

**Maine Department of Human Services  
Office of Child and Family Services  
Child Protective Services  
Annual Report on Referrals  
2008**

**Prepared by  
Robert Pronovost, Manager  
Child Protective Intake Unit  
626-8642  
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Title 22 MRSA, Chapter 1071, Subsection 4002 defines abuse or neglect as "a threat to a child's health or welfare by physical, mental or emotional injury or impairment, sexual abuse or exploitation, deprivation of essential needs or lack of protection from these by a person responsible for the child."

The following report provides a summary of the number of referrals to Child Protective Services, the number of inappropriate referrals that were screened out and a series of detailed reports on the characteristics of the referrals that were assigned to caseworkers for assessment.

A Referral is any written or verbal request for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation on behalf of a child in order to assess or resolve problems being presented.

During calendar year 2008 the Department of Human Services received almost **19,000** referrals for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation. **9,975** referrals presented situations with evidence of serious family problems or dysfunction but did not contain allegations of child abuse or neglect.

### **Inappropriate Referrals Received:**

**Parent/child conflict:** Children and parents in conflict over family, school, friends, behaviors with no allegations of abuse or neglect. Includes adolescents who are runaways or who are exhibiting acting out behaviors that parents have been unable to control.

**Non Specific allegations** or allegations of marginal physical or emotional care which may be poor parenting practice but is not considered abuse or neglect under Maine Law.

**Conflicts over Custody** and or visitation of children which may include allegations of marginal/poor care.

**Families in Crisis** due to financial, physical, mental health, or interpersonal problems but there are no allegations of abuse or neglect.

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The Department's ability to respond to reports of child abuse or neglect is based on factors such as the number of caseworkers, the seriousness or complexity of the cases receiving services and the availability of resources. Current staff resources are not sufficient for the Department to assign all of the reports of Child abuse and neglect that it receives to CPS Casework staff.

The Department of Human Services has contracts with private agencies to provide an alternative response to reports of child abuse and neglect when the allegations are considered to be low to moderate severity. **There were 2,325 Appropriate reports involving 4,980 children which were assigned to a Contract Agency for Alternative Response.**

**There were 6,178 reports involving 12,141 children assigned to a caseworker for a Child Protective Assessment.**

**New Reports Assigned for Assessment**

Families		Children involved by age group				
Office	Reports	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-15	16-17
Portland	960	745	384	284	226	119
Sanford	315	224	184	124	95	40
Biddeford	553	389	217	241	162	84
Lewiston	1014	879	503	380	230	119
Augusta	762	584	369	282	193	80
Rockland	560	462	273	178	119	64
Skowhegan	420	304	227	164	113	49
Bangor	876	778	341	284	161	96
Ellsworth	219	147	91	73	46	16
Machias	161	116	68	55	40	17
Houlton	62	54	32	18	11	5
Caribou/FK	256	232	148	93	60	38
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>6178</b>	<b>4929</b>	<b>2839</b>	<b>2183</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>729</b>

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**Source of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

School Personnel	966
Social Services Personnel	771
Law Enforcement Personnel	958
Medical Personnel	658
Anonymous	611
Neighbor/Friend	456
Relative	489
Other	194
Mental Health Personnel	489
Self/Family	486
Child Care Personnel	100

**Household Type/Living Arrangement of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

Two Parent Married	1341
Two Parent Unmarried	1491
One Parent Female	2556
One Parent Male	420
Adoptive Home	29
Relative	198
Non Relative	35
Other	108

**Family Stress Factors Identified During Assessment**

Family Violence	1352
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Parent/Caretaker	2066
Mental/Physical Health Problem	3501
Severe Parent/Child Conflict	740
Severe Acting Out Behavior of Child	668
School Problems	767
Divorce Conflict	597
Emotionally Disturbed Child	545
Runaway	92
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Child	183
Failure To Thrive Child	32

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**Completed Assessments**

Office	Completed	Child Abuse/Neglect Found	Unsubstantiated	Findings Rate
Portland	986	445	541	45%
Sanford	319	114	205	36%
Biddeford	578	238	340	41%
Lewiston	1045	429	616	41%
Augusta	764	220	544	29%
Rockland	576	196	380	34%
Skowhegan	408	182	226	45%
Bangor	897	365	532	41%
Ellsworth	233	120	103	56%
Machias	166	78	88	47%
Houlton	89	31	58	35%
Caribou	193	66	127	34%
Fort Kent	59	33	26	56%
<b>CPS Total</b>	<b>6313</b>	<b>2527</b>	<b>3786</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Institutional Abuse</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>.07%</b>

Data compiled on Assessments begun during calendar year.

**Child Abuse & Neglect Victims by Age and Sex**

Male	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
0-4	30	163	673	245
5-8	25	90	312	224
9-12	28	72	220	210
13-15	15	34	129	91
16-17	2	12	37	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>1371</b>	<b>804</b>

Female	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
0-4	42	119	633	268
5-8	37	68	283	195
9-12	59	46	208	121
13-15	51	60	158	133
16-17	20	22	55	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>1337</b>	<b>776</b>