

# Child Maltreatment

Facts at a Glance

Spring 2009

Note: Some numbers have been rounded.

## Child Maltreatment

- In 2007, U.S. state and local child protective services (CPS) investigated 3.2 million reports of children being abused or neglected.<sup>1</sup>
  - CPS classified 794,000 (10.6 per 1,000) of these children as victims. Approximately three quarters of them had no history of prior victimization.
  - Fifty-nine percent of the children were classified as victims of child neglect; 4 percent as victims of emotional abuse; 8 percent as victims of sexual abuse; and 11 percent as victims of physical abuse.
- A non-CPS study reported that 14 percent of U.S. children experienced some form of child maltreatment: 8 percent were victims of sexual abuse; 22 percent were victims of child neglect; 48 percent were victims of physical abuse; and 75 percent were victims of emotional abuse.<sup>2</sup>

Note: A child is counted each time she or he is a subject of a report, which means a child may be counted more than once as a victim of child maltreatment.

## Gender and Race Disparities among Children

- In 2007, some children had higher rates of victimization:
  - African-American (16.7 per 1,000 children).
  - American Indian or Alaska Native (14.2 per 1,000 children).
  - Multiracial (14.0 per 1,000 children).<sup>1</sup>
- Overall girls (52%) were at slightly higher risk than boys (48%) for all forms of child maltreatment.<sup>1</sup>

## Characteristics of Perpetrators

- Female perpetrators, mostly mothers, are typically younger than male perpetrators, who are mostly fathers.<sup>1</sup>
- More women (56%) than men (42%) are perpetrators of all forms of child maltreatment.<sup>1</sup>

## Nonfatal Cases of Child Maltreatment

- In 2007, CPS reported the approximate rates of child maltreatment victims:
  - 21.9 per 1,000 for 0 to 1 year-olds;
  - 13.0 per 1,000 for 1 year-olds;
  - 12.6 per 1,000 for 2 year-olds;
  - 11.9 per 1,000 for 3 year-olds;
  - 11.5 per 1,000 for 4 to 7 year-olds;
  - 9.4 per 1,000 for 8 to 11 year-olds;
  - 8.7 per 1,000 for 12 to 15 year-olds; and
  - 5.4 per 1,000 for 16 to 17 year-olds.<sup>1</sup>
- Non-CPS studies have reported higher rates of nonfatal child maltreatment cases, ranging from 4,300 to 4,900 per 100,000 children.<sup>2,3</sup>

## Deaths from Child Maltreatment

- In 2007, 1,760 children ages 0 to 17 died from abuse and neglect (rate of 2.35 per 100,000 children).<sup>1</sup>
  - 76 percent or more deaths occurred among children younger than age 4; 13 percent among 4-7 year-olds; 5 percent among 8-11 year-olds; 5 percent among 12-15 year-olds; and 2 percent among 16-17 year-olds.
  - 41% of deaths were non-Hispanic White children.
  - 26% of deaths were African-American children.
  - 17% of deaths were Hispanic children.

## References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. *Child Maltreatment 2007* [Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009] available at: <http://www.childwelfare.gov>.
2. Finkelhor, Ormrod, H, Turner, H, Hamby, S. The Victimization of Children and Youth: A Comprehensive National Survey. *Child Maltreatment* 2005; 10: 5-25.
3. Theodore, AD, Chang, JJ, Runyan, DK, Hunter, WM, Bangdewala, SI, Agans, R. Epidemiologic Features of the Physical and Sexual Maltreatment of Children in the Carolinas. *Pediatrics* 2005; 115: e330-e337.



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