

Child abuse and neglect in Ontario

Child abuse and neglect investigations

- During 1998, there were 64,745 (estimated) child maltreatment investigations conducted in Ontario
- This is an estimated rate of 27 investigations per 1,000 children age 0-15 years in the population
- 38% of these investigations were substantiated by child protection workers

Physical abuse

- 36% of the investigations had physical abuse as the primary reason for investigation (23,610)
- of these investigations, 32% were substantiated, while 19 percent remained suspected, and 49% were unsubstantiated

Sexual abuse

- 10% of the investigations had sexual abuse as the primary reason for the investigation (6,166)
- of these investigations, 29% were substantiated, 25% were suspected and 46% were unsubstantiated

Neglect

- neglect was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment
- 23,263 or 36% of the investigations involved allegations of neglect as the primary reason for investigation
- 31% of the cases were substantiated, 22% were suspected and 47% were unsubstantiated

Emotional Maltreatment

- 18% of the investigations had emotional maltreatment as the primary reason for investigation (23,626)
- 50% of the cases were substantiated, 30% remained suspected and 20% of the cases were unsubstantiated

Alleged perpetrators

- most investigations involved allegations against parents—biological mothers—59%, biological fathers—38%, stepfathers/common-law partners—10% and stepmothers/ common-law partners—3%
- investigations where the biological mother was alleged to be the perpetrator were substantiated in 34% of the cases
- investigations where the biological father was alleged to be the perpetrator were substantiated in 39% of the cases
- investigations where stepfathers were alleged to be the perpetrator were substantiated in 39% of the cases
- investigations where stepmothers were identified to be the alleged perpetrator were substantiated in 25% of the cases

Abused children--difficulties

- in physical abuse cases, behaviour problems, negative peer involvement, depression or anxiety, violence toward others and developmental delays were identified most often
- in sexual abuse cases, depression, behaviour problems, age-inappropriate sexual behaviour, negative peer involvement and developmental delays were identified most often
- in neglect cases, behaviour problems, irregular school attendance, negative peer involvement, developmental delays and running away was reported most often

Source...The Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect-1998

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