 percent of the investigations or assessments determined that the child was not a victim of maltreatment, with the following dispositions: 61.3 percent unsubstantiated, 6.1 percent alternative response nonvictim², 5.7 percent “other,” 1.6 percent closed with no finding, and 0.0 percent intentionally false.

Who reported child maltreatment?

For FFY 2007, more than one-half (57.7 percent) of all reports of alleged child abuse or neglect were made by professionals. The term “professional” means that the person had contact with the alleged child maltreatment victim as part of the report source’s job. The remaining reports were made by nonprofessionals, including friends, neighbors, sports coaches, and relatives.

The three most common report sources were teachers (17.0 percent), lawyers or police officers (16.3 percent), and social services staff (10.2 percent).

Who were the child victims?

During FFY 2007, an estimated 794,000 children were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect. Among the children confirmed as victims by CPS agencies in 2007:

- Children in the age group of birth to 1 year had the highest rate of victimization at 21.9 per 1,000 children of the same age group in the national population.
- Just over one-half (51.5 percent) of the child victims were girls, and 48.2 percent were boys.
- Almost one-half of all victims (46.1 percent) were White; 21.7 percent were African-American; and 20.8 percent were Hispanic.

² The NCANDS disposition category of “alternative response nonvictim” is defined as a conclusion that the child was not identified as a victim when a response other than an investigation was provided.

What were the most common types of maltreatment?

As in prior years, neglect was the most common form of child maltreatment. CPS investigations determined that:

- Nearly 60 percent (59.0 percent) of victims suffered neglect.
- More than 10 percent (10.8 percent) of the victims suffered physical abuse.
- Less than 10 percent (7.6 percent) of the victims suffered sexual abuse.
- Less than 5 percent (4.2 percent) of the victims suffered psychological maltreatment.

How many children died from abuse or neglect?

Child fatalities are the most tragic consequence of maltreatment. During FFY 2007:

- An estimated 1,760 children died due to abuse or neglect.
- The overall rate of child fatalities was 2.35 deaths per 100,000 children.
- More than 30 percent (34.1 percent) were attributed to neglect only; physical abuse also was a major contributor to child fatalities.
- More than three-quarters (75.7 percent) of the children who died due to child abuse and neglect were younger than 4 years old.
- Infant boys (younger than 1 year) had the highest rate of fatalities, at 18.85 deaths per 100,000 boys of the same age in the national population.
- Infant girls had a rate of 15.39 deaths per 100,000 girls of the same age.

Who abused and neglected children?

In FFY 2007, nearly 80 percent (79.9 percent) of perpetrators of child maltreatment were parents, and another 6.6 percent were other relatives of the victim. Women comprised a larger percentage of all perpetrators than men, 56.5 percent compared to 42.4 percent. Nearly 75 percent (74.8 percent) of all perpetrators were younger than age 40.

Who received services?

- Overall, 7.2 percent of all perpetrators were associated with sexually abusing a child, and this percentage was highest among friends or neighbors (57.7 percent), other relatives (32.0 percent), and child daycare providers (23.9 percent).
- Of the perpetrators who were parents, almost 90 percent (87.7 percent) were a biological parent of the victim.

During an investigation, CPS agencies provide services to children and their families, both in the home and in foster care.

- More than 60 percent (62.1 percent) of victims and 31.2 percent of nonvictims received postinvestigation services. Of the children who were not found to be victims of maltreatment, 27.6 percent received such services.
- Approximately one-fifth (20.7 percent) of victims and 3.8 percent of nonvictims were placed in foster care.

The statistics in the Child Maltreatment reports are based on data submitted to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). NCANDS is a voluntary reporting system that was developed by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to collect and analyze annual statistics on child maltreatment from State CPS agencies.