

# 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  
2005**

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Updated: 8/16/2006**

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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 2005 the Department of Human Services received over **17,684** referrals for Child Protective Services intervention in a family situation. **9,733** 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 2,617 Appropriate reports which were assigned to a Contract Agency.**

**There were 5,325 reports involving 10,707 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	586	315	260	184	68
Sanford	287	197	137	150	89	38
Biddeford	514	387	233	197	141	57
Lewiston	853	796	367	306	227	96
Augusta	716	591	309	273	204	80
Rockland	432	310	224	160	104	54
Skowhegan	271	211	108	109	60	27
Bangor	697	600	301	254	136	71
Ellsworth	162	111	76	67	37	17
Machias	181	134	74	70	41	25
Houlton	142	109	60	39	41	17
Caribou/FK	331	273	186	141	108	40
Central	14	8	5	8	3	0
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>5325</b>	<b>4313</b>	<b>2395</b>	<b>2034</b>	<b>1375</b>	<b>590</b>

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**Source of Reports Assigned for Assessment**

School Personnel	801
Social Services Personnel	643
Law Enforcement Personnel	754
Medical Personnel	527
Anonymous	377
Neighbor/Friend	369
Relative	470
Other	429
Mental Health Personnel	446
Self/Family	425
Child Care Personnel	77

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

Two Parent Married	1327
Two Parent Unmarried	1020
One Parent Female	2198
One Parent Male	332
Adoptive Home	25
Relative	184
Non Relative	40
Other	84
Shelter/Facility	40
Unknown	11

**Family Stress Factors Identified During Assessment**

Family Violence	1017
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Parent/Caretaker	1475
Mental/Physical Health Problem	2609
Severe Parent/Child Conflict	665
Severe Acting Out Behavior of Child	662
School Problems	627
Divorce Conflict	545
Emotionally Disturbed Child	488
Runaway	113
Alcohol/Drug Misuse by Child	140
Failure To Thrive Child	24

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**Completed Assessments**

Office	Completed	Child Abuse/Neglect Found	Unsubstantiated	Findings Rate
Portland	740	316	424	42.70%
Sanford	290	99	191	34.14%
Biddeford	537	138	399	25.70%
Lewiston	875	357	518	40.80%
Augusta	715	195	520	27.27%
Rockland	436	144	292	33.03%
Skowhegan	273	111	162	40.66%
Bangor	716	328	388	45.81%
Ellsworth	172	84	88	48.84%
Machias	181	80	101	44.20%
Houlton	227	75	152	33.04%
Caribou	199	75	124	37.69%
Fort Kent	59	31	28	52.54%
<b>Institutional Abuse</b>	193	19	174	9.84%
<b>CPS Total</b>	5613	2052	3561	36.56%

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
<b>0-4</b>	44	121	512	184
<b>5-8</b>	33	86	227	178
<b>9-12</b>	29	81	200	169
<b>13-15</b>	12	33	96	77
<b>16-17</b>	2	17	30	22
<b>Total</b>	120	338	1065	630

Female	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Emotional Abuse
<b>0-4</b>	52	105	456	184
<b>5-8</b>	60	75	236	180
<b>9-12</b>	62	65	174	160
<b>13-15</b>	66	54	144	112
<b>16-17</b>	20	11	42	32
<b>Total</b>	260	310	1052	668