

**CHILD MALTREATMENT 1996:
Reports From the States to the
National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
CONTENTS OF CHILD MALTREATMENT 1996**

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Appendix A. State Advisory Group Representatives 1996-1997

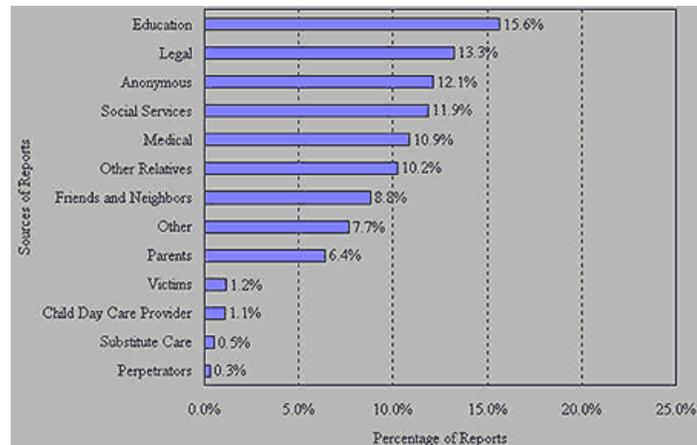
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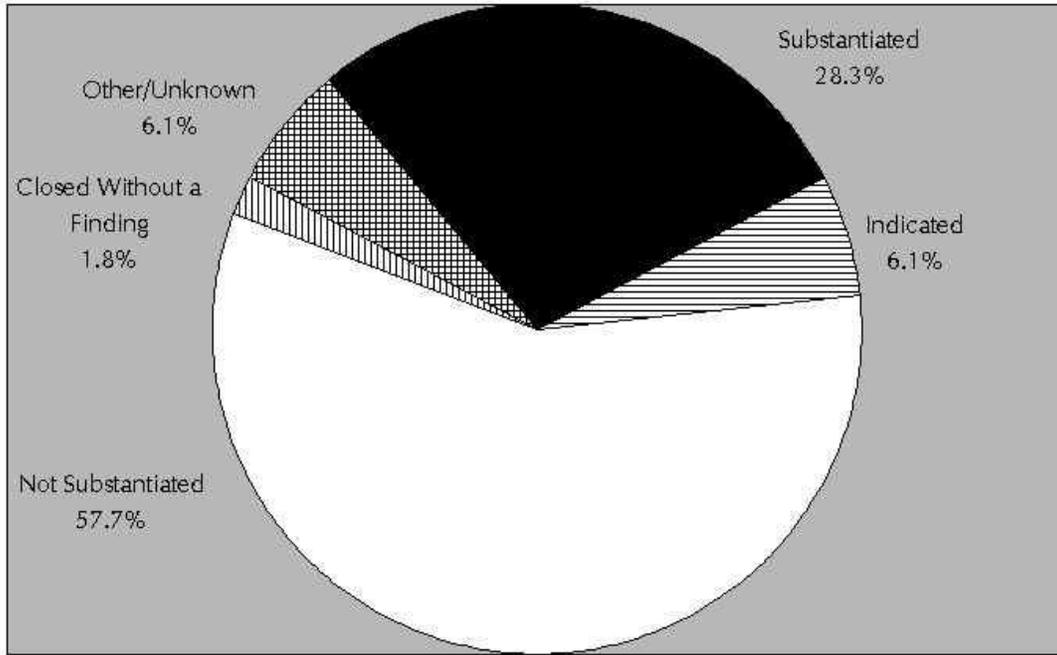
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Figure 2-1 Sources of Reports



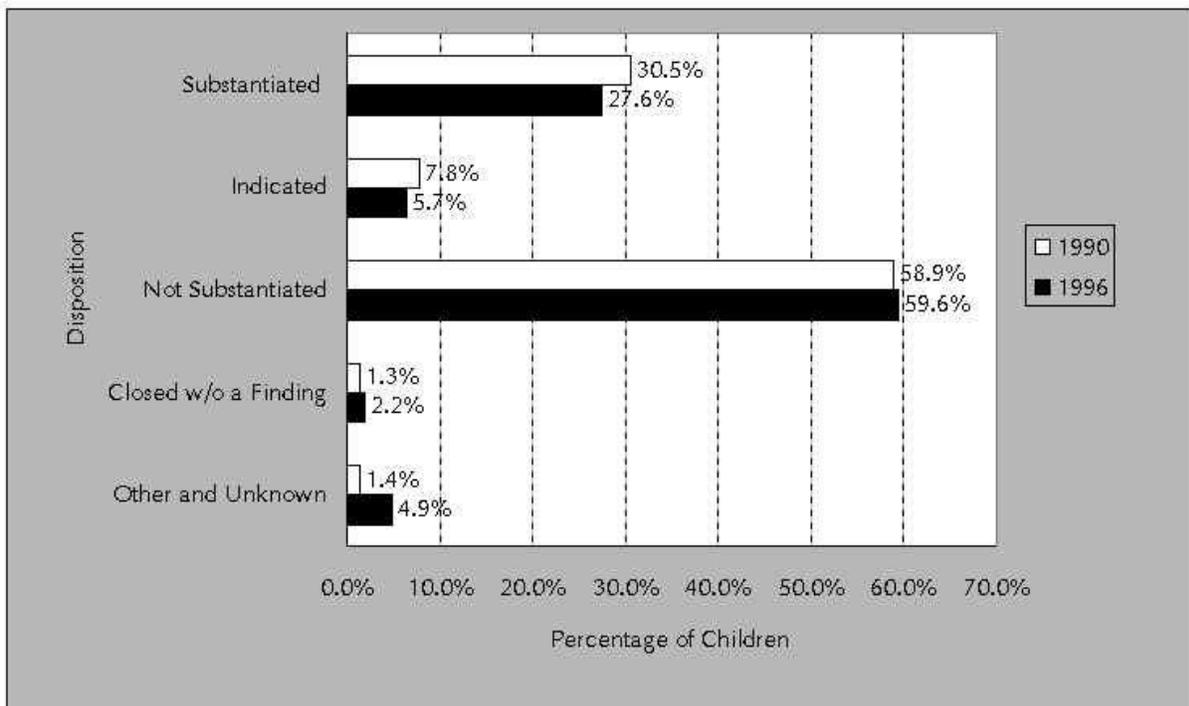
N = 1,490,340 reports from 42 states

Figure 2-2 - Investigated Reports By Disposition, 1996



N= 1,624,666 reports from 48 states.

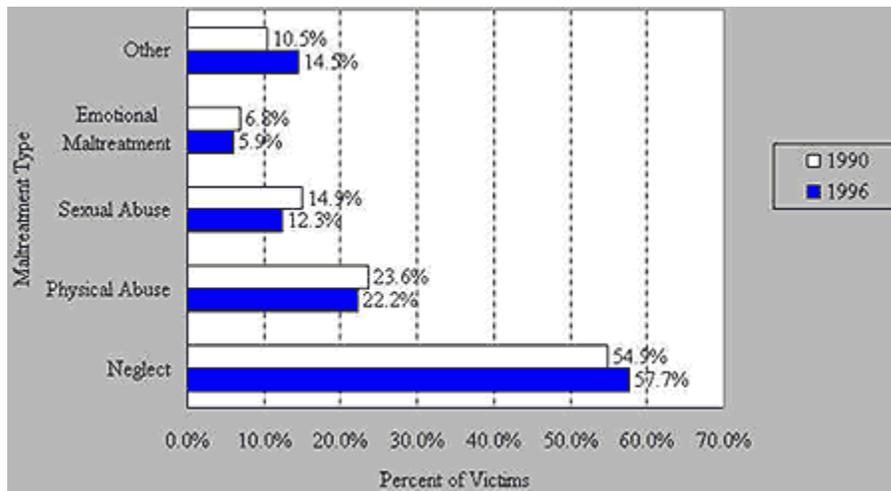
Figure 2-3 Children by Disposition, 1990 and 1996



1990: N= 1,614,414 children in 22 States.

1996: N= 1.932,085 children in 33 States.

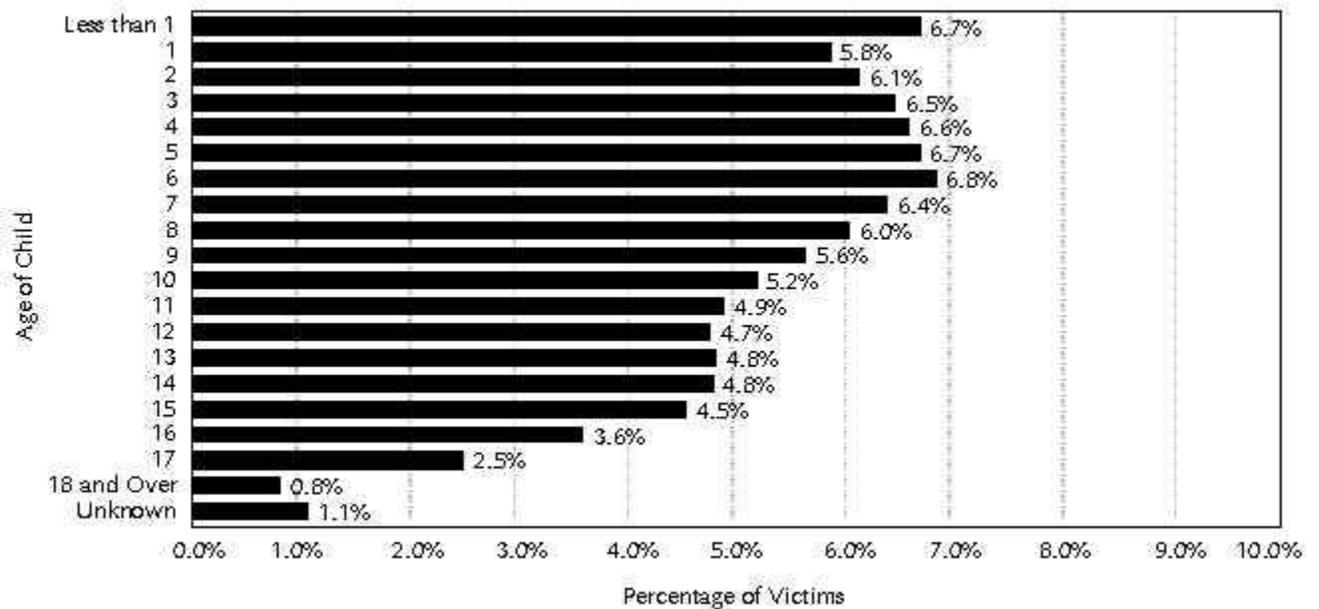
Figure 2-4 Types of Maltreatment, 1990 and 1996



1990: N= 558,234 victims in 31 States.

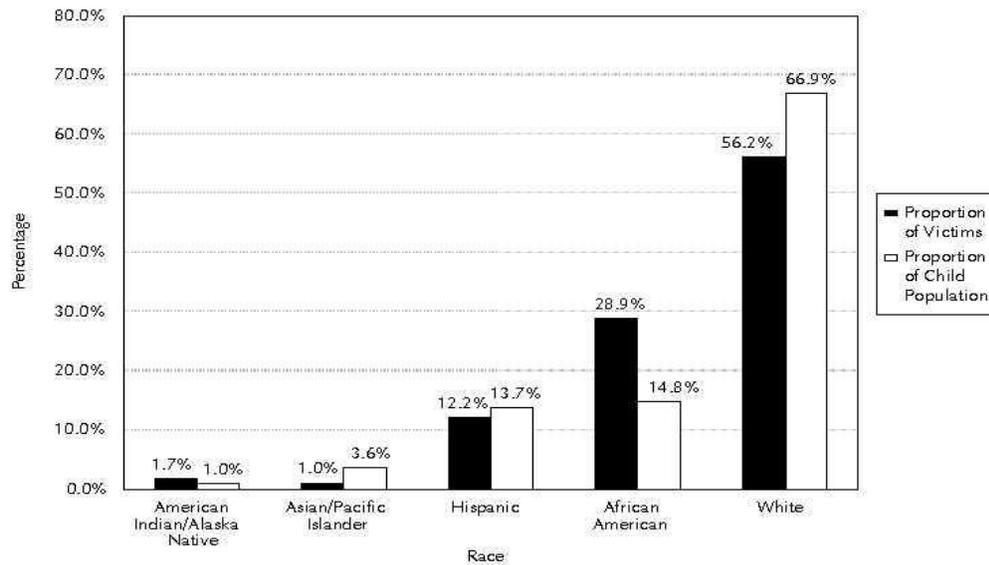
1996: N= 572,943 victims in 31 States.

Figure 2-5 Victims by Age, 1996



N= 807,854 victims in 42 States.

Figure 2-6 Proportions of Victims and Children Under 18 Years of Age by Race, 1996



N= 747,359 victims in 41 States. Note: Population data for children are based on reported race and ethnicity as per 1994 Census estimates in the 41 States. The Percentages are based on the number of victims excluding children of "Other" or "Unknown" race.

Table 2-1 Report Dispositions by Source of Reports, DCDC

Report Source	Disposition					Totals
	Substantiated	Indicated	Unsubstantiated	Closed w/o Finding	Other/Unknown	
Social Services Personnel	17,588 (14.3%)	11,080 (13.9%)	28,912 (12.1%)	517 (11.2%)	2,135 (11.3%)	60,182 (12.9%)
Medical Personnel	20,981 (17.0%)	7,835 (9.9%)	20,687 (8.7%)	359 (7.7%)	1,766 (9.4%)	51,628 (11.1%)
Law Enforcement Personnel	25,168 (20.4%)	11,142 (14.1%)	20,930 (8.8%)	571 (12.3%)	2,086 (11.1%)	59,897 (12.9%)
Education Personnel	19,376 (15.7%)	12,647 (15.9%)	38,111 (15.9%)	401 (8.6%)	3,552 (18.9%)	74,087 (15.9%)
Child Day Care Providers	1,903 (1.5%)	1,276 (1.6%)	3,862 (1.6%)	24 (0.5%)	288 (1.5%)	7,353 (1.6%)
Alleged Victims	939 (0.8%)	1,061 (1.3%)	2,784 (1.2%)	24 (0.5%)	166 (0.9%)	4,974 (1.1%)
Parents	6,700 (5.4%)	7,412 (9.3%)	21,712 (9.1%)	323 (7.0%)	2,125 (11.3%)	38,272 (8.2%)
Other Relatives	8,605 (7.0%)	7,031 (8.9%)	22,724 (9.5%)	625 (13.5%)	1,886 (10.0%)	40,871 (8.8%)
Friends and Neighbors	6,312 (5.1%)	7,293 (9.2%)	25,201 (10.5%)	729 (15.7%)	1,585 (8.4%)	41,120 (8.8%)
Perpetrators	71 (0.1%)	126 (0.2%)	188 (0.1%)	2 (0.0%)	1 (0.0%)	388 (0.1%)
Anonymous	6,735 (5.5%)	7,398 (9.3%)	32,636 (13.6%)	462 (10.0%)	1,261 (6.7%)	48,492 (10.4%)
Other	8,459 (6.9%)	5,049 (6.4%)	20,638 (8.7%)	599 (12.9%)	1,971 (10.5%)	36,766 (7.9%)
Unknown	237 (0.2%)	1 (0.0%)	658 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	896 (0.2%)
Total	123,074 (100.0%)	79,301 (100.0%)	239,093 (100.0%)	4,636 (100.0%)	18,822 (100.0%)	464,926 (100.0%)

Table 2-2 Victims by State 1990 and 1996

State	1990	1996	Percent Change
Alabama	16,508	18,640	12.9%
Alaska	5,217	7,544	44.6%
Arizona	24,244	20,633	-14.9%
Arkansas	7,922	8,571	8.2%
California	78,512	182,160	132.0%
Colorado	7,906	6,906	-12.6%
Connecticut	12,481	19,906	59.5%
Delaware	2,065	2,337	13.2%
Washington, DC	3,210	5,867	82.8%
Florida	79,086	74,587	-5.7%
Georgia	34,120	48,572	42.4%
Guam			
Hawaii	1,974	2,374	20.3%
Idaho	2,667	8,816	230.6%
Illinois	37,539	43,973	17.1%
Indiana	26,818	22,861	-14.8%
Iowa	8,215	9,967	21.3%
Kansas			
Kentucky	22,239	27,293	22.7%
Louisiana	15,383	14,911	-3.1%
Maine	4,133	4,656	12.7%
Maryland			
Massachusetts	28,621	27,219	-4.9%
Michigan	25,774	21,073	-18.2%
Minnesota	9,256	10,200	10.2%
Mississippi			
Missouri	21,732	23,522	8.2%
Montana			
Nebraska	5,595	3,612	-35.4%
Nevada	7,703	8,135	5.6%
New Hampshire	1,056	1,063	0.7%
New Jersey	19,546	10,537	-46.1%
New Mexico	4,379	8,845	102.0%
New York	57,931	70,602	21.9%
North Carolina	24,880	33,133	33.2%
North Dakota	2,893	270	-90.7%
Ohio	49,434	56,336	14.0%

State	1990	1996	Percent Change
Oklahoma			
Oregon	8,126	9,238	13.7%
Pennsylvania	7,951	6,183	-22.2%
Puerto Rico			
Rhode Island	5,393	4,181	-22.5%
South Carolina	9,632	8,917	-7.4%
South Dakota	4,132	2,617	-36.7%
Tennessee	11,473	11,439	-0.3%
Texas	53,939	44,704	-17.1%
Utah	8,524	8,538	0.2%
Vermont	1,500	1,221	-18.6%
Virginia	14,174	10,280	-27.5%
Virgin Islands, The			
Washington			
West Virginia			
Wisconsin	14,165	16,667	17.7%
Wyoming	2,478	895	-63.9%
Totals	790,526	930,001	17.6%

1990 N= 790,526 victims in 44 States.

1996 N= 930,001 victims in 44 States.

Table 2-3 Type of Maltreatment by Age of Victim, DCDC

Age Group	Type of Maltreatment					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
0-3	12,010 (20.0%)	50,400 (33.7%)	5,339 (51.7%)	2,873 (10.3%)	1,644 (15.7%)	72,266 (28.0%)
4-7	15,454 (25.7%)	43,559 (29.2%)	2,169 (21.0%)	7,932 (28.4%)	2,710 (26.0%)	71,824 (27.8%)
8-11	13,681 (22.8%)	30,370 (20.3%)	1,501 (14.5%)	7,123 (25.5%)	2,905 (27.8%)	55,580 (21.5%)
12 and Over	18,960 (31.5%)	25,096 (16.8%)	1,313 (12.7%)	10,037 (35.9%)	3,182 (30.5%)	58,588 (22.7%)
Totals	60,105 (100.0%)	149,425 (100.0%)	10,322 (100.0%)	27,965 (100.0%)	10,441 (100.0%)	258,258 (100.0%)

Table 2-4 Type of Maltreatment by Sex of Victim, DCDC

Sex	Type of Maltreatment					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
Male	31,316 (51.6%)	76,955 (51.2%)	5,386 (52.0%)	6,454 (22.8%)	4,989 (47.0%)	125,100 (48.0%)
Female	29,367 (48.4%)	73,426 (48.8%)	4,975 (48.0%)	21,867 (77.2%)	5,622 (53.0%)	135,257 (52.0%)
Totals	60,683 (100.0%)	150,381 (100.0%)	10,361 (100.0%)	28,321 (100.0%)	10,611 (100.0%)	260,357 (100.0%)

Table 2-5 Type of Maltreatment by Race/Ethnicity of Victim, DCDC

Race/Ethnicity	Type of Maltreatment					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
White	33,181 (56.1%)	76,967 (52.3%)	4,224 (41.3%)	17,978 (64.8%)	7,130 (68.9%)	139,480 (54.8%)
African American	16,406 (27.7%)	50,401 (34.3%)	4,509 (44.0%)	5,339 (19.2%)	1,684 (16.3%)	78,339 (30.8%)
Hispanic	8,053 (13.6%)	16,447 (11.2%)	1,299 (12.7%)	3,901 (14.1%)	1,265 (12.2%)	30,965 (12.2%)
American Indian/Alaska Native	670 (1.1%)	2,018 (1.4%)	145 (1.4%)	349 (1.3%)	167 (1.6%)	3,349 (1.3%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	842 (1.4%)	1,275 (0.9%)	61 (0.6%)	198 (0.7%)	104 (1.0%)	2,480 (1.0%)
Totals	59,152 (100.0%)	147,108 (100.0%)	10,238 (100.0%)	27,765 (100.0%)	10,350 (100.0%)	254,613 (100.0%)

Table 2-6 Child Fatality Victims by Sex and Age, DCDC

Age Group	Child Sex		Totals
	Male	Female	
0-3	128 (74.4%)	106 (78.5%)	234 (76.2%)
4-7	23 (13.4%)	21 (15.6%)	44 (14.3%)
8-11	15 (8.7%)	4 (3.0%)	19 (6.2%)
12 and Over	6 (3.5%)	4 (3.0%)	10 (3.3%)
Totals	172 (100.0%)	135 (100.0%)	307 (100.0%)

Table 2-7 Perpetrators by Sex and Age, DCDC

Age Group	Sex		Totals
	Male	Female	
19 and Younger	5,727 (10.4%)	6,205 (7.2%)	11,932 (8.5%)
20-29	13,468 (24.5%)	33,464 (39.0%)	46,932 (33.3%)
30-39	21,241 (38.6%)	33,516 (39.1%)	54,757 (38.9%)
40-49	9,984 (18.2%)	8,885 (10.4%)	18,869 (13.4%)
50 and Older	4,586 (8.3%)	3,681 (4.3%)	8,267 (5.9%)
Totals	55,006 (100.0%)	85,751 (100.0%)	140,757 (100.0%)

Table 2-8 Type of Maltreatment by Sex of Perpetrator, DCDC

Sex	Maltreatment Type					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
Male	17,590 (44.7%)	20,617 (28.1%)	1,893 (21.7%)	16,448 (71.5%)	2,586 (43.0%)	59,134 (39.3%)
Female	21,757 (55.3%)	52,675 (71.9%)	6,818 (78.3%)	6,571 (28.5%)	3,429 (57.0%)	91,250 (60.7%)
Totals	39,347 (100.0%)	73,292 (100.0%)	8,711 (100.0%)	23,019 (100.0%)	6,015 (100.0%)	150,384 (100.0%)

Acknowledgments

One of our Nation's most compelling problems is the maltreatment of our children. The Administration on Children, Youth and Families is committed to providing information to policymakers, child welfare practitioners, researchers, and concerned citizens so that together we can better address this problem. One facet of this process is the continued collection of data through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), which is sponsored by the Children's Bureau in a partnership with the States. This is the seventh consecutive year that findings have been reported from the NCANDS.

This document, *Child Maltreatment 1996: Reports From the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*, is based on child maltreatment data that are aggregated and submitted by the States. These data represent the most complete national information about child maltreatment known to the State child protective services agencies. We hope that this information will assist in the development of policies, programs, and services aimed at ensuring the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable citizens, our children.

The work of many people has made this document possible. Specifically, the efforts of State child protective services agencies and their staffs in providing data to the NCANDS have been indispensable. The members of the State Advisory Group have been a source of sound advice and continuing support for the NCANDS. The contributions of all involved are gratefully acknowledged.



James A. Harrell
Deputy Commissioner
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Highlights of Findings

Reports

In 1996, child protective services agencies investigated more than 2 million reports alleging maltreatment of more than 3 million children.

- The national rate of children who were reported was 44 per 1,000 children in the population.
- Reports were received from professionals (52 percent); persons in the families of the victims, including parents, other relatives, and the victims themselves (18 percent); and friends and neighbors (9 percent). Twenty percent of reports were from other or anonymous persons.
- It is estimated that almost two-thirds of substantiated or indicated reports were from professional sources—education, social services, law enforcement, and medicine.

Victims

Child protective services agencies determined that almost 1 million children were identified as victims of substantiated or indicated abuse or neglect in 1996, an approximate 18 percent increase since 1990.

- The national rate of victimization was 15 victims per 1,000 children in the population.
- More than half (52 percent) of all victims suffered neglect, while almost a quarter (24 percent) suffered physical abuse. About 12 percent of the victims were sexually abused. Children suffering medical neglect and emotional maltreatment accounted for 3 percent and 6 percent of all victims, respectively. A greater proportion of neglect and medical neglect victims were children younger than 8 years old, while a greater proportion of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse victims were children age 8 or older.
- More than half (53 percent) of all victims were white. African American children represented the second-largest group of victims (27 percent). Hispanic children were about 11 percent of victims, American Indian/Alaska Native children about 2 percent of victims, and Asian/Pacific Islander children about 1 percent of victims. The percentages of African American and American Indian/Alaska Native victims were disproportionately high, almost twice their representation in the national child population.
- An estimated 1,077 child maltreatment fatalities occurred in the 50 States and the District of Columbia in 1996. Based on data from a subset of States, children younger than age 4 accounted for 76 percent of fatalities.

Perpetrators

Seventy-seven percent of perpetrators of child maltreatment were parents, and an additional 11 percent were other relatives of the victim.

- It is estimated that over 80 percent of all perpetrators were under age 40 and that almost two-thirds were females.
- An estimated three-quarters of neglect and medical neglect cases were associated with female perpetrators, while almost three-quarters of sexual abuse cases were associated with male perpetrators.

Section 1 Introduction



The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) is the primary source of national information on abused and neglected children known to State child protective services agencies. Findings from the NCANDS are based on aggregate data from all States and automated case-level data from a number of States. This is the seventh consecutive year that information based on the findings of the NCANDS has been published.

This section of the document discusses the background of the NCANDS, describes its two components—the Summary Data Component (SDC) and the Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC)—summarizes data collection methods, and provides an overview of the report.

1.1 Development of the NCANDS

The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) established the NCANDS to respond to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Public Law 93-247), as amended, which called for the creation of a coordinated national data collection and analysis program, both universal and case specific in scope. In 1988, the NCCAN embarked on a collaborative effort with the States to collect and analyze annual child abuse and neglect data from child protective services agencies in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the territories, and the Armed Services.

A State Advisory Group (appendix A) helped to identify data items and definitions that present a national profile of child maltreatment. Subsequently, the State representatives assisted in the pilot testing and development of the NCANDS. The State Advisory Group continues to play an important role in the implementation of the NCANDS.

The design of the NCANDS was guided by the needs in the field of child welfare and the capabilities of State data systems to produce the information. The resulting two-pronged approach of the NCANDS allows for aggregate data to be collected through the SDC and case-level data to be collected through the DCDC. Brief descriptions of the SDC and DCDC follow:

Summary Data Component (SDC)-The SDC is a compilation of 15 key aggregate indicators of State child abuse and neglect statistics. The data items cover reports of alleged maltreatment, dispositions of investigations of alleged child abuse and neglect,

and characteristics of the victims and perpetrators of substantiated and indicated maltreatment.

Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC)-The DCDC is a compilation of case-level data about children who are the subjects of reports alleging child maltreatment. The DCDC permits more detailed analysis of State child abuse and neglect data than is possible with the aggregate data in the SDC. The DCDC contains 19 data elements on reports of alleged maltreatment and characteristics of children who are the subjects of these reports. An additional 98 data elements are collected on victims of maltreatment, including information on types of substantiated or indicated maltreatments, child disabilities, family problems, services provided to victims, and characteristics of perpetrators.

This report is based on the aggregate data collected through the 1996 SDC. In addition, case-level data collected through the 1996 DCDC are used to elaborate on key SDC findings. A discussion of the DCDC data collection methods and analyses of its data elements may be found in *Child Abuse and Neglect Case-Level Data 1993: Working Paper 1*. Copies of this document are available from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information by calling 1-800-FYI-3366.

Eleven States (Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Washington) that were able to produce case-level data from their automated information systems submitted 1996 data for the DCDC. Although these States are not a statistically representative sample of the United States, the volume of data that is available contributes additional insight into the characteristics of child abuse and neglect. The child population in these 11 States is almost one-third of the population younger than 18 years old in the United States. Data on approximately 466,000 unduplicated reports that include more than 716,000 children were collected. Nearly a quarter of reports received by child protective services agencies nationwide are included in the 1996 DCDC database. Data on selected topics are presented in this report. Additional findings will be published later in 1998.

1.2 SDC Data Collection Methods

The SDC data collection instrument (appendix B) consists of 15 data items on 4 child maltreatment data topics. The topics include report data, disposition data, victim data, and perpetrator data. The SDC Data Collection Forms and Instructions were mailed to the States in the spring of 1997. Technical assistance was available to those States that requested help in responding to the SDC. Data analyzed in this document were collected from 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and the Armed Services. Data from 1995 were used for two States that were unable to provide 1996 data.

In addition to providing the data, representatives from each State agency were asked to provide supplementary information or clarification regarding their responses to specific data items. These comments provide a more thorough understanding of each State's data and of the national findings. The State comments on 1996 data are included in section 3.

As the completed forms were received, they were reviewed for data consistency and logic as well as substantive clarity. When necessary, follow-up questions were sent to the States. States were also able to review and modify data submissions from previous years.

The ability to provide accurate State statistics depends upon comprehensive automated information systems. The Federal Government (under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993) has provided funding to the States to improve their child welfare information systems. Planned system improvements include assigning unique identifiers to individuals involved in reports of child maltreatment, which will enable States to unduplicate their counts of children reported and child victims, and establishing better linkages between report data and service data.

1.3 SDC Data Analysis Process

After the 1996 SDC data were reviewed and finalized, they were entered into a spreadsheet and subsequently analyzed using statistical software. To determine national figures for some important data items, estimates were computed for missing data. In addition, in several analyses, rates per unit of the population were calculated. Population estimates were obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

1.4 Overview of the Report

Section 2 of this document presents findings based on the SDC data submitted by the States for 1996. Data collected from 11 States through the DCDC and data from the 1990 SDC are used to supplement these findings. Section 3 presents the data tables that were generated from the 1996 SDC data submissions and provides explanatory comments related to each State's data.

Appendix A lists the participants in the State Advisory Group. The SDC Data Collection Forms and Instructions are provided in appendix B. Additional information on the issues involved in the data analyses is presented in appendix C, Technical Notes. Issues that are discussed include estimating procedures and calculation of population rates.

Updated on January 17, 2001

Section 2 1996 National Findings



This section presents the analyses of data on reports, dispositions, victims, services, and perpetrators collected through the Summary Data Component (SDC) for 1996. Analyses of selected 1996 Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC) case-level data from 11 States (Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Washington) are presented to elaborate on key topics. The section also includes comparisons of some data from 1990, the first year of the SDC, in order to highlight changes over time. In addition, an analysis of data from the Armed Services is provided.

2.1 Report Data

The SDC findings presented in this section include the number of reports of alleged abuse and neglect, the number of children in reports, and the distribution of sources of reports.

Reports of Alleged Maltreatment

Child protective services agencies received and referred for investigation over 2 million reports of alleged child abuse and neglect in 1996. Of the 2,025,956 reports, incident-based reports from 40 States and the District of Columbia made up 1,729,630 and the remaining 296,326 reports were child-based reports received from 10 States and the Virgin Islands. An incident-based system counts each alleged maltreatment incident as one report, regardless of the number of children involved. A child-based system counts each child who is alleged to be a victim of maltreatment as a single report.

Children in Reports

Just over 3 million children were reported as alleged victims of maltreatment and referred for investigation. The national rate of children who were the subjects of reports was 44 children per 1,000 children younger than 18 years of age in the general population. This rate has increased from 41 children per 1,000 in 1990. Some children may have been reported and counted more than once during the year.

The rate of children reported and referred for investigation varied considerably from State to State, ranging from 8 to 110 children reported per 1,000 children in the general population. However, for about two-thirds of the States the range was between 30 and 59 children reported per 1,000 children younger than 18 years of age in the general population.

Several factors may influence the variation in rates. These factors include differences in State definitions of maltreatment and agency policies and procedures related to receiving and investigating reports. For example, the Pennsylvania child abuse registry does not collect data on general neglect cases. State policy addresses cases of neglect through a general protective services investigation rather than through a child protective services investigation. In Vermont, the lack of supervision of a child, classified as neglect in many States, is not legally defined as maltreatment. On the other hand, States that have broader definitions of maltreatment may have higher rates of reports accepted for investigation.

Sources of Reports

Professional reporters, including educators, law enforcement and justice officials, medical professionals, social services personnel, and child care staff, accounted for about 52 percent of all reports of alleged maltreatment that were referred for investigation in 1996 ([see figure 2-1](#)). Educators provided the largest proportion of reports (16 percent), followed by law enforcement personnel (13 percent). Parents, other relatives of the victims, and victims themselves made up about 18 percent of the report sources. The distribution of sources of reports has remained virtually the same since 1990.

2.2 Disposition Data

The findings discussed in this section include the dispositions of investigated reports of alleged maltreatment and of children involved in these reports. DCDC data were used to look at the relation between dispositions and sources of reports. Data from 1990 were used to examine changes in the distribution of dispositions.

Investigations of Reports

Forty-eight States were able to provide data on both substantiated and unsubstantiated investigation dispositions. These 48 States reported that about 1,625,000 investigations of alleged abuse or neglect were conducted in 1996. [Figure 2-2](#) shows that about 34 percent of the investigations resulted in a disposition of either substantiated or indicated child maltreatment. More than half of all dispositions resulted in a finding that child maltreatment was not substantiated. In most of the six jurisdictions that identify intentionally malicious or false reports, such reports constituted about 1 percent of unsubstantiated investigations. All other investigation dispositions, including "Unknown," "Closed Without a Finding," and "Other" accounted for 8 percent of all dispositions.

Report Sources and Dispositions

Based on case-level data from 11 States, 62 percent of all reports that were substantiated or indicated were referred by law enforcement, medical, social services, or education professionals ([see table 2-1](#)). Only two groups of professionals, law enforcement and medical, had more than half of their reports substantiated or indicated, 61 percent and 56 percent, respectively.

Children in Investigated Reports

Forty-three States were able to provide data on both substantiated and not substantiated dispositions of children. (Because of expungement practices, some States were unable to provide the number of children for whom maltreatment was not substantiated.) Thirty-four percent of children were victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment, 59 percent of the children had investigations resulting in unsubstantiated dispositions, and 5 percent of the children had investigations resulting in dispositions of "Other." For 2 percent of the children, dispositions of either "Closed Without a Finding" or "Unknown" were made.

Dispositions for 1990 and 1996 were able to be compared in 33 States ([see figure 2-3](#)). The proportion of children with substantiated or indicated dispositions decreased from 38 percent to 33 percent. While the proportions of children with unsubstantiated dispositions remained about the same, the percent of children with "Other" or "Unknown" dispositions increased from 1 percent to 5 percent.

2.3 Victim Data

This section analyzes the characteristics of victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment. Topics include numbers and rates of victims, types of maltreatment, and victim demographics such as age, sex, and race/ethnicity.

National Numbers and Rates of Victims

In 1996, approximately 970,000 children were found by child protective services agencies to be victims of maltreatment. This number reflects a national rate of 15 victims per 1,000 children younger than 18 years of age in the population.

Victim rates are influenced by State laws and policies relating to the classification of dispositions. Some States use a two-tier system that classifies an allegation as substantiated or unsubstantiated. Other States use a three-tier system that includes the third category of indicated. Indicated is used when there is sufficient reason to suspect that the child may have been maltreated or is at risk of maltreatment, but the allegation cannot be substantiated to the level of evidence required by State law. In the 36 States that use a two-tier system of dispositions, there were 13 victims per 1,000 children younger than age 18 in the population, compared to a rate of 21 victims per 1,000 children in the 13 three-tier States.

Trends in Victimization

Nationally, the number of victims increased between 1990 and 1996. Based on a comparison of 44 States that provided data on victims in both years, an overall increase of 18 percent was observed. However, as shown in [table 2-2](#), the national pattern of growth in the number of victims over the 7-year period was not seen in all States. Twenty-five States had increases ranging from under 1 percent in Utah to 231 percent in Idaho. Nineteen States had decreases ranging from under 1 percent in Tennessee to 91 percent in North Dakota.

In comparing these changes, it is important to note that State maltreatment rates are influenced by different policies for accepting cases for investigation and classifying dispositions. For example, the change from a three-tier system to a two-tier system tends to decrease the number of children classified as victims. Changes in other policies also affect the number of victims. Some States are implementing diversified response systems that classify some families and children as "in need of services." Such children may no longer be classified as victims. Missouri, New Jersey, North Dakota, and South Dakota are examples of States that have recently incorporated diversified response systems. Still other States may have revised the standard of evidence used to substantiate maltreatment or may have changed methods of data collection.

Types of Maltreatment

For 1996, 48 States reported that there were 500,032 substantiated or indicated victims of neglect; 229,332 victims of physical abuse; and 119,397 victims of sexual abuse. In 41 States, there were 55,473 victims of emotional maltreatment. Child victims are counted for each type of maltreatment they experience.

Based on the number of victims in these States (968,748), more than half of all victims

(52 percent) suffered neglect, while almost a quarter (24 percent) suffered physical abuse. About 12 percent of the victims were sexually abused. Children suffering medical neglect and emotional maltreatment accounted for 3 percent and 6 percent of all victims, respectively. Approximately 16 percent of victims were subjected to "Other" types of maltreatment, such as "abandonment," "congenital drug addiction," and "threats to harm the child." (These numbers add to more than 100 percent because some children suffered more than one type of abuse.)

Data from 31 States were used to compare types of maltreatment suffered by children in 1990 and in 1996 ([see figure 2-4](#)). The proportion of victims who suffered neglect increased by 3 percentage points. The proportion of those who were sexually abused declined by 3 percentage points and those who were physically or emotionally abused declined slightly. The proportion of victims of "Other" types of maltreatment increased by 4 percentage points.

Age of Victims

The age distribution of victims was available for 42 States. A general pattern was observed of a decreasing proportion of victims as age increases ([see figure 2-5](#)). Each single-year age group up to age 9 had 6 to 7 percent of all victims. Each single-year age group between 10 and 15 had about 5 percent of all victims.

Based on case-level data from 11 States, [table 2-3](#) shows that type of maltreatment had some relation to age. The percent of victims of neglect and medical neglect *decreased* with child age. Slightly over half of medical neglect victims were children younger than age 4. Only 13 percent of medical neglect victims were age 12 or older. In contrast, the percent of victims of physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment *increased* with child age. While only 10 percent of all sexual abuse victims were under 4 years of age, 36 percent were age 12 or older.

Sex of Victims

Based on data from 43 States, about 48 percent of the victims of maltreatment were male, and about 52 percent were female. The sex for 1 percent of the victims was not reported. The distribution of sex of victims has remained stable over the 7 years of the SDC data collection.

Findings from case-level data in the 1996 DCDC suggest that there were some differences in the types of maltreatment experienced by male and female children. Girls were 77 percent of all sexual abuse victims, while boys were 23 percent. Victims of emotional maltreatment were more likely to be girls (53 percent) than boys (47 percent). Victims of other types of abuse were slightly more likely to be boys than girls ([see table 2-4](#)).

Race/Ethnicity of Victims

Forty-one States provided data on race/ethnicity. More than half (53 percent) of all victims were white. African American children represented the second-largest group of victims (27 percent). Hispanic children were about 11 percent of victims, American Indian/Alaska Native children were about 2 percent of victims, and Asian/Pacific Islander children about 1 percent of victims. "Other" and "Unknown" categories accounted for 2 percent and 4 percent, respectively.

[Figure 2-6](#) shows there were disproportionate numbers of African American and American Indian/Alaska Native victims, almost twice their proportions in the national child population. White and Asian/Pacific Islander children were a lower proportion of victims than their representation in the population, while Hispanic children were about the same proportion of victims as their representation in the total population.

[Table 2-5](#), based on the DCDC, presents types of maltreatment by race. While white victims were 55 percent of maltreatment victims in the 11 States, they were 65 percent of sexual abuse victims and 69 percent of victims of emotional maltreatment. However, white children represented a disproportionately low percentage of medical neglect victims (41 percent). For African American children a different pattern was seen. While they were 31 percent of all maltreatment victims, they were a disproportionately low percentage of victims of sexual abuse and emotional maltreatment (both under 20 percent). However, African American children accounted for 44 percent of all medical neglect victims.

2.4 Service Responses

Based on the findings of the investigation of maltreatment, the State agency often provides services to victims and their families, including placing children in protective custody, instituting court action, and offering additional services such as parenting classes, counseling, and in-home services. The following discussion addresses data submitted by the States in some of these service areas.

Victims Removed From the Home

Based on data from 36 States, about 16 percent of the victims of maltreatment were removed from their homes. In many States, the linkages between child protective services data and foster care data are not well defined. With the implementation of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), more comprehensive data on the children who are removed from their homes are becoming available.

Court Actions

Twenty-six States reported that court actions were initiated for about 14 percent of maltreatment victims in 1996. The ability to report on court actions varies from State to State. Reported court actions may include the State filing for temporary custody of the victim, filing for guardianship, or filing a dependency petition. In some States, reported court actions may also include criminal proceedings. Because court data are maintained in judicial information systems, child protective services agencies may have incomplete data on court actions.

Victims and Families Receiving Additional Services

Data from 24 States revealed that 205,981 families received postinvestigative child welfare services. Twenty-three States reported that 381,411 child victims received such services. Fewer than half of the States provided these data, and only 17 States were able to provide data for both victims and families. Data about reports of maltreatment and data about the provision of services

may be contained in different and unlinked information systems. Also, information systems in some States are not able to distinguish between services provided to victims and services provided to their siblings. These issues are being examined by States that are redesigning their child welfare information systems.

2.5 Child Fatalities

This section discusses the findings about child fatalities. Fatality figures include primarily those victims known to the State child protective services agencies and may not include other victims not reported to the agencies.

Forty-one States reported that 917 fatalities resulted from child maltreatment in 1996. It is estimated that there were 1,077 fatalities in the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

The rate of child fatalities in the 40 States that reported in both 1990 and 1996 was 1.9 child fatalities per 100,000 children younger than 18 years of age in the general population in 1990 compared to 1.6 child fatalities per 100,000 children in 1996.

There were 307 fatalities reported by the 11 States in the DCDC ([see table 2-6](#)). These fatalities represent about one-third of all fatalities reported to the SDC. The DCDC data suggest that death due to child abuse and neglect was found mostly among very young children. Children younger than age 4 accounted for 76 percent of all fatalities.

2.6 Perpetrator Data

Data on the types of perpetrator relationships to victims are discussed in this section. In addition, case-level data from the DCDC are used to describe the age and sex of perpetrators.

Based on data from 43 States, 77 percent of perpetrators of child maltreatment were parents and an additional 11 percent were other relatives of the victims. People who were in other caretaking relationships to the child victims made up only 2 percent of perpetrators (e.g., foster parents, facility staff, and child care providers). About 10 percent of all perpetrators were classified as noncaretakers or "Unknown." In many States, perpetrators of maltreatment by definition must be in a child caretaking role.

Based on data from the DCDC, perpetrators tended to be young—81 percent of all perpetrators were under age 40 ([see table 2-7](#)). They were most likely to be between 30 and 39 years of age (the 10-year age group with the highest frequency of perpetrators, 39 percent) and least likely to be 50 years of age or older (only 6 percent of perpetrators). They were more likely to be female (61 percent of all perpetrators) than male.

Data from the DCDC also provide information on type of maltreatment by perpetrator gender ([see table 2-8](#)). An estimated three-quarters of neglect and medical neglect cases were associated with female perpetrators, while almost three-quarters of sexual abuse cases were associated with male perpetrators.

2.7 Armed Services Data

Data were received on reports of maltreatment that occurred worldwide in 1996 in the four branches of the Armed Services (the Air Force, the Army, the Marine Corps, and the Navy). Personnel in the services' Family Advocacy Programs are required to report all cases of child maltreatment to the child abuse registry in the State in which the child resides, and reports on children in the continental United States are included in State totals.

There were 16,673 reports of alleged maltreatment in 1996. Investigations of 48 percent of the reported children resulted in dispositions of substantiated maltreatment, while allegations of maltreatment were found to be unsubstantiated for 52 percent of the children.

Forty-two percent of child victims in the Armed Services suffered from neglect and 36 percent suffered from physical abuse. About 17 percent suffered from emotional maltreatment and another 14 percent suffered from sexual abuse. The proportion of neglect victims was lower than the national proportion, while the proportion of physical abuse victims was higher than the national proportion.

Updated on January 17, 2001

SECTION II - REPORT DATA

State	Item 3. Reports by Source												TOTAL		
	Social Services	Medical	Legal/Justice	Education	Providers	Child Day Care	Substitute Care	Victims	Parents	Other Relatives	Friends and Neighbors	Perpetrators		Anonymous	Other
Alabama	2,131	3,078	3,992	4,149	264			411	3,063	3,463	1,200		2,189	2,424	26,384
Alaska	1,702	809	1,312	1,740	182	273	81			841	1,362		1,240	558	10,100
Arizona	1,395	4,476	4,833	4,932	364	791	625	1,681	1,989	2,623		3,039	1,670		28,418
Arkansas	2,420	2,323	1,730	3,077	387	1,769	300			2,189	1,846		2,852	3,334	22,027
California															
Colorado															
Connecticut	3,149	6,209	5,197	6,742	246	533	187	2,211	1,486	734		5,226	1,232		33,152
Delaware	440	964	974	711	93		120	769	466	372	140	344	342		5,335
Washington, D.C.	540	501	1,108	439	19		65	285	776	556		677	56		5,022
Florida	19,772	10,624	15,835	14,416	1,076		2,224	12,795	13,300	15,046	365	10,922	7,979		124,354
Georgia	3,440	7,751	7,893	9,020	463		409	3,338	6,814	4,684	135	6,548	1,486		51,981
Guam															
Hawaii	617	730	556	655	15	10	34	208	278	233	3	288	1,757		5,384
Idaho	498	860	1,602	2,156	128	39	407	1,502	882	1,667		840	1,406		11,987
Illinois	11,642	10,580	9,669	10,453	1,152		342	5,368	4,992	3,942		9,858	2,204		70,222
Indiana															
Iowa	3,061	1,658	2,124	2,529								10,880	1,879		22,131
Kansas															
Kentucky	3,342	2,911	5,058	5,733	724		904	4,706	5,001	4,272			6,590		39,241
Louisiana	3,716	2,669	3,378	3,825	31				4,649			8,654			26,922
Maine	611	717	479	882	93		130	131	407	369		292	359		4,470
Maryland															
Massachusetts	7,101	8,121	11,552	7,628	719	338	380	2,700	2,271	4,800		9,129	5,460		60,199
Michigan	10,258	4,067	7,358	9,331	440		506	5,094	6,274	6,176		5,897	3,254		58,655
Minnesota	1,192	2,123	2,676	3,673	291	487	629	1,701	1,122	1,569	102	574	546		18,685
Mississippi	1,160	2,006	2,483	2,805	115	30	345	802	3,403	1,413		3,310	244		18,116
Missouri	5,385	5,604	5,394	5,531	615							6,722	24,434		53,685
Montana															
Nebraska	448	456	1,499	1,097	236		195	474	590	745	237	2,102	267		8,346
Nevada	929	1,430	3,431	2,701	229		111	1,027	863	1,403		640	794		13,558
New Hampshire	814	895	862	1,225	143		11	894		527	32	415	342		6,160
New Jersey	7,147	9,084	9,733	12,065		849	943	5,648	5,425	6,319		10,804			67,817
New Mexico	2,438	2,760	4,209	4,079	276	100	413	2,756	2,326	4,126		5,101	77		28,661
New York	16,451	18,138	15,795	28,090						20,659	7,656	19,660	11,355		137,804
North Carolina	15,528	6,571	9,365	14,949	1,426		884	8,374	13,778	15,804		15,489			102,168
North Dakota	962	226	715	738	105	19	20	438	275	357	6	237	243		4,341
Ohio	13,202	9,156	12,458	9,761	1,262	702	1,522		16,677	10,215	3,023	7,021	10,515		95,514
Oklahoma															
Oregon															
Pennsylvania	3,701	4,155	1,713	5,457	472	580	597	2,576	1,185	1,069	78	1,189	894		23,666
Puerto Rico															
Rhode Island	1,645	1,068	1,085	1,437	146	62	814	1,067	785	1,320		804	377		10,610
South Carolina	2,111	2,373	2,252	3,416	179	109	404	1,815	2,070	1,837	35	3,014	684		20,299
South Dakota	3	482	1,623	940	95	177	81	390	676	437		840	510		6,254
Tennessee	1,936	3,691	6,399	4,118	529		711	1,886	6,289	4,211	184	2,931	3,359		36,244
Texas	8,959	10,567	12,287	19,980	1,344		779	9,315	10,736	10,335		6,857	8,621		99,780
Utah	2,310	1,198	2,181	1,806	237		192	1,579	1,814	2,066	70	879	1,526		15,858
Vermont	321	156	345	606	86	45	56	269	123	65	9	49	129		2,259
Virginia	2,047	4,022	4,712	6,643	454		542	3,364	2,891	3,564	508	4,141	1,742		34,630
Virgin Islands, the	20	35	47	88	7	8	8	43	23	25	1	95	7		407
Washington	5,852	2,830	3,067	5,493	959	386	236	2,731	2,397	3,415	14	4,932	1,614		33,926
West Virginia															
Wisconsin	6,291	4,618	8,519	8,028	579	755	700	4,625	2,136	3,230	106	4,164	3,817		47,568
Wyoming															
Total	176,887	162,292	197,900	233,144	16,181	8,062	17,318	95,665	152,321	131,590	5,048	180,445	114,067		1,490,340
Number Reporting	42	42	42	42	39	21	36	35	39	39	18	41	39		42

3.2 Comments on 1996 State Data

In the comments below, States have provided clarifications and elaborations of their data submissions. Comments provided in previous years that may be useful in reading the 1996 data are also included. Each State also has provided the name of a State contact who is able to provide additional information if needed.

[Alabama](#)

[Alaska](#)

[Arizona](#)

[Arkansas](#)

[California](#)

[Colorado](#)

[Connecticut](#)

[Delaware](#)

[District of Columbia](#)

[Florida](#)

[Georgia](#)

[Hawaii](#)

[Idaho](#)

[Illinois](#)

[Indiana](#)

[Iowa](#)

[Kansas](#)

[Kentucky](#)

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[Texas](#)

[Utah](#)

[Vermont](#)

[Virginia](#)

[Virgin Islands](#)

[Washington](#)

[West Virginia](#)

[Wisconsin](#)

[Wyoming](#)

[Armed Services](#)

Appendix A

State Advisory Group Representatives 1996-1997



Appendix A is a list of the State Advisory Group representatives who make recommendations to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) on child protective services (CPS) practices and data issues.

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Appendix B

Summary Data Component Data Collection Form



These forms and instructions and a glossary were sent to all States, the District of Columbia, the territories, and the Armed Services in the spring of 1997.

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Section 3 - Disposition Data

[4. Number of Completed Investigation or Assessments by Disposition](#)

[5. Number of Children and Families Who Were The Subject of a Completed Investigation](#)

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[Section IV - Victim Data](#)

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[8. Age of Victims](#)

[9. Sex of Victims](#)

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[11. Number of Victims Removed From the Home](#)

[12. Number of Victims For Whom Court Action Was Initiated](#)

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[Section V - Perpetrator Data](#)

Appendix C Technical Notes



In this section, notes are provided on the data validation and analytic procedures used in this report.

Calculation of Rates

Unless otherwise noted, rates were calculated using the number per 1,000 children younger than age 18 in the reporting States. Population data on children younger than 18 years of age by State were supplied by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1996 Census population estimates were downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/state/96agesex.txt>.

Comparisons of 1990 Data to 1996 Data

In comparing data from 1990 and 1996, only those States able to report an item for *both* 1990 and 1996 are used. Thus the number of States included in the comparisons of various data items may differ from the total number of States reporting in 1996.

Data Tables

An italicized number in the data tables indicates that it has been estimated. Columns referring to data type use "D" to specify duplicated counts and "U" to specify unduplicated counts.

Number of Reports (Item 1)

The number of reports alleging child maltreatment was estimated for Wyoming based on the most recent data submission from the State. In 1993, Wyoming submitted data on 3,908 reports received and referred for investigation. The 1993 estimated child population for the State was 136,308, resulting in a rate of 28.67 reports per 1,000 children. The 1996 State population of children under 18 years of age was multiplied by 28.67 to estimate 3,821 reports in 1996.

Number of Children Subject of a Report (Item 2)

The number of children who were the subject of a report was estimated for Colorado, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, Oregon, West Virginia, and Wyoming. The mean ratio of children to incident-based reports was calculated using data from all States able to report on item 1 and

item 2. With the exception of the Virgin Islands, the duplicated counts of children were used. The Tukey biweight estimator was applied to reduce the effect of outliers. The resulting multiplier of 1.6107 was used to calculate the number of children in reports for each of the remaining States.

Report Dispositions by Source of Report, DCDC (Table 2-1)

The distribution of report dispositions by report source is based upon Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC) data from 11 States. The DCDC category "Child Day Care Providers" includes both child day care providers and substitute care providers.

Two-tier and Three-tier States (Item 6)

The 1996 rate of victimization for the two-tier States is based on the number of child victims per 1,000 children under the age of 18 years in 36 States. The three-tier rate is based on the number of children with substantiated or indicated dispositions per 1,000 children under the age of 18 years in 13 States, including the Virgin Islands.

Children by Disposition, 1990 and 1996 (Figure 2-3)

The comparison of dispositions is based on the 33 States that provided data on all dispositional categories in both 1990 and 1996.

Child Victims by State, 1990 and 1996 (Table 2-2)

Table 2-2 uses data from the 44 States that provided data on children for whom the disposition was substantiated or indicated in both years. States that were unable to provide counts on children with unsubstantiated allegations of maltreatment were not excluded from this comparison, as they were in Figure 2-3.

Victims by Maltreatment Type

The discussion of percentages of victims by type of maltreatment reports on the 48 States that provided data for item 6, "Children by Disposition," and item 7, "Number of Victims by Maltreatment Type." (North Dakota is excluded from these calculations because the State provided a count of victims, but did not report on types of maltreatment.) For example, in calculating the percentage of child victims of physical abuse, the number of physical abuse maltreatments was used as the numerator, and the number of substantiated and indicated child victims was used as the denominator. The result was multiplied by 100.

Types of Maltreatment, 1990 and 1996 (Figure 2-4)

The comparison of maltreatments suffered by victims in 1990 and 1996 is based on the 31 States that provided data on substantiated and unsubstantiated dispositions and on types of maltreatment in both years. Percentages are based on the number of maltreatments suffered by 558,234 victims in 1990 and 572,943 victims in 1996.

Age of Victims (Item 8)

Most States provided age data in 1-year increments, but some States reported data by age groups (e.g., ages 0-2, ages 3-5). For these States the number of victims was estimated for each age by dividing the grouped figure by the number of years included in that group.

Type of Maltreatment by Age of Victim, DCDC (Table 2-3)

In analyzing data from the DCDC, each type of maltreatment is counted only once for each uniquely identified victim. For example, a victim whose records include two incidents of physical abuse and one incident of sexual abuse is counted once for physical abuse and once for sexual abuse. This also applies to table 2-4 and table 2-5.

Race/Ethnicity of Victims

Population of children under the age of 18 years of age by race is based on 1994 Census population estimates downloaded from the Internet at: <http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/state/sasrh/sasrh94.txt>. In figure 2-6, percentages of victims by race/ethnicity do not include children reported to be of "Unknown" or "Other" race.

Victim Outcomes (Items 11 and 12)

For some States, the number of victims removed from the home or for whom court action was reported also includes the siblings of these victims. The column on data type indicates whether each State has reported these numbers based on counts of only victims (V) or based on counts of victims and siblings (S).

Victims and Families Receiving Additional Services (Item 13)

For most States, the numbers of victims and families receiving additional services do not include information on services that are not captured on the State child protective services information system.

Fatality Rates (Item 14)

For a national estimate, a ratio of fatalities to the child population in the States providing fatality data was computed. (The Virgin Islands was excluded from the national estimate.) The Tukey biweight estimator was computed on the mean rate. The resulting multiplier of 1.454 was used on the population of the remaining States and the District of Columbia. The sum of these figures is used as an estimate of the national number of child fatalities.

Relationship of Perpetrator to Victim (Item 15)

States that count perpetrators by incident may count fewer perpetrator relationships than States that use victim-based reporting, because an incident may include more than one child victim. States that use victim-based reporting are noted in the column labeled "Data Type" with a "V." States that collect data on perpetrators by incident are noted with an "I."

Type of Maltreatment by Sex of Perpetrator, DCDC (Table 2-8)

In analyzing data from the DCDC, each type of maltreatment is counted only once for each uniquely identified perpetrator. For example, a perpetrator who is associated with two incidents of physical abuse and one incident of sexual abuse is counted once for physical abuse and once for sexual abuse. Perpetrators with missing data are not included in this table.

Armed Services Victims by Maltreatment Type

The percentages of victims by maltreatment type are calculated using the number of victims (7,961) as the denominator.

Additional Information

This document has been prepared for the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, by Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc., under contract number ACF-105-95-1849. Members of the Technical Team who have contributed to this report are Ying-Ying T. Yuan, Ph.D., Project Director; Linda Ingram, Research Associate; Ryan Mahon, Research Assistant; Patricia Pearson, Administrative Assistant; C. Courtney Elliott, Ph.D., Consultant; and David Struckman-Johnson, Ph.D., Consultant. Editing and report design have been conducted by Houston Associates, Inc., under subcontract to Earl Moore and Associates, Inc., under contract number ACF-105-97-1857.

In addition to compiling and analyzing annual statistics from the States, the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) Technical Assistance Program helps States to improve their child protective services information systems, address technical and programmatic issues of submitting data to NCANDS, and enhance the analytical capability of their agencies.

For further information regarding technical assistance contact the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) Technical Assistance Program, Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc., 12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 310, Rockville, Maryland 20852-1606.

Additional copies of this document, updated State data tables for previous years, and other information regarding child maltreatment can be obtained by contacting the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at the following address:

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013-1182
1-800-FYI-3366

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, *Child Maltreatment 1996: Reports From the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998).