

## 2003 Child Abuse and Neglect Fact

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is non-accidental physical injury of a child inflicted by a parent or caretaker which ranges from superficial bruises and welts to broken bones, burns, serious internal injuries and in some cases, death. The definition of physical abuse includes actions that create a substantial risk of physical injury to the child.

### Physical Neglect

Physical neglect is withholding, or failing to provide, adequate food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, medical care, education, and/or supervision, such that the child's physical, mental or emotional condition is impaired or at imminent risk of being impaired.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when a parent or caretaker commits a sexual offense against a child or allows a sexual offense to be committed, such as rape, sodomy, engaging a child in sexual activity, engaging a child in - or promoting a child's - sexual performance.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse includes parents' or caretakers' acts or omissions that cause or could cause serious conduct, cognitive, affective, or other mental disorders. For example, torture, close confinement or the constant use of verbally abusive language to harshly criticize and denigrate a child. It also includes emotional neglect - withholding physical and emotional contact to the detriment of the child's normal emotional development, and in extreme cases, physical development.

### Some Causes

There are many reasons why some people have difficulty meeting the demands of parenting, including: immaturity and unrealistic expectations, unmet emotional needs, stresses of child care, economic crisis, lack of parenting knowledge, parent was maltreated as a child, and drug or alcohol problems.

Prevention & Parent Helpline:  
1-800-CHILDREN

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## Reports and numbers of children

In 2003, 77,086 New York State children were abused or neglected, 17 of every 1,000 children in the state. The NYS Central Register (the Child Abuse Reporting Hotline) received 147,339 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, involving 245,515 children. Upon investigation, 44,495 (30%) were substantiated as situations of child abuse and neglect. (There are more child victims than reports, because more than one child may be involved.) Compared to the prior year, the number the number of reports decreased by 4% from 153,664 and the number of substantiated reports decreased by 5% from 46,761.

Nationwide, an estimated 906,000 children\* were victims of abuse and neglect in 2003, a victimization rate of 12.4 for every 1,000 children in the country, or 31.7% of children reported as suspected victims. States investigated or assessed 3,353,000 children (46 of every 1,000 children). This is a 5% increase in number of children investigated or assessed, and a 1.1% increase in the number of substantiated child victims, compared to 2002.

\* A child was counted each time he or she was found to be a victim; the adjusted estimate is 803,000 unique child victims.

## Types of maltreatment

Child neglect continues to comprise the largest portion of cases of child maltreatment. According to the federal report Child Maltreatment 2003, figures for the country and for New York State are as follows:

	United States	New York State
Neglect	61%	90%
Physical Abuse	19%	13%
Sexual Abuse	10%	4%
Emotional Maltreatment	5%	1%
Medical Neglect	2.3%	3.6%
Other Types	18%	25%

“Other types of maltreatment” include, for example, abandonment, threats of harm, congenital drug addiction. Totals are more than 100% because a child may be the victim of more than one type of maltreatment.

## Fatalities

In New York State in 2003, 62 children are known to have died of as a result of child abuse and neglect, a fatality rate of 1.37 per 100, 000 children.

Nationwide in 2003, 1,027 children died of abuse or neglect in the 43 states that reported that information; that is, almost 2 children for every 100,000 children in the population. Children younger than 1 year old accounted for 43.6% of fatalities, and 78.7% of fatalities were younger than 4 years old.

Sources of Data: Child Maltreatment 2003, U.S. DHHS, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005; New York State Office of Children and Family Services Data Warehouse, July 29, 2005.



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
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