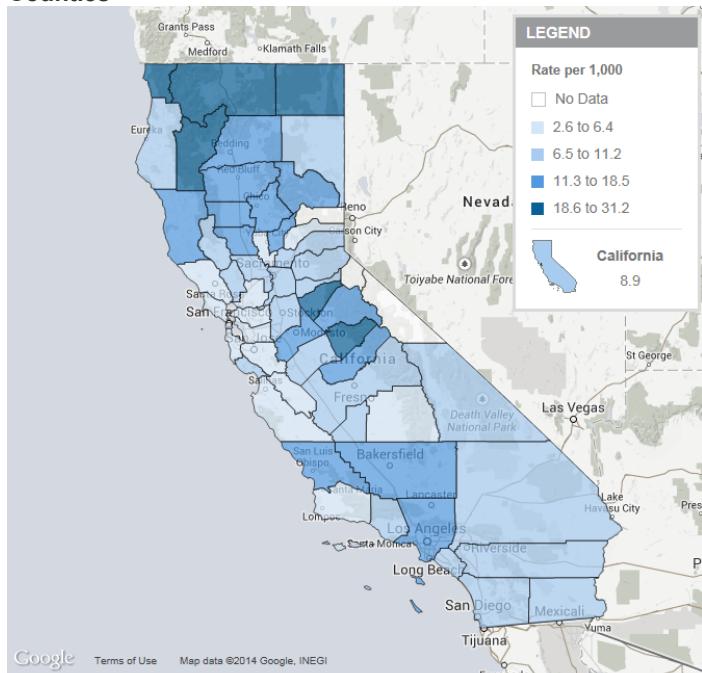


Child Abuse and Neglect in California

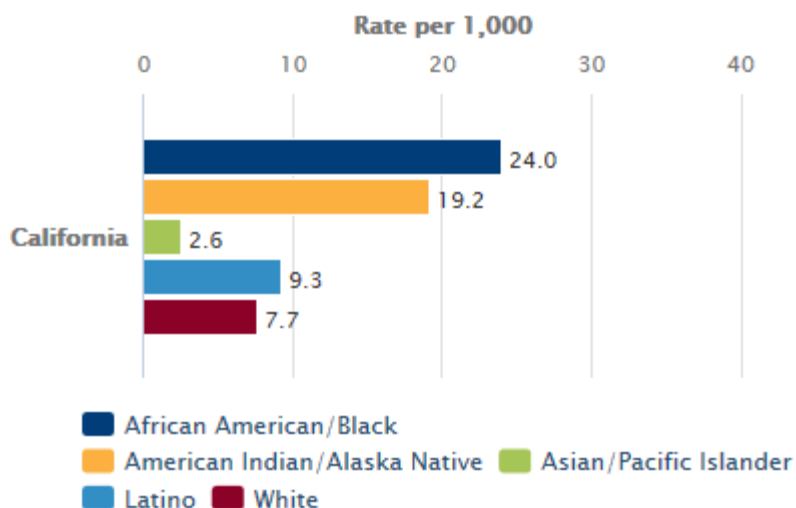
Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect: 2013; showing Counties



Definition: Rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases per 1,000 children under age 18.

Data Source: Needell, B., et al. (May 2014). Child Welfare Services Reports for California, UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research; U.S. data come from Child Trends analysis of Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System data through the National Data Archive on Child Abuse & Neglect, as cited on [KIDS COUNT](#) (Apr. 2013).

Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, by Race/Ethnicity: 2013



What It Is

Child abuse and neglect indicators are broken into two broad categories: the rate of child abuse and neglect *reports* and the rate of *substantiated cases*. Generally speaking, most reports of child abuse are not in the end substantiated by Child Protective Services after an investigation. Typically, as the public becomes more aware of child maltreatment and how to report it, the rate of reports goes up. The rate of substantiated cases is generally a more accurate measure of the prevalence of abuse and neglect because it reflects *verified* reports. On kidsdata.org, reports and substantiated cases of child abuse/neglect are provided overall, and by age, race/ethnicity, and type of abuse.

Why This Topic Is Important

Children who are abused or neglected, including those who witness domestic violence, often exhibit emotional, cognitive, and behavioral problems, such as anxiety, depression, suicidal behavior, difficulty in school, use of alcohol and other drugs, and early sexual activity (1, 2). Abuse, particularly experienced when children are young, causes stress that can disrupt early brain and physical development, placing mistreated young children at higher risk for health problems as adults (2, 3). Children who are abused or neglected also are more likely to repeat the cycle of violence by entering into violent relationships as teens and adults or abusing their own children (1). An estimated 686,000 U.S. children were victims of maltreatment in 2012, and approximately 1,640 of these children died from abuse or neglect (7).

Child abuse and neglect are underreported and occur in families of all socioeconomic levels and ethnic groups (4, 5). Major risk factors for child abuse/neglect victims include being under 4 years old and having special needs. Family and community risk factors include parental substance abuse, parental mental illness, major stress (e.g. poverty, social isolation), domestic violence, and unsafe neighborhoods (5, 6). Research shows that in 30% to 60% of homes with either domestic violence or child abuse cases, it is likely that both types of abuse are occurring (4).

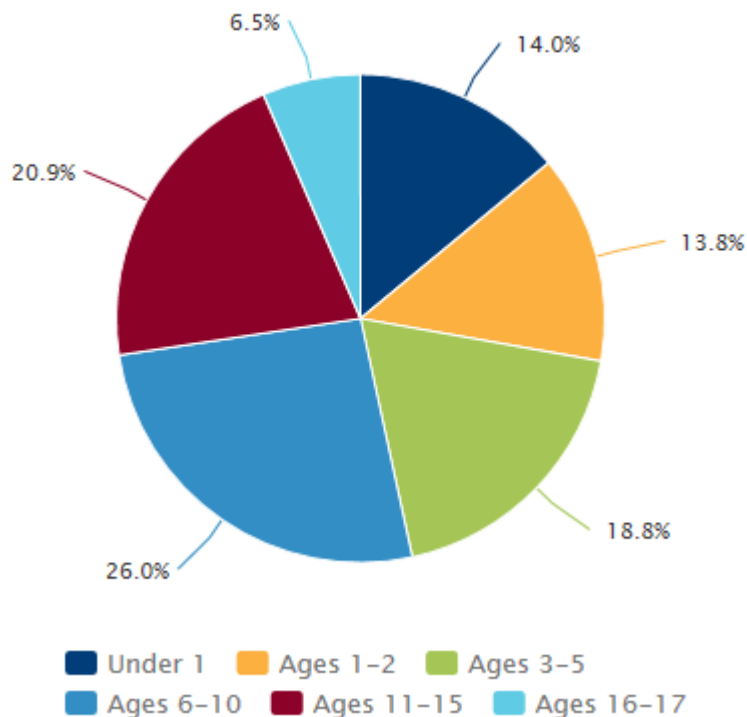
How Children Are Faring

In 2013, there were 482,265 reports (allegations) of child abuse and neglect in California. Of those cases, 81,381, or 17%, were substantiated (verified) by the state child welfare system. Nearly 65% of these verified

Definition: Rate of substantiated cases of child abuse per 1,000 children under age 18, by race/ethnicity.

Data Source: Needell, B., et al. (May 2014). Child Welfare Services Reports for California, U.C. Berkeley [Center for Social Services Research](#); U.S. data come from Child Trends analysis of Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System data available through the National Data Archive on Child Abuse & Neglect, as cited on [KIDS COUNT](#) (Apr. 2013).

Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, by Age: 2013 California



Definition: Percentage of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect, by age (e.g., 13.8% of substantiated cases of child abuse in California in 2013 concerned children ages 1-2).

Data Source: Needell, B., et al. (May 2014). Child Welfare Services Reports for California, U.C. Berkeley [Center for Social Services Research](#).

cases were due to general neglect, which includes cases where the parent, guardian, or caregiver failed to provide adequate food, shelter, medical care, or supervision for the child, but no physical injury occurred. Neglect consistently has been the most common type of substantiated case statewide and in nearly all counties for which these data are available. California's rate of substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect declined from 12.0 cases per 1,000 children ages 0-17 in 1998 to 8.9 in 2013. Children ages 0-5 make up half of all substantiated cases of child abuse/neglect in California; they comprised 47% of all cases in 2013, up from 40% in 1998.

Statewide, child abuse and neglect cases disproportionately involve children of color, particularly African American/Black and American Indian/Alaska Native children. For more information on racial disproportionality and inequities in child welfare, see the [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#) and a recent [synthesis of research](#) on the issue.

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:
<http://www.kidsdata.org/topic/2/child-abuse-and-neglect/summary>



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