

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN VIRGINIA

Fact Sheet

(July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)

How many children were reported as victims of abuse or neglect in Virginia?

During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017, there were **55,258** children reported as possible victims of abuse or neglect in **36,894** completed reports which were accepted by Virginia's city and county departments of social services. There were **1,543** reports of substance-exposed newborns.

Who reported suspicions of abuse or neglect to departments of social services?

The following individuals or entities reported suspected child abuse or neglect to departments of social services: Educators (21.6%); Law Enforcement/Legal/Courts (17.5%); relatives/parents (14.0%); anonymous (11.2%); Mental Health (10.6%); other categories (9.3%); medical community (9.1%); social services staff (5.9%); and child care providers (.7%).

What were the outcomes of these reports?

There were **6,947** children in founded investigations. "Founded" means that a review of the facts gathered during an investigation met the "preponderance of the evidence" standard.

There were **9,796** children involved in unfounded investigations. "Unfounded" means that a review of the facts gathered during an investigation did not meet the "preponderance of the evidence" standard.

There were **38,515** children involved in reports that yielded family assessments. That means that Family Services Specialists engaged these families through the process of assessing their strengths and needs and developing and operationalizing a safety plan with each, as well as by ensuring the provision of supportive services, as appropriate.

What were the types of maltreatment in founded investigations?

In some reports, more than one type of maltreatment may have occurred. Of all the instances of maltreatment in completed founded investigations:

- **56.6%** of the maltreatment was due to physical neglect, a failure to provide food, clothing, shelter or supervision to the child to the extent that the child's health was endangered.
- **28.0%** of the maltreatment was due to physical abuse.
- **8.8%** of the maltreatment was due to sexual abuse.
- **3.3%** of the maltreatment was due to mental abuse/neglect.
- **2.0%** of the maltreatment was due to medical neglect.

Who were the children in founded investigations?

AGE**

- **32.4%** of all victims were children younger than 4
- **41.9%** of all victims were children aged 4 -11
- **21.8%** of all victims were children aged 12-17

**The age of 3.9% of the victims was unknown.

RACE***

- **67.6%** of all victims were white
- **33.1%** of all victims were black
- **1.1%** of all victims were Asian

***The race of .8% of the victims was American Indian, Native Hawaiian or unknown. This category allows for multiple responses per child and thus, may exceed 100%.

Source: Virginia Department of Social Services as of 12-4-2017 and Virginia Child Welfare Outcome Reports (VCWOR) Retrieved December 2017