

CHILD ABUSE STATISTICS



Children are among the most vulnerable in our communities and the most in need of protection. The Pennsylvania Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Teams and its local partners are working to help abused children and provide education to prevent future abuse.

DEFINING CHILD ABUSE

Pennsylvania law defines child abuse and neglect as "when someone intentionally, knowingly or recklessly performs an action or fails to prevent an action that causes a child under the age of 18 to experience serious physical injury or mental harm, sexual abuse or exploitation."



NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE STATISTICS

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, a substantiated claim is defined as a claim that has been investigated with enough evidence to support the claim under state law.

While each state has its own definition of child abuse and neglect, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) provides a national minimum definition, which defines child abuse and neglect as "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation []; or an act or failure to act, which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services reported about 678,000 abused and neglected children in 2018.

If you suspect the abuse of a child, call the ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313.

PA CHILD ABUSE STATISTICS

Almost 6,500 cases of child abuse were substantiated in Pennsylvania in 2016. Nearly half of those cases (47.5%) involved sexual abuse. Over a quarter (29.6%) involved physical abuse. Serious neglect was involved in 8.3% of cases.

Numbers rose in 2017, with over 7,000 substantiated cases of child abuse in Pennsylvania. Of these 7,000 cases, 48% involved sexual abuse, 28.3% involved physical abuse and 9.7% involved serious neglect.

Numbers went up again in 2018. There were over 7,500 substantiated cases of child abuse in Pennsylvania in 2018. 47.4% of cases involved sexual abuse, 28.3% involved physical abuse and 9.4% involved serious neglect.