{{Fact Sheet}}

(July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015)

What is child abuse or neglect?

Under Virginia law, an abused or neglected child is any child under 18 whose parent, or any other person responsible for the care of the child, does any or all of the following:

- causes or threatens to cause a non-accidental physical or mental injury, including, but not limited to a child who is with his parent during the manufacture or sale of certain drugs.
- neglects or refuses to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, emotional nurturing, or health care.
- abandons the child.
- fails to provide adequate supervision in relation to the child's age and level of development.
- commits or allows to be committed any illegal sexual act upon a child including incest, rape, fondling, indecent exposure, prostitution, or allows a child to be used in any sexually explicit visual material.
- knowingly leaves a child alone in the same dwelling with a person who is not related to the child by blood or marriage and who is required to register as a violent sexual offender.

Child abuse is not usually just one physical attack or just one instance of failure to meet a child's most basic needs. Usually child abuse is a pattern of behavior which takes place over a period of time. The longer child abuse continues, the more serious it becomes, and the more difficult it is to help.

How many children were reported as victims of maltreatment in Virginia?

From July 2014 through June 2015, **49,868** children were reported as possible victims of abuse and/or neglect in **33,020** completed reports to Virginia's city and county departments of social services.

Were all these reports founded?

Founded means that a review of the facts shows a preponderance of the evidence supports a founded report. **6,592** children were victims in founded reports of child abuse and/or neglect.

– Continued on back

2016 Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention
No permission is needed to duplicate this page for educational purposes.
1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)
800-Children (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline

Fact Sheet *(continued)*

In addition, **33,809** children were involved in reports that received a family assessment. This means that a Child Protective Services worker completed a family services needs assessment with these families; developed a written safety plan if needed; and, provided or arranged for services, if needed.

How many children died as a result of child abuse/neglect?

In State Fiscal Year 2015 there were 128 completed investigations of child deaths due to suspected abuse or neglect. Forty-eight **(48)** children died as a result of abuse or neglect and 38 of these children were age 4 years or younger.* **Fifteen cases (15) are still pending and six (6) cases are under appeal as of 12-17-2015.*

Who were the children?

31.74% of all victims in founded investigations of child abuse and neglect were children younger than age 4. **42.96%** of all victims were children ages 4 through 11. Most victims, **67.86%,** were white, **32.53%** were black, and **1.12%** were Asian.

What were the types of maltreatment in founded investigations?

In some reports, more than one type of maltreatment may have occurred. Of all the instances of maltreatment in completed founded investigations:

- **56.45%** of the maltreatment was due to physical neglect, a failure to provide food, clothing, shelter or supervision to the child to the extent that the child's health was endangered.
- **26.13%** of the maltreatment was due to physical abuse.
- **10.84%** of the maltreatment was due to sexual abuse.
- **3.28%** of the maltreatment was due to mental abuse/neglect.
- **2.29%** of the maltreatment was due to medical neglect.

Who are the abusers?

Abusive parents can be your friends, your neighbors or your relatives. Child maltreatment affects all economic, racial, social, ethnic and religious groups.

What is the cost of child abuse and neglect in monetary and human terms?

The cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States is estimated at $258 million per day, according to a study by Prevent Child Abuse America.

How can child abuse and neglect be prevented?

Recognize the warning signs: parents under chronic stress, children exhibiting negative and anxious behaviors, signs of physical abuse.

Encourage families under stress to seek out support services. Call the **800-CHILDREN** parent helpline for guidance. Report suspected child abuse and neglect by calling your local social services department or call the **Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-552-7096,** *(Language line available).*

2016 Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention
No permission is needed to duplicate this page for educational purposes.
1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)
800-Children (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline