

What We Do

Domestic Violence & Abuse

Rape & Sexual Assault

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Child Abuse Facts

Child Advocacy Centers

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Stalking

Anti-Trafficking Program

Helping Youth

Counseling & Support Groups

Court & Community

Legal Assistance

Our Stories

Donate

Tell-a-friend about us

Make a restitution payment

Hotline Phone Numbers**Domestic Violence Hotline:**[800.621.HOPE \(4673\)](tel:800.621.HOPE4673)**Crime Victims Hotline:**[866.689.HELP \(4357\)](tel:866.689.HELP4357)**Rape & Sexual Assault Hotline:**[212.227.3000](tel:212.227.3000)**TDD phone number for all hotlines:**[866.604.5350](tel:866.604.5350)

Child Abuse: Statistics & Facts

Child abuse can have damaging effects not only on the children who suffer it, but on communities that must address the aftermath of abuse. Learn the facts about child abuse and how you can help children in need.

**Which children are most likely to suffer abuse or neglect?**

Age of most children who become victims of abuse and neglect: **18 months or younger**

Number of children in the United States who died because of abuse or neglect in 2010: **1,537**

Of the number of children who died because of abuse or neglect...

- **79.4%** were younger than four years of age
- **47.7%** were younger than one year in age

Rate at which boys become victims vs. girls: **Nearly the same** (48.5% male vs. 51.2% female)

How many reports of child abuse are made?

Number of reports of child abuse every year in the United States: **3.6 million**

Number of children involved in child abuse reports: **6 million**

Who reports child abuse?

Reports that came from teachers, law enforcement or legal representatives, or social service providers: **60%**
 (teachers 16.4%; law enforcement 16.7%; social service 11.5%)

Anonymous (9%), other relatives of the child (7%), parents (6.8%), and friends or neighbors of the child (4.4%) made up the remaining total.

Who is most likely to abuse or neglect children?
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Give to families in crisis

NEED HELP?

Call our Hotlines

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Additional Links

-  Corporate Support
-  SafeWork
-  Online Community
-  Hope Shining

Percentage of abusers who are someone the child knows (a parent/caregiver, other relatives, neighbors, friends, or persons considered family): **81.2%**

Age of most perpetrators of child abuse (36.3% of cases): **20 to 29 years**

Of the reports, **45.2%** of the perpetrators were male and **53.6%** were female.



What can happen to children who are abused or neglected?

As children

Babies who are victims of shaken baby syndrome can suffer bleeding in the eye or brain; damage to the spinal cord and neck; rib and bone fractures. These injuries can be fatal.

Child physical abuse can result in the malformation of the brain, resulting in impaired mental development and lack of growth in vital areas.

Child abuse victims as young as three years of age have shown signs of depression and withdrawal symptoms.

Child abuse victims are more likely to exhibit anti-social behaviors, including borderline personality disorders and violent behavior.

Child abuse victims placed in foster or kinship care because of abuse or neglect were found to score lower than other students in tests of cognitive capacity, language development, and academic achievement.

As teenagers



In a study of young adults who suffered child abuse or neglect, **80%** met criteria for at least one psychiatric disorder by age 21, including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide attempts.

In a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study of homeless youth, it found that **46%** of those surveyed had escaped a home where they suffered physical abuse, and **17%** left because of sexual abuse.

Young people who were victims of child abuse and neglect are **25%** more likely to experience teen pregnancies, delinquencies, and to suffer mental health problems. They are more likely to perform lower in school, to engage in high-risk sexual behavior, and to use alcohol and illicit drugs.

According to a National Institute of Justice study, abused and neglected children were **11 times** more likely to engage in criminal behavior as teens, are **2.7 times** more likely to be arrested for violent and criminal behavior as an adult, and are 3.1 times more likely to be arrested for one of many forms of violent crime.

As adults

Adults who suffered child abuse and neglect can develop allergies, arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, high blood pressure, and ulcers, in addition to other physical disabilities because of poor health caused by the abuse.

Child abuse and neglect have been associated with panic and dissociative disorders, attention deficit and/or hyperactivity disorder, depression, anger, and post-traumatic stress disorder in children and in adults who suffered abuse.

Adults who were abused or neglected as children are more likely to abuse alcohol or drugs during their lifetimes. A study found that as many as two-thirds of individuals in drug treatment programs reported being abused as children.

Continuing the cycle of abuse

Researchers estimate that one-third of abused and neglected children will grow up to abuse their own children when they become parents.

How much can child abuse cost?

\$124 billion: Estimated minimum annual cost of child abuse to U.S. communities to provide

- Healthcare to treat mental illnesses, substance abuse, mental and physical disabilities, and other health-related issues
- Child welfare and protection
- Law enforcement and court systems allocation to handle juvenile and adult criminal cases
- Special education costs
- Unemployment and underemployment services and benefits



Low-end estimated cost per case of child abuse: **\$210,012**

Total cost of public education for 50 million children in the United States (2007-2008): **\$596.6 billion**

Cost per pupil for a public education: **\$10,441**

TAKE ACTION: Help save young lives and young futures

Recognize the Signs: Safe Horizon's 10 Signs of Child Abuse ([HTML](#) or [PDF](#) version) can help you learn to recognize when a child is being abused.

Report child abuse: Find out [how to report a case of child abuse](#) in your state.

Help a child in crisis: Safe Horizon's Child Advocacy Centers provide healing, hope, and justice to more than 5,000 children each year. [Be part of our effort](#) to give child victims of abuse comfort.

Return to our [Child Abuse](#) page.

Resources

Get informed. Get more facts and statistics about child abuse and neglect.

Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics: [How much money does the United States spend on public elementary and secondary schools?](#)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [The Economic Burden of Child Maltreatment in the United States and Implications for Prevention](#).

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation: [National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being \(NSCAW\), 1997-2010](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families: 2010 Child Maltreatment Report. <http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/statistics/can.cfm>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families. <http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/statistics/cs/can.cfm>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families: [Long Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health: [The Relationship Between Childhood Sexual Abuse and Sexual Health Practices of Homeless Adolescents](#) (Johnson, Rew, Stemglanz, 2006)

U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse: [Exploring the Role of Child Abuse in Later Drug Abuse](#) (Swan, 1998)