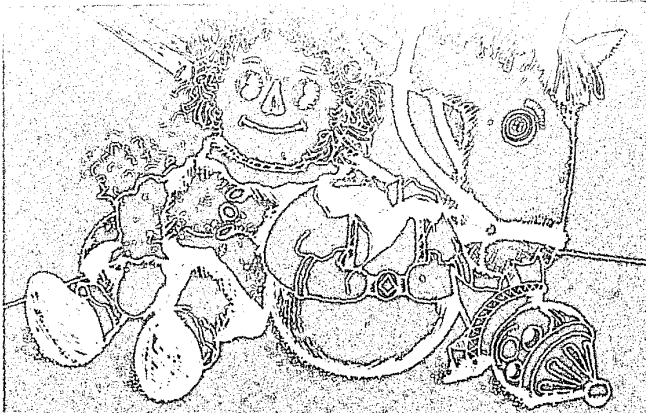


# child abuse in Maryland

107067



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# CHILD ABUSE IN MARYLAND

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 1985

NCJRS

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SEP 24 1987

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Prepared by the Social Services Administration, Office of Child Welfare  
Child Protective Services  
300 W. Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201

## INCIDENTS OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE IN MARYLAND

1985

This report is based on an analysis of data on incidents of suspected child abuse, which were reported by local departments of social services during calendar year 1985 to the Social Services Administration, Central Registry of Child Abuse.

Baltimore City reported the highest number of incidents (3158). Among the counties, Prince George's and Baltimore counties had the highest totals (P.G. Co. 1264, Baltimore Co. 910).

The total number of incidents reported in 1985 reflects an increase of 11 percent over the figures for 1984, a tripling of the rate of increase in the prior year. (Projections for 1986, as of Fall 1986, show another rise in the reporting rate, with a 23 percent rate of increase.) Sexual abuse reports have continued to increase at a higher rate than other forms of abuse, rising 25 percent in 1985, with a projected increase of 21 percent for 1986. During 1985 all other types of abuse reports increased by 6 percent. Throughout this report data for 1985 is shown next to the data from previous years so that the reader can compare at a glance the trends reflected in the aspects of child abuse under consideration.

These figures represent only those incidents which were reported to local departments of social services; it is estimated nationally that only one in ten incidents of child abuse is actually brought to the attention of local authorities. It is hoped that these figures will help to delineate the serious nature of the problem and will be useful in Maryland's efforts to build a strong child protection network.

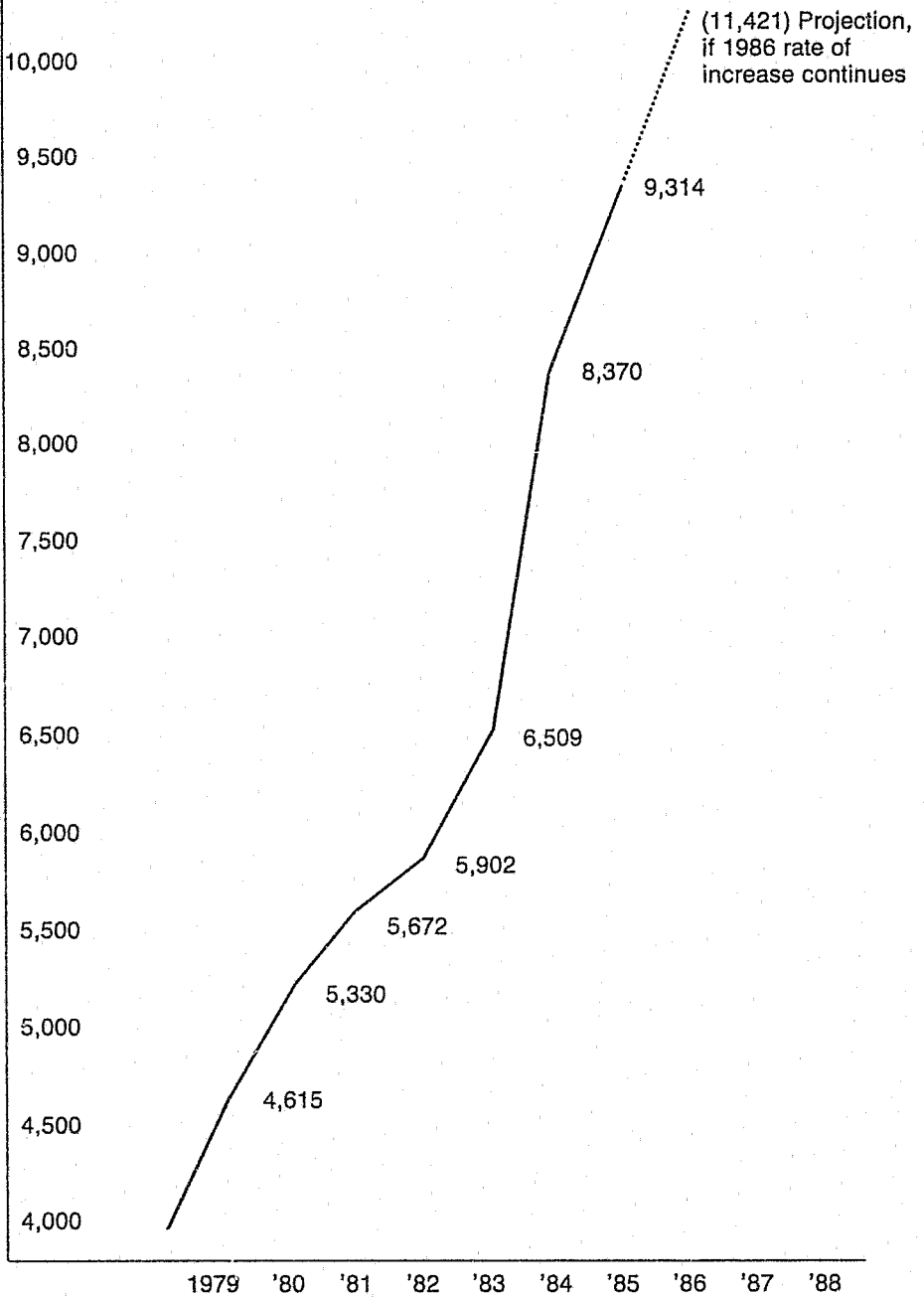
**ANNUAL SUMMARIES OF  
SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORTS  
RECEIVED BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, CENTRAL REGISTRY**

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
<b>Baltimore Metropolitan Area</b>	3122	3489	3590	3714	3857	4881	5484
Baltimore City	1961	2150	2208	2264	2274	2944	3158
Anne Arundel County	358	373	421	457	530	641	670
Baltimore County	547	550	543	617	629	710	910
Carroll County	94	116	125	105	131	151	179
Harford County	131	237	217	180	212	287	401
Howard County	31	63	76	91	81	148	166
<b>D.C. Area</b>	800	1005	1130	1278	1483	1931	1956
Montgomery County	376	418	372	391	450	533	692
Prince George's County	424	587	758	887	1033	1398	1264
<b>Western Maryland</b>	203	244	257	295	405	445	569
Allegany County	38	64	59	85	114	118	134
Frederick County	61	79	82	108	142	138	210
Garrett County	29	51	46	21	33	52	51
Washington County	75	50	70	81	116	137	174
<b>Southern Maryland</b>	232	228	275	259	326	493	577
Calvert County	63	59	55	66	62	77	91
Charles County	115	80	98	95	171	237	254
St. Mary's County	54	89	122	98	93	179	232
<b>Eastern Shore</b>	258	364	420	356	438	620	728
Caroline County	25	30	27	25	26	45	40
Cecil County	55	51	75	62	113	196	179
Dorchester County	45	34	48	44	58	47	62
Kent County	9	17	11	7	14	20	26
Queen Anne's County	19	19	13	16	19	39	63
Somerset County	15	21	22	23	19	43	48
Talbot County	9	23	22	21	31	32	60
Wicomico County	63	148	147	129	107	133	171
Worcester County	18	21	55	29	51	65	79
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4615</b>	<b>5330</b>	<b>5672</b>	<b>5902</b>	<b>6509</b>	<b>8370</b>	<b>9314</b>

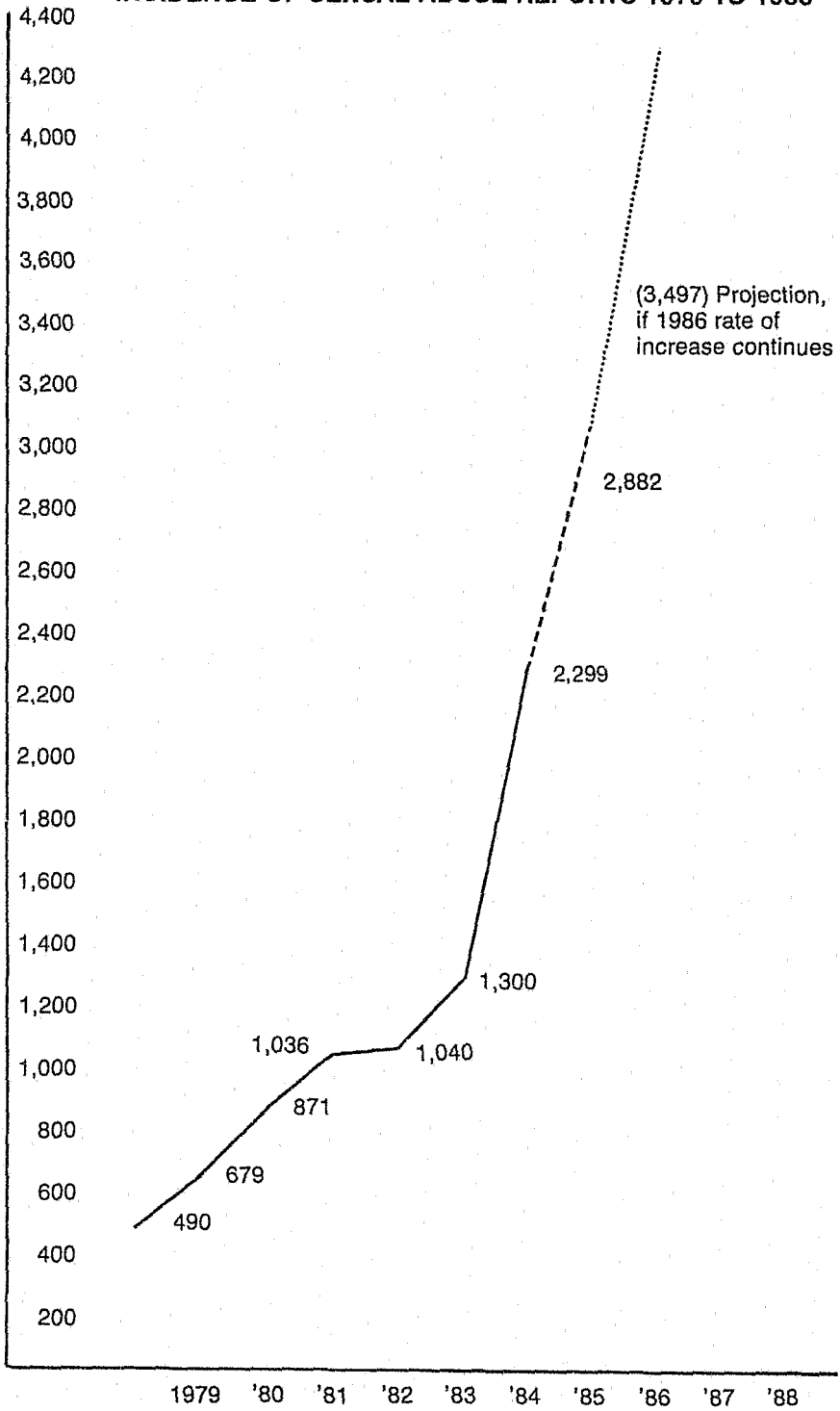
**ANNUAL SUMMARIES OF  
SUSPECTED CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTS  
RECEIVED BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, CENTRAL REGISTRY**

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
<b>Baltimore Metropolitan Area</b>	478	555	636	678	755	1268	1618
Baltimore City	276	341	379	419	411	669	739
Anne Arundel County	57	78	89	89	112	234	299
Baltimore County	109	92	114	113	170	203	347
Carroll County	16	16	12	18	22	30	61
Harford County	17	22	23	32	24	95	120
Howard County	3	3	6	15	17	37	52
<b>D.C. Area</b>	107	183	251	237	327	602	613
Montgomery County	44	84	74	89	115	203	271
Prince George's County	63	99	177	148	212	399	342
<b>Western Maryland</b>	28	37	42	38	70	121	212
Allegany County	7	6	8	14	19	40	56
Frederick County	11	20	12	11	27	36	93
Garrett County	3	5	10	4	5	11	11
Washington County	7	6	12	9	19	34	52
<b>Southern Maryland</b>	30	26	39	38	67	123	171
Calvert County	5	8	12	9	21	17	22
Charles County	15	10	17	14	24	55	83
St. Mary's County	10	8	10	15	22	51	66
<b>Eastern Shore</b>	36	70	68	49	81	185	268
Caroline County	9	5	7	2	3	10	13
Cecil County	6	19	14	9	23	68	69
Dorchester County	4	4	10	5	9	13	30
Kent County	0	2	1	0	1	5	17
Queen Anne's County	1	5	4	4	3	22	28
Somerset County	4	4	3	3	1	8	17
Talbot County	1	2	3	5	7	17	20
Wicomico County	9	23	13	17	24	26	50
Worcester County	2	6	13	4	10	16	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>1036</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>1300</b>	<b>2299</b>	<b>2882</b>

# INCIDENCE OF ABUSE REPORTS 1979 TO 1985



# INCIDENCE OF SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTS 1979 TO 1985



## ABUSED CHILDREN: PROFILE OF INJURIES

As defined by Maryland law, an abused child is a person under the age of 18 years who has sustained any physical injury as a result of cruel or inhumane treatment or as a result of malicious act or acts, or any sexual abuse, meaning an act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, by a parent, adoptive parent, or other person who has the permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a minor child.

The two factors that determine whether child abuse has occurred are:

1. the child suffered physical injury or sexual abuse or exploitation with or without injury; and
2. the injury was caused non-accidentally by, or the sexual abuse was perpetrated by, a person who had care, custody or supervision of the child at the time.

An injury is any bodily damage, ranging from a bruise or bruises to bone fractures and burns. Some injuries may not be readily apparent, for example, internal injuries.

Sexual abuse may range from nude photography and fondling for sexual gratification to incest, rape, sexual offense in any degree, sodomy, sexual practices prohibited by law or prostitution, or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child for commercial purposes as prohibited by law.

Cuts, bruises and welts remain the most common types of physical injuries which are sustained by children as the result of abuse. In 1985, such injuries were reported in 2139 cases, 23 percent of abuse investigations.

During 1985 there was a slight decrease, for the third year in a row, in the percentage of physical abuse cases in which children suffered severe physical harm (such as burns, scalds, bone fractures and subdural hematomas). There were 278 such injuries, or 4.6 percent of physical abuse reports, compared to 5 percent in 1984, 6 percent in 1983, and 6.5 percent in 1982.

There continues to be a dramatic increase in the number of child sexual abuse cases reported. In 1985 this remains the most frequently reported form of child abuse, accounting for 31 percent of reports.

Projections based on the 1986 figures available in Fall '86 indicate that this trend is continuing, with 32 percent of the reports received involving sexual abuse. Baltimore City reported the largest number of cases (739), while Baltimore County (347), and Prince George's County (342) had the highest incidence among the counties. Female children were the victims in 78 percent of cases in 1985, and a child under 5 was the victim in 25 percent of cases. These figures indicate a continuing trend towards identification of younger victims of both sexes.



# SEVERE CHILD ABUSE-RELATED INJURIES

1981-1982-1983-1984-1985

Number of Cases:

10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100    110    120    130    140    150    160

burns, scalds



bone fractures



Subdural Hematomas



Skull Fractures



Dislocations, Sprains, Twisting, Shaking



Internal Injuries



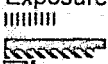
Failure to Thrive



Poisoning



Exposure to Elements



10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100    110    120    130    140    150

||||| 1981

||||| 1982

||||| 1983

||||| 1984

||||| 1985

## CHILD FATALITIES

In 1981, there were ten child abuse fatalities in Maryland, compared with six in 1980. In 1982, there were 23 deaths as a result of child maltreatment. In response to this dramatic increase, the Social Services Administration initiated a comprehensive review of cases under care and an analysis of characteristics associated with high-risk families in an effort to ensure that maximum preventive services were being directed appropriately.

This alarming trend seemed to parallel the increases seen in the number of severe injury cases reported overall in most recent years when national statistics indicated that other states had experienced similar increases. The phenomenon has been attributed to the additional stress on families resulting from depressed economic conditions and unemployment. In 1983, there were 16 child abuse fatalities in Maryland, in 1984 there were 10, and in 1985 there were 8.

A 1982 analysis of cases in which a child clearly died as a result of child abuse or neglect elicited the following profile:

**Average Age: 1.8 years**

### Sex:

Females	53%
Male	47%

### Race:

White	40%
Black	55%
Other	5%

### Cause of Death:

Brain Damage	38%
Internal Injury	28%
Infection/Illness (Secondary to Inflicted Injury)	14%
Suffocation	10%
Starvation	10%

### Household Composition:

Two Caretakers	67%
One Caretaker	33%

### Average Age of

Caretaker:	24.4 years
Average Number of Siblings	1.5

The profile of 1985 fatalities differs from that of earlier years in that male children comprise a clear majority of the fatalities. All but one of the children were under two years of age. White and Black children each comprised 50 percent of the total, and households had two or more caretakers in 63 percent of the cases. The average age of caretakers was 23.08 years, ranging in age from 19 to 28. The leading causes of death were internal injuries and suffocation (two cases each), with multiple injuries, head injuries, drowning, and malnutrition each accounting for one death. Most children had siblings, with two having three siblings each, three having two siblings each, and one child having one sibling.

During 1986 there has been another alarming increase in the number of fatalities, which shows no indication of abating in 1987.

### 1985 FATALITIES

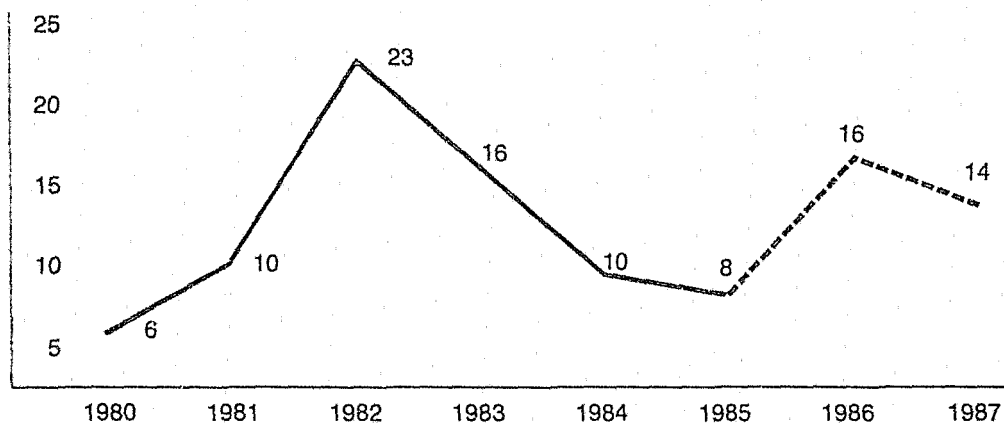
Abuse Only  
7

Abuse and Neglect  
2

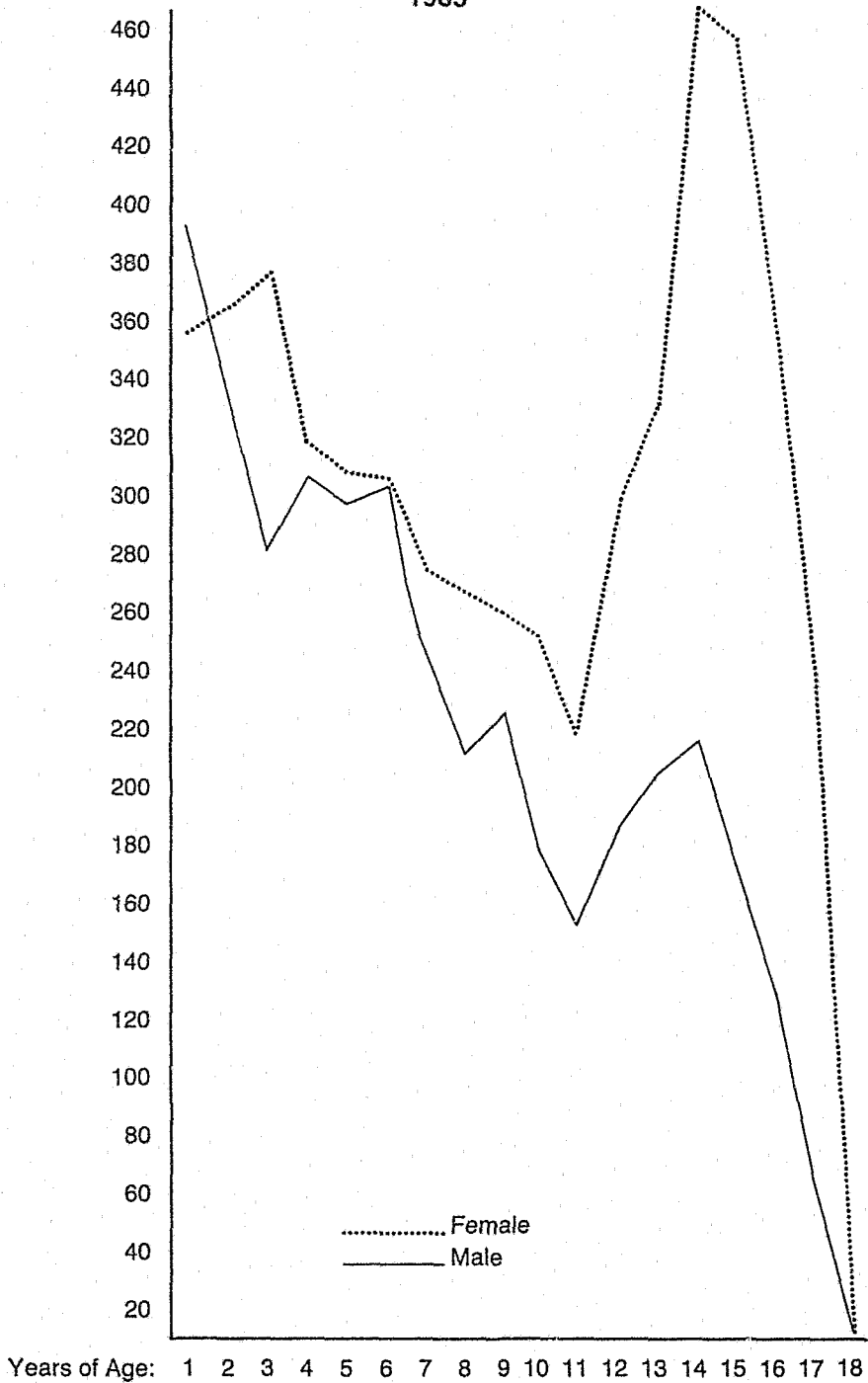
Neglect Only  
1

Total Fatalities—8  
1 and under —7  
7 years —1

### NUMBER OF MALTREATMENT DEATHS (ACTUAL AND PROJECTED)



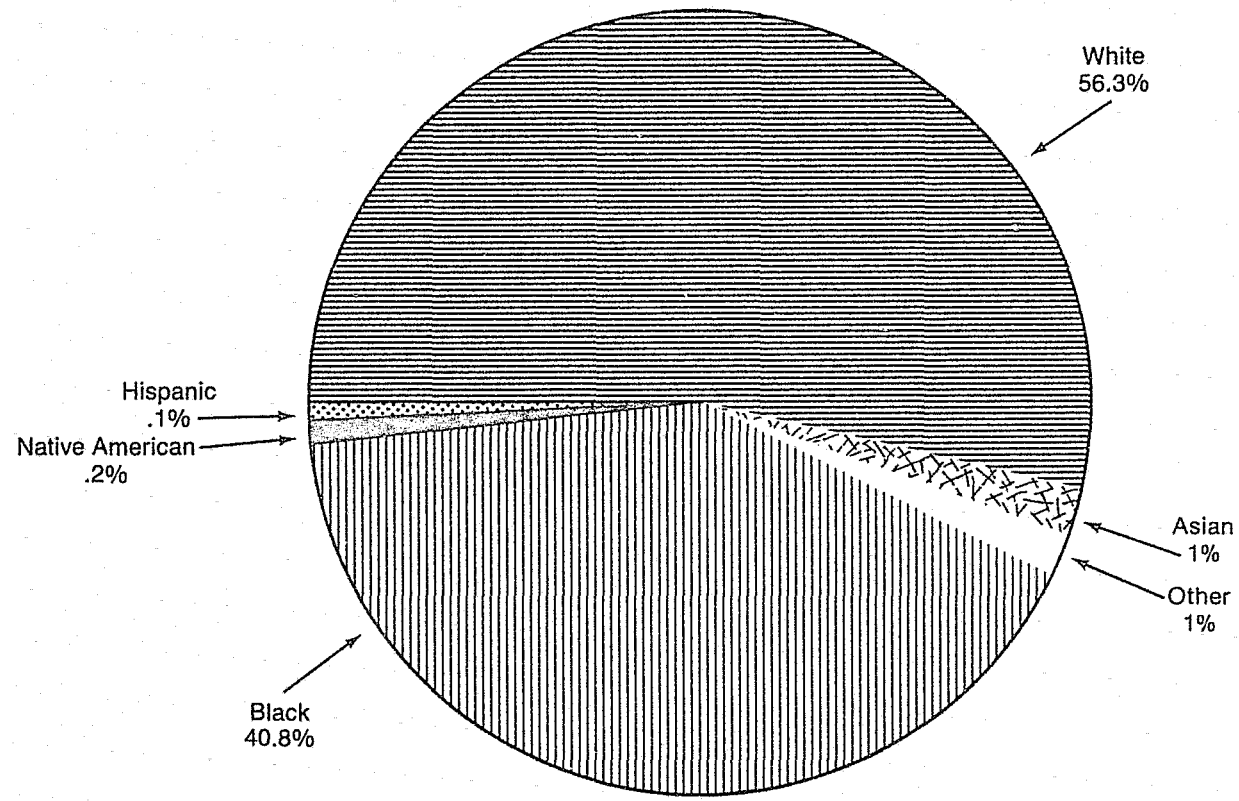
# DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD ABUSE REPORTS BY AGE & GENDER 1985



**BREAKDOWN OF CHILD ABUSE CASES  
FOR SELECTED VARIABLES  
FAMILY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION — 1984**

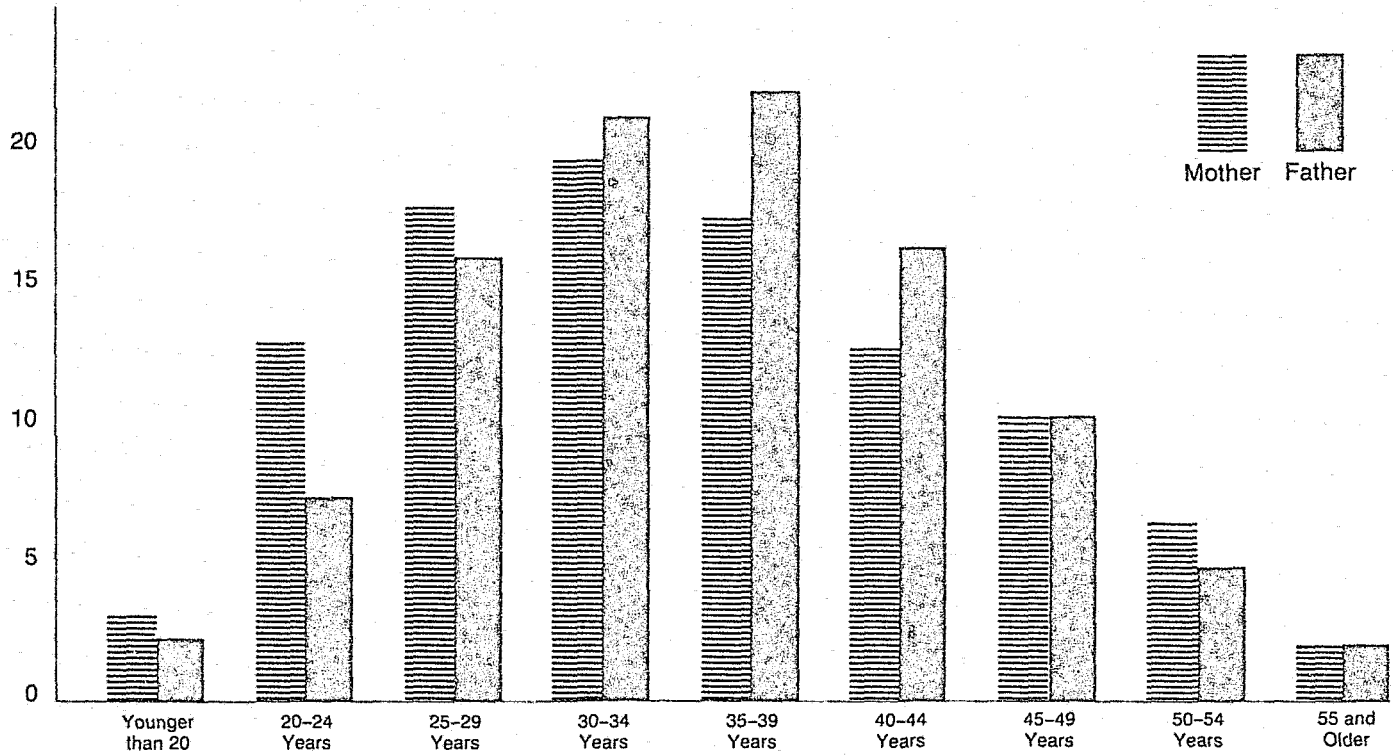
	Mother	Father
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	41%	39%
Single	20%	10%
Widowed	1%	1%
Separated	16%	13%
Divorced	14%	10%
Data Unavailable	8%	28%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Works/Owns Small Business	11%	11%
Works in Industry	14%	22%
Works for Government	8%	10%
Housekeeper, Domestic	9%	1%
Professional	3%	3%
Other	18%	14%
Never Employed	18%	2%
Data Unavailable	18%	39%
<b>Education</b>		
Under 7 years Schooling	2%	2%
7-9 years Schooling	8%	5%
10-12 years Schooling	22%	13%
High School Graduate	24%	19%
1 to 3 years of College	6%	4%
College Graduate	4%	4%
Professional	1%	1%
Data Unavailable	33%	54%
<b>Estimated Yearly Income</b>		
\$ 0- 4,999	21%	3%
5,000- 8,999	8%	3%
9,000-12,999	6%	4%
13,000-15,999	4%	4%
16,000-19,999	2%	4%
20,000 & Above	3%	8%
Data Unavailable	56%	74%
<b>Source of Income</b>		
AFDC or other Public Assistance	27%	2%
Retirement, Social Security, Pension	1%	2%
Salaries, Wages	41%	48%
Other	3%	2%
Data Unavailable	28%	47%

# 1985 CHILD ABUSE CASES BY RACE/ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

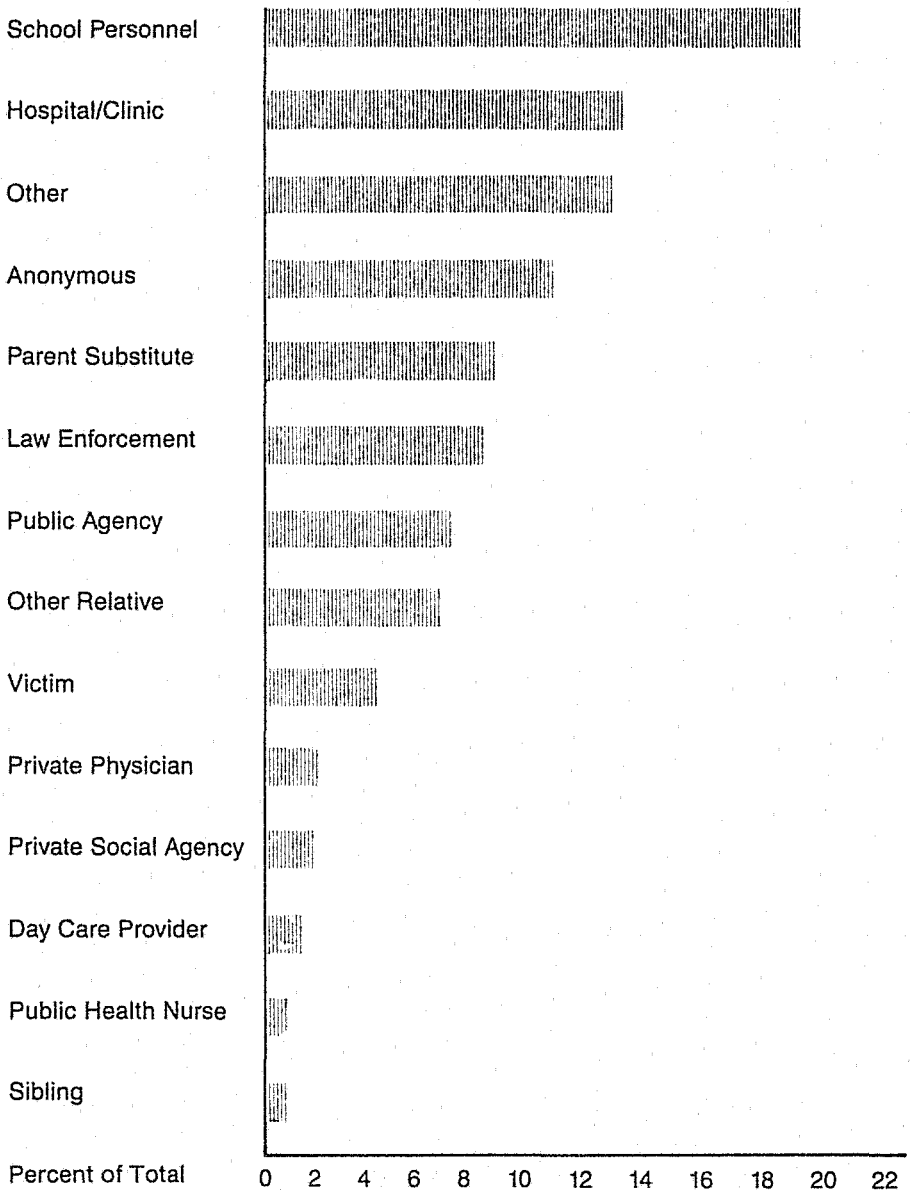


# CHILD ABUSE CASES BY AGE & GENDER OF PARENTS

1984



## SOURCES OF INITIAL REPORTS, 1985





## CHILD ABUSE: IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT

Child abuse is a problem which requires the involvement of all sectors of the community for the purposes of identification, prevention, and treatment.

While the local department of social services is mandated to investigate and manage cases of child abuse, children who are in need of protection become known to the local agency only when a report of suspected child abuse is made. Most often these reports come from school personnel and hospitals or clinics. However, relatives, neighbors, and others who may have close contact with the child and his/her family are important referral resources.

When a report of suspected child abuse is made, a protective services worker from the local department of social services, or a police officer, is required to make on-site contact with the child and his/her family within 24 hours. A thorough investigation is made in order to assess whether abuse has occurred, and to ensure the safety of the child and any other children in the household. Oftentimes this investigation is conducted with the police or other law enforcement officials and, in cases of sexual abuse, there is always a joint investigation. A copy of the report of the disposition of each investigation is sent to the State's Attorney for further action, if appropriate.

Utilizing the information gathered during the investigation, the local department of social services develops a plan for the protection of the child and treatment of the family's problems. Often various other agencies in the community are involved, such as the health department, community mental health services, private social agencies, schools, day care centers, etc. Other resources of the local department of social services, such as parent aides, homemaker service, foster care, day care, or emergency assistance, are often called upon as part of the treatment plan.

Approximately 40 percent of the child abuse referrals result in a ruling out of the allegations. Of the remaining 60 percent, approximately one-fifth of the children require emergency placement. The average length of service is approximately 10 to 14 months.

Coordination of efforts is provided through the use of Multi-Disciplinary Child Protection Teams. These groups are composed of professionals from the various community agencies treating the child and his/her family.

In summary, child abuse identification and treatment relies upon the development of sensitivity to the problem among members of the general population, and a willingness on the part of all involved to coordinate and strengthen the child protection networks.