

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**Maine Department of Human Services  
Bureau of Child and Family Services  
Child Protective Services  
Annual Report on Referrals  
2006**

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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 2006 the Department of Human Services received over **18,869** referrals for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation. **10,234** 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.

The Department of Human Services has contracts with private agencies to respond to reports of child abuse and neglect. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of reports that were not assigned for assessment. **There were 2,401 Appropriate reports which were assigned to a Contract Agency.**

**There were 6,234 reports involving 12,101 children assigned to a caseworker for a Child Protective Assessment.**

**New Reports Assigned for Assessment**

| <b>Families</b>   |                | <b>Children involved by age group</b> |            |             |              |              |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Office</b>     | <b>Reports</b> | <b>0-4</b>                            | <b>5-8</b> | <b>9-12</b> | <b>13-15</b> | <b>16-17</b> |
| <b>Portland</b>   | 888            | 641                                   | 417        | 325         | 224          | 123          |
| <b>Sanford</b>    | 285            | 205                                   | 134        | 107         | 80           | 52           |
| <b>Biddeford</b>  | 603            | 394                                   | 256        | 211         | 167          | 84           |
| <b>Lewiston</b>   | 945            | 724                                   | 497        | 389         | 269          | 108          |
| <b>Augusta</b>    | 779            | 616                                   | 323        | 280         | 193          | 100          |
| <b>Rockland</b>   | 611            | 482                                   | 305        | 225         | 164          | 72           |
| <b>Skowhegan</b>  | 335            | 243                                   | 148        | 107         | 87           | 48           |
| <b>Bangor</b>     | 877            | 724                                   | 335        | 250         | 178          | 74           |
| <b>Ellsworth</b>  | 190            | 129                                   | 67         | 61          | 46           | 22           |
| <b>Machias</b>    | 181            | 130                                   | 62         | 50          | 51           | 20           |
| <b>Houlton</b>    | 149            | 121                                   | 78         | 50          | 34           | 15           |
| <b>Caribou/FK</b> | 368            | 283                                   | 170        | 136         | 126          | 46           |
| <b>Central</b>    | 23             | 19                                    | 9          | 11          | 3            | 1            |
| <b>Statewide</b>  | 6234           | 4711                                  | 2801       | 2202        | 1622         | 765          |

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**Source of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| School Personnel          | 1029 |
| Social Services Personnel | 781  |
| Law Enforcement Personnel | 828  |
| Medical Personnel         | 607  |
| Anonymous                 | 518  |
| Neighbor/Friend           | 358  |
| Relative                  | 522  |
| Other                     | 445  |
| Mental Health Personnel   | 558  |
| Self/Family               | 498  |
| Child Care Personnel      | 90   |

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

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Two Parent Married   | 1531 |
| Two Parent Unmarried | 1351 |
| One Parent Female    | 2495 |
| One Parent Male      | 391  |
| Adoptive Home        | 22   |
| Relative             | 216  |
| Non Relative         | 32   |
| Other                | 156  |
| Shelter/Facility     | 230  |
| Unknown              | 10   |

**Family Stress Factors Identified During Assessment**

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Family Violence                         | 1122 |
| Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Parent/Caretaker | 1833 |
| Mental/Physical Health Problem          | 3058 |
| Severe Parent/Child Conflict            | 810  |
| Severe Acting Out Behavior of Child     | 704  |
| School Problems                         | 751  |
| Divorce Conflict                        | 660  |
| Emotionally Disturbed Child             | 514  |
| Runaway                                 | 112  |
| Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Child            | 168  |
| Failure To Thrive Child                 | 26   |

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**Completed Assessments**

| Office                     | Completed | Child Abuse/Neglect Found | Unsubstantiated | Findings Rate |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Portland                   | 899       | 362                       | 537             | 40%           |
| Sanford                    | 291       | 96                        | 195             | 33%           |
| Biddeford                  | 600       | 197                       | 403             | 33%           |
| Lewiston                   | 956       | 346                       | 610             | 36%           |
| Augusta                    | 784       | 235                       | 549             | 30%           |
| Rockland                   | 603       | 198                       | 405             | 33%           |
| Skowhegan                  | 337       | 152                       | 185             | 45%           |
| Bangor                     | 889       | 384                       | 505             | 43%           |
| Ellsworth                  | 196       | 111                       | 85              | 57%           |
| Machias                    | 179       | 83                        | 96              | 46%           |
| Houlton                    | 194       | 54                        | 140             | 28%           |
| Caribou                    | 287       | 108                       | 179             | 38%           |
| Fort Kent                  | 48        | 27                        | 21              | 56%           |
| <b>Institutional Abuse</b> | 199       | 9                         | 190             | 05%           |
| <b>CPS Total</b>           | 6462      | 2362                      | 4100            | 37%           |

Data compiled on for Assessments begun during calendar year.

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

| Male         | Sexual Abuse | Physical Abuse | Neglect | Emotional Abuse |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| 0-4          | 41           | 151            | 616     | 218             |
| 5-8          | 33           | 86             | 263     | 193             |
| 9-12         | 29           | 64             | 181     | 162             |
| 13-15        | 13           | 43             | 112     | 101             |
| 16-17        | 4            | 12             | 44      | 25              |
| <b>Total</b> | 120          | 356            | 1216    | 699             |

| Female       | Sexual Abuse | Physical Abuse | Neglect | Emotional Abuse |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| 0-4          | 49           | 106            | 557     | 187             |
| 5-8          | 57           | 70             | 235     | 145             |
| 9-12         | 50           | 51             | 175     | 159             |
| 13-15        | 65           | 56             | 157     | 139             |
| 16-17        | 21           | 20             | 49      | 39              |
| <b>Total</b> | 242          | 303            | 1173    | 669             |