

Child Maltreatment Report 2007

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/index.htm>

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“...defines child abuse and neglect as:

- Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”

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

During Federal fiscal year 2007, an estimated 3.2 million referrals, involving the alleged maltreatment of approximately 5.8 million children, were referred to CPS agencies.”

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**“Who reported child maltreatment?”**

For 2007, more than one-half (57.7%) of all reports of alleged child abuse or neglect were made by professionals.

- The three largest percentages of report sources were from such professionals as teachers (17.0%), lawyers or police officers (16.3%), and social services staff (10.2%).”

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**“Who were the child victims?”**

During 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;
- More than one-half of the child victims were girls (51.5%) and 48.2 percent were boys; and
- Approximately one-half of all victims were White (46.1%), 21.7 percent were African-American, and 20.8 percent were Hispanic.”

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**“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%) of victims suffered neglect;
- More than 10 percent (10.8%) of the victims suffered physical abuse;
- Less than 10 percent (7.6%) of the victims suffered sexual abuse; and
- Less than 5 percent (4.2%) of the victims suffered from psychological maltreatment.”

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#### **“Who abused and neglected children?”**

In 2007, nearly 80 percent of perpetrators of child maltreatment (79.9%) 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%) of all perpetrators were younger than age 40.

- Of the perpetrators who were child daycare providers, nearly 24 percent (23.9%) committed sexual abuse.
- Of the perpetrators who were parents, nearly 90 percent (87.7%) were the biological parent of the victim.”

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#### **“Annual Data Collection Process**

States that submit case-level data, construct a child-specific record for each report of alleged child abuse or neglect that received a disposition as a result of an investigation or an assessment during the reporting period; this data file is called the Child File. The reporting period for *Child Maltreatment 2007* was October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007. “

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“Child protective services (CPS) agencies use a two-stage process for handling allegations of child maltreatment. Those stages are screening and investigation. During the screening stage, an initial notification—called a referral—alleging abuse or neglect is made to CPS. Agency hotline or intake units conduct the screening process to determine whether the referral is appropriate for further investigation or assessment. Referrals that do not meet the investigation or assessment criteria are screened out or diverted from CPS.

During the investigation stage, a screened-in referral—called a report—receives an investigation or assessment. The purpose of an investigation or assessment is to

determine if a child was maltreated or is at-risk of maltreatment and to establish the appropriate intervention. During Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2007: “

- Approximately 3.2 million referrals of child abuse and neglect that included approximately 5.8 million children were made to CPS agencies.
- About 62 percent (61.7%) of those referrals reached the second stage, became a report, and were either investigated or received an assessment.
- More than 25 percent (25.2%) of the investigations that reached the report stage determined that at least one child was a victim of child abuse or neglect.

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### **“Screening of Referrals**

The process of determining whether a referral meets a State's standard for an investigation or assessment is known as screening. "Screening in" a referral means that an allegation of child abuse or neglect met the State's standard for investigation or assessment and the referral reaches the second stage and is called a report. "Screening out" a referral means that the allegation did not meet the State's standard for an investigation or assessment. Reasons for screening out a referral include: The referral did not concern child abuse or neglect; it did not contain enough information to enable an investigation or assessment to occur; the children in the referral were the responsibility of another agency or jurisdiction, e.g., a military installation or a tribe; or the alleged victim was older than 18 years.

During FFY 2007, an estimated 3.2 million referrals, which included approximately 5.8 million children, were referred to CPS agencies. The national rate was 43.0 referrals per 1,000 children for FFY 2007 compared with 43.7 referrals per 1,000 children for FFY 2006.<sup>1, 2</sup>

During FFY 2007, CPS agencies screened in 61.7 percent of referrals and screened out 38.3 percent. These results were identical to FFY 2006 data, which indicated 61.7 percent were screened in and 38.3 percent were screened out. “

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### **Report Sources**

“Professionals submitted more than one-half (57.7%) of the reports (figure 2-1).”  
([http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/figure2\\_1.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/figure2_1.htm))

“Nonprofessional sources submitted 26.8 percent of reports. These included parents, relatives, friends and neighbors, alleged victims, alleged perpetrators, and anonymous callers. The three largest groups of nonprofessional reporters were anonymous (7.6%), other relatives (7.3%), and parents (6.1%). “

“Unknown or "other" report sources submitted 15.7 percent of reports. The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) uses the term "other" sources for those categories that States are not able to crosswalk to any of the NCANDS terms.<sup>4</sup> "Other" sources may include clergy members, sports coaches, camp counselors, bystanders, volunteers, and foster siblings. Unknown or "other" report sources are listed separately because either the data are missing or the data cannot be classified into either the professional or nonprofessional category.”

“Alleged Victims” were noted to report incidences of CA/N 0.6% of the time

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### **“Investigation or Assessment Results**

CPS agencies assign a finding—also called a disposition—to a report after the circumstances are investigated and a determination is made as to whether the maltreatment occurred or the child is at-risk of maltreatment. For FFY 2007, 1,860,262 investigations or assessments received a disposition. Each State establishes dispositions by policy and law. The major NCANDS disposition categories are described below.

- Alternative Response Nonvictim: A conclusion that the child was not identified as a victim when a response other than an investigation was provided.
- Alternative Response Victim: A conclusion that the child was identified as a victim when a response other than an investigation was provided.
- Indicated: An investigation disposition that concludes that maltreatment could not be substantiated under State law or policy, but there was reason to suspect that the child may have been maltreated or was at-risk of maltreatment. This is applicable only to States that distinguish between substantiated and indicated dispositions.
- Substantiated: An investigation disposition that concludes that the allegation of maltreatment or risk of maltreatment was supported or founded by State law or State policy.
- Unsubstantiated: An investigation disposition that determines that there was not sufficient evidence under State law to conclude or suspect that the child was maltreated or at risk of being maltreated. “

### **Response Time from Referral to Investigation**

“The FFY 2007 median response time from report to investigation was 79 hours or approximately 3.3 days.<sup>10</sup> The FFY 2006 median response time was 66 hours or 2.8 days. The FFY 2007 average response time was 84 hours or approximately 3.5 days. This is comparable to an average response time of 86 hours for FFY 2006.p. 10”

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## **CPS Workforce and Workload**

In most agencies, the screening and investigation are conducted by different groups of workers. In many rural and smaller agencies, one worker may perform both functions, and other functions not mentioned here.”

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## **Chapter 3 Children<sup>1</sup> Child Maltreatment 2007**

“National child maltreatment estimates for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2007 are based on child populations for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. During FFY 2007:

- An estimated 794,000 children were victims of maltreatment;
- The rate of victimization was 10.6 per 1,000 children in the population; and
- More than 3.5 million children received CPS investigations or assessments.”

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### **“Child Victims**

Based on data from 50 States, nearly one-quarter (22.5%) of children who received an investigation or assessment were found to have been maltreated.<sup>5</sup> This compares to 25.2 percent of children who were found to have been maltreated during FFY 2006. The number of reported victims of maltreatment from the 50 States was 753,357.<sup>6</sup> The victimization rate for FFY 2007 was 10.6 per 1,000 in the population.<sup>7</sup> State rates of victimization ranged from 1.5 to 26.3 per 1,000 children. Based on the victimization rate of 10.6 per 1,000 in the population, an estimated 794,000 children were victims of maltreatment during FFY 2007.<sup>8</sup> “

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### **“First-Time Victims**

Approximately three-quarters of victims (75.4%) had no history of prior victimization.<sup>9</sup> “

### **“Age and Sex of Victims**

Nearly 32 percent (31.9%) of all victims of maltreatment were younger than 4 years old ([figure 3–2](#)). An additional 23.8 percent were in the age group 4–7 years and 19.0 percent were in the age group 8–11 years.<sup>10</sup> Victimization was split almost evenly between the

sexes; 48.2 percent of victims were boys and 51.5 percent of the victims were girls. The sex of 0.3 percent of child victims was unknown.

The youngest children had the highest rate of victimization. The rate of child victimization for boys in the age group of birth to 1 year was 22.2 per 1,000 male children of the same age group ([figure 3-3](#)). The child victimization rate for girls in the age group of birth to 1 year was 21.5 per 1,000 female children of the same age group. The victimization rate for children in the age group of 4–7 years was 11.4 per 1,000 for boys and 11.6 per 1,000 for girls. The victimization rate for children in the age group of 16–17 was 5.4 per 1,000 children in the same age group. Overall, the victimization rates decreased for older age groups. “

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## **Types of Maltreatment**

“During FFY 2007, 59.0 percent of victims experienced neglect, 10.8 percent were physically abused, 7.6 percent were sexually abused, 4.2 percent were psychologically maltreated, less than 1 percent were medically neglected, and 13.1 percent were victims of multiple maltreatments ([figure 3-4](#)).<sup>12</sup> In addition, 4.2 percent of victims experienced such "other" types of maltreatment as "abandonment," "threats of harm to the child," or "congenital drug addiction." States may code any condition that does not fall into one of the main categories—physical abuse, neglect, medical neglect, sexual abuse, and psychological or emotional maltreatment—as "other.”

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“The data for victims of specific types of maltreatment were analyzed in terms of report sources, race, and age group. Of victims of physical abuse, 25.4 percent were reported by teachers, 23.9 percent were reported by police officers or lawyers, and 13.3 percent were reported by medical staff.<sup>13</sup> Police officers or lawyers accounted for the largest report source percentage of neglect victims (28.1%) and sexual abuse victims (29.4%). "Other" and unknown reporters are not classified as either professional or nonprofessional reporters. They were responsible for 11.5 percent of all reports. Overall, 67.5 percent of victims were reported by professionals and 20.9 percent were reported by nonprofessionals.”

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## **Risk Factors**

“Children who were reported with any of the following risk factors were considered as having a disability: Mental retardation, emotional disturbance, visual or hearing impairment, learning disability, physical disability, behavioral problems, or another

medical problem. In general, children with such risk factors are undercounted, as not every child receives a clinical diagnostic assessment from CPS agency staff. Slightly more than 8 percent (8.1%) of victims had a reported disability. Approximately 3 percent (3.1%) of victims had behavior problems, another 3.1 percent had some other medical condition, and 1.9 percent of victims were emotionally disturbed. A victim could have been reported with more than one type of disability.<sup>17</sup>

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**Table 3-13** ([http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/table3\\_13.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/table3_13.htm))

- Each victim is counted only once for each applicable disability category regardless of how many reports the child had. The column victims with reported disabilities counts each child only once regardless of how many disabilities were reported.