

# 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  
2004**

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Run Date: 03/20/2005**

Maine Department of Human Services  
Child Protective Services  
2004 Annual Report

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 2004 the Department of Human Services received over **16,943** referrals for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation. **8,216** 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.

Maine Department of Human Services  
 Child Protective Services  
 2004 Annual Report

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 3,421 Appropriate reports which were assigned to a Contract Agency.**

**There were 29 Appropriate reports which were not assigned for assessment.**

**There were 5,277 reports involving 10,567 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
<b>Portland</b>	724	542	317	274	171	75
<b>Sanford</b>	285	176	145	163	98	47
<b>Biddeford</b>	576	386	268	246	177	70
<b>Lewiston</b>	841	616	395	369	288	110
<b>Augusta</b>	758	546	373	323	221	82
<b>Rockland</b>	370	253	187	141	92	40
<b>Skowhegan</b>	238	177	129	97	63	28
<b>Bangor</b>	764	560	353	269	185	85
<b>Ellsworth</b>	207	141	103	100	48	19
<b>Machias</b>	182	122	68	81	49	16
<b>Houlton</b>	96	81	43	44	26	8
<b>Caribou/FK</b>	220	168	98	89	72	37
<b>Statewide</b>	5277	3764	2476	2193	1488	616

Maine Department of Human Services  
Child Protective Services  
2004 Annual Report

**Source of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

School Personnel	819
Social Services Personnel	681
Law Enforcement Personnel	694
Medical Personnel	445
Anonymous	415
Neighbor/Friend	355
Relative	467
Other	372
Mental Health Personnel	523
Self/Family	402
Child Care Personnel	85

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

Two Parent Married	1435
Two Parent Unmarried	909
One Parent Female	2221
One Parent Male	320
Adoptive Home	29
Relative	182
Non Relative	37
Other	94
Shelter/Facility	41
Unknown	10

**Family Stress Factors Identified During Assessment**

Family Violence	952
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Parent/Caretaker	1431
Mental/Physical Health Problem	2493
Severe Parent/Child Conflict	709
Severe Acting Out Behavior of Child	677
School Problems	615
Divorce Conflict	527
Emotionally Disturbed Child	583
Runaway	109
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Child	194
Failure To Thrive Child	25

Maine Department of Human Services  
Child Protective Services  
2004 Annual Report

**Completed Assessments**

Office	Completed	Child Abuse/Neglect Found	Unsubstantiated	Findings Rate
Portland	751	358	393	47.67%
Sanford	275	83	192	30.18%
Biddeford	601	223	378	37.10%
Lewiston	872	391	481	44.84%
Augusta	776	262	514	33.76%
Rockland	386	157	229	40.67%
Skowhegan	240	125	115	52.08%
Bangor	780	373	407	47.82%
Ellsworth	212	102	110	48.11%
Machias	186	77	109	41.40%
Houlton	100	46	54	46.00%
Caribou	196	63	133	32.14%
Fort Kent	29	14	15	48.28%
<b>Institutional Abuse</b>	151	15	136	9.93%
<b>CPS Total</b>	5555	2289	3266	41.21%

Data compiled on 3/24/2005 for Assessments begun during 2004 calendar year.

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

Male	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
<b>0-4</b>	51	182	549	311
<b>5-8</b>	41	134	303	246
<b>9-12</b>	39	97	210	205
<b>13-15</b>	26	65	148	133
<b>16-17</b>	4	16	37	29
<b>Total</b>	161	494	1247	924

Female	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
<b>0-4</b>	68	170	527	331
<b>5-8</b>	62	104	279	221
<b>9-12</b>	66	92	233	225
<b>13-15</b>	84	68	181	157
<b>16-17</b>	22	24	57	47
<b>Total</b>	302	458	1277	981