

# 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  
2003**

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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 2003 the Department of Human Services received **17,300** referrals for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation. **8,084** 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 4,185 Appropriate reports which were assigned to a Contract Agency.**

**There were 23 Appropriate reports which were not assigned for assessment.** The allegations in these reports warrant Child Protective Services Intervention but were not assigned because the office had reached the upper limits of its capacity to investigate and assess.

**There were 4,930 reports involving 10,002 children assigned to a caseworker for a safety 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	725	505	342	289	188	89
Sanford	190	148	110	89	51	26
Biddeford	518	365	230	236	136	62
Lewiston	779	642	397	320	216	105
Augusta	707	548	363	272	225	81
Rockland	219	175	106	100	66	29
Skowhegan	236	160	99	88	49	29
Bangor	857	610	362	358	240	116
Ellsworth	214	138	102	104	55	17
Machias	173	107	78	73	54	14
Houlton	107	97	43	40	26	16
Caribou/FK	188	144	92	101	57	22
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>4930</b>	<b>3639</b>	<b>2324</b>	<b>2070</b>	<b>1363</b>	<b>606</b>

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**Source of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

School Personnel	698
Social Services Personnel	648
Law Enforcement Personnel	641
Medical Personnel	484
Anonymous	359
Neighbor/Friend	415
Relative	479
Other	327
Mental Health Personnel	480
Self/Family	324
Child Care Personnel	73

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

Two Parent Married	1370
Two Parent Unmarried	884
One Parent Female	2036
One Parent Male	300
Adoptive Home	15
Relative	164
Non Relative	35
Other	71
Shelter/Facility	44
Unknown	11

**Family Stress Factors Identified During Assessment**

Family Violence	1036
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Parent/Caretaker	1454
Mental/Physical Health Problem	2358
Severe Parent/Child Conflict	711
Severe Acting Out Behavior of Child	579
School Problems	591
Divorce Conflict	543
Emotionally Disturbed Child	535
Runaway	84
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Child	170
Failure To Thrive Child	29

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**Case Substantiation for Completed Assessments**

Office	Completed	Substantiated	Unsubstantiated	Substantiation Rate
<b>Portland</b>	725	361	364	50%
<b>Sanford</b>	193	87	106	45%
<b>Biddeford</b>	531	190	341	36%
<b>Lewiston</b>	800	439	361	55%
<b>Augusta</b>	715	319	396	45%
<b>Rockland</b>	238	141	97	59%
<b>Skowhegan</b>	233	142	91	61%
<b>Bangor</b>	868	514	354	59%
<b>Ellsworth</b>	226	135	91	60%
<b>Machias</b>	173	90	83	52%
<b>Houlton</b>	102	58	44	57%
<b>Caribou</b>	168	87	81	52%
<b>Fort Kent</b>	38	21	17	55%
<b>Institutional Abuse</b>	175	28	147	16%
<b>CPS Total</b>	5185	2612	2573	50%

Substantiation Data compiled on 3/30/2004 for Assessments begun during 2003 calendar year.

**Substantiated Victims by Age and Sex**

Male	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
<b>0-4</b>	73	261	688	444
<b>5-8</b>	53	168	407	359
<b>9-12</b>	61	144	330	304
<b>13-15</b>	26	57	164	163
<b>16-17</b>	7	20	34	31
<b>Total</b>	220	650	1623	1301

Female	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
<b>0-4</b>	80	213	615	430
<b>5-8</b>	68	126	332	306
<b>9-12</b>	97	104	306	303
<b>13-15</b>	90	103	223	213
<b>16-17</b>	19	24	61	54
<b>Total</b>	354	570	1537	1306