

# Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report



2008 Data

Bureau of Program Integrity  
Division of Safety and Permanence  
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families



# Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report

Annual Report for Calendar Year 2008  
to the Governor and Legislature  
s. 48.981(9), Stats.

This report is available on the Internet at  
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# Table of Contents

<b>Letter from the Administrator .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Structure of Child Protective Services in Wisconsin .....	8
Child Abuse and Neglect Definitions.....	8
Overview of the Child Protective Services Process.....	10
Key Terms.....	11
<b>Child Protective Services Process.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Child Protective Services Access .....	14
Child Protective Services Initial Assessment.....	16
<b>Reporters .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Reporter’s Relationship to Alleged Child Victim .....	25
Reporter Allegations and Subsequent Findings .....	27
<b>Victims .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Characteristics of Maltreated Children.....	29
Fatalities.....	33
Abusive Head Trauma and Impacted Babies .....	36
<b>Maltreaters .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Characteristics of Maltreaters .....	37
Relationship to Victim .....	39
<b>Federal Performance Standards.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Recurrence of Maltreatment .....	43
Maltreatment While in Out-of-Home Care .....	43
<b>Services to Families .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Safety Decision & Services.....	44
CPS Removals to an Out-of-home Placement.....	46
Initial Assessment Disposition .....	48
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	
Child Maltreatment Related Statutes .....	51
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	
Unborn Child Abuse.....	52
<b>APPENDIX C</b>	
An Overview of the CPS Process .....	53

APPENDIX D	
Data Collection and Interpretation .....	54
APPENDIX E	
Total CPS Reports and Screening Decisions by County, 2008.....	56
APPENDIX F	
Children in CPS Reports Per 1,000 Children by County, 2008 .....	58
APPENDIX G	
County Substantiation Rates, 2008 .....	60
APPENDIX H	
Child Victimization Rate by County, 2008.....	62
APPENDIX I	
Total Maltreatment Allegations by Maltreatment Type and Maltreatment Finding by County, 2008.....	64
APPENDIX J	
County Maltreatment Allegation Substantiation Rate By Maltreatment Type, 2008 .....	66
APPENDIX K	
Percentage of CPS Initial Assessments by Type by County, 2008 .....	68
APPENDIX L	
Safety Assessment Results in Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments by County, 2008.....	70
APPENDIX M	
Where to Report.....	72

## Tables and Graphs

Table 1	Statewide Referrals and Screening Decisions, 2008 .....	15
Table 2	CPS Reports Per 1,000 Children, 2008 .....	15
Figure 1	Total Number of CPS Reports Statewide, 1999-2008 .....	16
Table 3	CPS Initial Assessment Workload, 2008.....	17
Table 4	Statewide Substantiation Rate, 2008 .....	18
Table 5	Statewide Child Victimization Rate, 2008 .....	18
Figure 2	Statewide Substantiation Rates, 1999-2008 .....	19
Figure 3	Statewide Victimization Rates Per 1,000 Children, 2004-2008 .....	20
Table 6	Total Maltreatment Allegations by Type and Finding, 2008.....	20
Figure 4	Maltreatment Findings by Maltreatment Type, 2008.....	21
Table 7	Statewide Maltreatment Allegation Substantiation Rate By Maltreatment Type, 2008 .....	21
Figure 5	Neglect Allegation Findings, 2004-2008 .....	22
Figure 6	Physical Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008 .....	23
Figure 7	Sexual Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008 .....	23
Figure 8	Emotional Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008 .....	24
Table 8	Referrals (Screened-in and Screened-out) by Reporter's Relationship to Alleged Child Victim, 2008 .....	25
Table 9	Total Maltreatment Allegations (Screened-in Referrals Only) by Reporter's Relationship to Alleged Child Victim, 2008.....	26
Figure 9	Total Maltreatment Allegations by Maltreatment Type (Screened-in Referrals Only), Mandated versus Non-Mandated Reporters, 2008.....	27
Figure 10	Percentage of Reporter's Total Maltreatment Allegations Found Substantiated or Likely to Occur After CPS Initial Assessment, Mandated versus Non-Mandated Reporters, 2008.....	28
Figure 11	Gender of Victims, 2008.....	29
Table 10	Child Victimization Rate by Gender, 2008 .....	29
Figure 12	Victims by Age Group, 2008.....	30
Figure 13	Victimization Rate by Age and Gender, 2008 .....	30

Figure 14	Substantiated Maltreatment Allegations for Female Victims, 2008.....	31
Figure 15	Substantiated Maltreatment Allegations for Male Victims, 2008.....	31
Figure 16	Race of Victims Where Known, 2008.....	32
Figure 17	Race of WI Child Population .....	32
Table 11	Profile of Substantiated Child Fatalities, 2008 .....	34
Figure 18	Count of Child Fatalities Substantiated as Maltreatment, 1999-2008 .....	35
Figure 19	Gender of Maltreaters, 2008 .....	37
Figure 20	Substantiated Allegations by Abuse Type and Maltreater’s Gender, 2008 .....	38
Figure 21	Maltreaters by Age Group, 2008 .....	38
Figure 22	Race of Maltreaters Where Known, 2008 .....	39
Figure 23	Race of WI Population Ages 18-44 .....	39
Table 12	Substantiated Allegations by Maltreater Relationship to Child Victim, 2008 .....	40
Figure 24	Percentage of Maltreatment Types by Maltreater Category ...	41
Table 13	Federal Performance Measures, 2004-2008 .....	43
Figure 25	Safety Assessment Results in Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008.....	44
Figure 26	Frequencies of Safety Threats by Category.....	46
Table 14	Median and Mean Age of Male and Female Children Removed to an Out-of-home Placement, 2008.....	47
Figure 27	Race of Children Removed to Out-of-home Care, 2008 .....	47
Figure 28	Initial Assessment Dispositions in Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008 .....	48
Figure 29	Initial Assessment Dispositions in Secondary CPS Initial Assessments and Non-Caregiver Investigations, 2008 .....	49
Table 15	Safety Decision by Initial Assessment Disposition for Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008.....	49

## **Letter from the Administrator**

Wisconsin's child welfare system operates under the core belief that all children deserve to grow up in a safe and healthy environment. Our first priority is to ensure that children can live safely in their own homes. In situations where children are unsafe in their own homes, a Child Protective Services (CPS) case is opened to provide services that control the conditions that make the children unsafe in the family home. When that is not possible, children are placed in a relative or foster home until the conditions in the family home can be controlled so that children are safe and protected.

In September of 2007, new comprehensive standards outlining the requirements for receipt and response to child abuse and neglect referrals and completion of initial assessments of child maltreatment allegations were released. The new Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards contain several important policy changes related to maltreatment allegations, review of criminal background history of suspected maltreaters and other adult household members, and interview requirements for non-custodial parents of alleged child victims. In addition, the CPS Access and Initial Assessment Standards require that the maltreater appeal process be documented into new functionality in Wisconsin's automated child welfare data system resulting in more timely and accurate information related to substantiated or overturned substantiated maltreatment findings.

Finally, one of the most significant changes affects how reports of alleged child maltreatment resulting in a child's death are handled. Under the previous access and initial assessment standards, CPS agencies were not required to screen in reports and assess maltreatment allegations when a child died from suspected maltreatment and there were no other children in the household. The new standards require CPS agencies to screen in reports and conduct initial assessments of these cases so that family case and maltreater records contain this critical information in case of future concerns to child safety. This broadened requirement for assessing child maltreatment death has led to a higher total number of reported child maltreatment fatalities in 2007 and 2008 (see pages 33-37 for discussion).

Thank you for your interest in learning more about Wisconsin's child welfare system. It is our hope that the information in this report will inform efforts to prevent abuse and neglect and better protect children who have been maltreated or are in unsafe homes. We appreciate your continued support for our efforts as we strive to ensure that families are stronger as a result of being involved in our child welfare system.

Cyrus A. Behroozi  
Administrator

## **Executive Summary**

In calendar year 2008, county Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare received a total of 56,934 reports from reporters alleging maltreatment of children. Educational personnel, law enforcement, and social service workers accounted for the largest sources of CPS reports. Forty-seven percent of these CPS reports were screened-in by CPS agencies for further assessment resulting in 24,901 CPS initial assessments of families. CPS agencies assessed 39,493 maltreatment reports involving 33,110 children and 44,258 allegations of maltreatment. Some children were involved in more than one report and/or were affected by multiple allegations of maltreatment.

### **Allegations and Findings**

Neglect was the most common type of maltreatment allegation during calendar year 2008, followed by physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Of the total allegations, 5,686 or approximately 15% were substantiated as maltreatment. The maltreatment allegation types accounting for the most substantiated findings during calendar year 2008 were neglect and sexual abuse.

### **Child Victims**

There were 4,865 child victims of maltreatment in 2008. A child is a victim if they had at least one substantiated maltreatment finding at the conclusion of a CPS initial assessment. This represents 3.7 children per 1,000 children in Wisconsin. Females were more likely to be victims than males due to higher rates of sexual abuse. In calendar year 2008, CPS agencies reported 27 children died from substantiated maltreatment.

### **Maltreaters**

Roughly equal number of males and females were maltreaters in 2008. However, males accounted for the majority of maltreaters in sexual abuse cases, while females accounted for the majority of maltreaters in neglect cases. Primary caregivers accounted for 72% of the substantiated maltreatment. The Access and Initial Assessment Standards released in September 2007 allow maltreatment allegations to be substantiated for a child without identifying a specific maltreater.

### **CPS Services**

Of the families involved in CPS initial assessments during calendar year 2008, 20% of families received services from the CPS agency and 15% were referred by the CPS agency to a community resource. During 2008, 2,198 children were removed from their family home and placed in an out-of home placement during the CPS initial assessment in order to ensure child safety.

### **Data Source**

Data for this report is from the electronic Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWiSACWIS). CPS agencies use eWiSACWIS to manage their cases, and due to local flexibility in program operation, there can be significant data variation between counties. The body of the report provides statewide composite data and county-specific detail is in the appendices.

## Introduction

Child Protective Services (CPS) is a specialized field of the Child Welfare System. CPS intervention is warranted whenever there is a report that a child may be unsafe, abused or neglected, or at risk of maltreatment. The purpose of the CPS system is to identify and alter family conditions that make children unsafe or place them at risk for maltreatment. Services provided by CPS agencies include receiving reports of alleged child maltreatment, assessing these reports as needed, implementing plans to keep children safe, and coordinating services for children and families where maltreatment has occurred.

In sum, Wisconsin's CPS programs strive to: (1) protect the health, safety, and welfare of children by encouraging the reporting of suspected child maltreatment; (2) assure that appropriate protective services are provided to unsafe children and their families to protect children from further harm; (3) provide support, counseling, and other services to children and their families to ameliorate the effects of child maltreatment; and (4) promote the well being of the child in his or her home setting, wherever possible, or in another safe and stable placement.

This Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report reflects data collected during calendar year 2008 regarding reports of child maltreatment in Wisconsin. This report has been compiled by the Department of Children and Families to assist state policymakers, service providers and the public in understanding and effectively responding to trends in child maltreatment.

## Structure of Child Protective Services in Wisconsin

CPS agencies are responsible for identifying and addressing conditions affecting child safety in the home for families who come to the attention of these agencies. In Wisconsin, this critical social responsibility is met through a state-supervised, county-administered system, with the exception of Milwaukee County where the state administers the CPS program. Alleged child maltreatment is reported to 71 county social or human services departments in the state and to the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) in Milwaukee County or to local law enforcement agencies. Alleged child maltreatment involving tribal children is also reported to county CPS agencies and the BMCW or to local law enforcement; certain CPS agencies and the BMCW are required to notify the tribe of the referral within 24 hours of its receipt. [Ref. s. 48.981(3)(bm), Stats.] Please refer to **Appendix M** for a complete list of contact information for these county departments.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Definitions

State laws define child abuse and neglect. These definitions provide the basis for persons to report suspected child maltreatment and guide county agencies in their response. Throughout this report, the terms "child maltreatment" and "child abuse and/or neglect" have the same meaning and can be used interchangeably. Refer to **Appendix A** for a list of Wisconsin's child maltreatment related statutes. State laws and policies concerning child maltreatment pertain to children 17 years of age or less, unless otherwise specified. Child maltreatment is generally divided into four basic types: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

**Physical neglect** is defined in the statutes as “failure, refusal or inability on the part of a parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person exercising temporary or permanent control over a child, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.” [Ref. s. 48.981(1)(d), Stats.]

**Physical abuse** is defined as “physical injury inflicted on a child by other than accidental means.” [Ref. s. 48.02(1)(a), Stats.] This includes non-accidental injury inflicted by any other person. “Physical injury includes but is not limited to lacerations, fractured bones, burns, internal injuries, severe or frequent bruising or great bodily harm, as defined in s. 939.22(14).” [Ref. s. 48.02(14g), Stats.]

**Sexual abuse** is defined by cross-referencing several crimes in the Wisconsin Criminal Code section of the statutes (see **Appendix A**). In summary, sexual abuse includes the following:

- sexual intercourse or sexual contact with a child 15 years of age or less;
- sexual intercourse or sexual contact with a 16- or 17-year old child without his or her consent;
- inducement of a child to engage in sexually explicit conduct in order to videotape, photograph, etc., that child or videotaping, photographing, etc., a child for such purposes, or producing, distributing, selling or otherwise profiting from such a videotape, photograph, etc.;
- encouragement by or permission of a person responsible for a child's welfare for a child to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of videotaping, photographing, etc.;
- causing a child to view or listen to sexual activity;
- exposing genitals to a child; or
- permitting or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution.

Allegations associated with any other form of sexual abuse not specified above are identified as “other sexual abuse.”

**Emotional abuse** is defined as “emotional damage for which the child’s parent, guardian or legal custodian has neglected, refused or been unable for reasons other than poverty to obtain the necessary treatment or to take steps to ameliorate the symptoms.” [Ref. s. 48.02(1)(gm), Stats.]

The definitions of child neglect and emotional abuse involve failure on the part of parents or other persons responsible for a child to provide necessary care for a child. The definitions of physical abuse and sexual abuse include harm to a child by any person. Therefore, physical or sexual abuse of a child can include assaults by a parent, strangers, persons unrelated to a child’s family, or peers. In cases where someone outside of the family harms the child, CPS interventions with the family do not provide all of the solutions.

In many of these cases, in addition to the CPS assessment, law enforcement is involved and criminal prosecution of the person who harmed the child may occur. However, in most child abuse and neglect cases, the parties involved are family

members and solutions involve CPS interventions with the family. In some of these cases, court intervention is required to assure safety for the child and to order services for the family.

Wisconsin statutes define unborn child abuse as another form of child maltreatment. Due to the unique nature of this maltreatment type, unborn child abuse data is excluded from the body of this report and presented separately in **Appendix B**.

## **Overview of the Child Protective Services Process**

CPS agencies follow numerous state and federal policies and practice standards as they strive to keep children safe from harm. The CPS process can be divided into three parts: CPS access, CPS initial assessment, and CPS ongoing services. The section of this report entitled, the Child Protective Services Process provides further detail about the first two parts of the CPS process. The section of this report entitled Services to Families addresses the third. **Appendix C** shows an overview of the CPS process in Wisconsin, with a flowchart illustrating the different paths a child maltreatment report may take.

During CPS access, the CPS agency receives information about suspected child abuse and/or neglect from community sources, i.e. reporters. Based on the information from the reporter, the CPS agency must determine if the information constitutes an allegation of child maltreatment or threatened harm as defined by Wisconsin statutes. If an allegation rises to the level indicated by statutory definitions of maltreatment, the referral is screened-in for further assessment, and if it does not, the report may be screened-out. At this stage, screened-out CPS reports are no longer part of the CPS process. However, the CPS agency may still refer the family to community services or offer to provide voluntary agency services to address family concerns not related to child safety.

All screened-in CPS reports move on to the next stage of the CPS process, CPS initial assessment. Based on all the information gathered as part of the CPS access process including the severity of the maltreatment alleged by the reporter and level of danger to the child, the CPS agency designates a response time, ranging from an immediate response to within 5 days, by which an initial face-to-face contact with the child/family must occur.

The primary purpose of the CPS initial assessment is to assure the child's safety and determine whether the child and family are in need of services to keep the child safe. The CPS initial assessment generally involves interviews with the child, family, and other individuals closely involved with the report. Based on information gathered through the CPS initial assessment, the agency determines whether one or more types of abuse has occurred. The CPS agency must make a finding for all allegations unless critical information sources are unavailable for interview.

In addition, the information gathered during the CPS initial assessment is used to make a decision about child safety. If a child is unsafe, the CPS agency must develop a plan to address child safety and open the case for ongoing CPS services. Depending on the situation, the family involved may voluntarily participate in CPS

services or be court-ordered to participate. If the safety decision is that the child or children present in the home are safe, the case may be closed. The CPS agency may still offer/refer the family to other community services or voluntary services within the agency to address other concerns not related to child safety.

## **Key Terms**

This section provides a brief review of key CPS terms. Further contextual understanding of these terms can be gained by reading the narrative in each section of this report.

**Alleged Maltreater:** A person, in a screened-in referral, who is asserted to have committed one or more maltreatment acts against one or more children. The same person may be counted twice as an alleged maltreater if they are in different screened-in referrals during the calendar year.

**Alleged Victim:** A child with one or more maltreatment allegations in a screened-in referral that have not yet been assessed. The same child may be counted twice as an alleged victim if they are in different screened-in referrals during the calendar year.

**CPS Agency:** The county social or human service department or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare responsible for addressing concerns related to child safety in the home for families who come to the attention of these agencies.

**CPS Report:** Each child identified in a screened-in referral as an alleged victim of maltreatment or threatened maltreatment is considered one CPS report. One CPS report can have multiple allegations involving the same child.

**Imminent Danger:** The belief that dangerous family behaviors, conditions, or situations will remain active or become active without delay, thereby threatening a child's safety.

**Initial Assessment:** A comprehensive assessment conducted in response to reports of alleged child maltreatment. A CPS initial assessment is completed in order to: assess and analyze present and impending danger threats to child safety; take action, when necessary to control threats to child safety; determine the need for CPS ongoing services (court-ordered or voluntary); determine whether maltreatment occurred; and assist families in identifying useful community resources. The term CPS initial assessment includes the CPS investigation process as defined in s. 48.981(3)(c), Stats.

**Initial Assessment Disposition:** The action taken by the CPS agency on the family's case (e.g. case opened for CPS services, case closed) as a result of a decision regarding child safety and initial assessment finding.

**Initial Assessment Finding:** The overall maltreatment finding for the family, upon completion of the CPS initial assessment, of whether abuse was substantiated,

unsubstantiated, or unable to locate sources of information and/or subjects of the report - unsubstantiated.

**Maltreater:** A person, who after the CPS initial assessment of a screened-in referral, has had at least one allegation of child maltreatment found to be substantiated by the CPS agency. The same maltreater may be counted twice if they had at least one substantiated or likely to occur allegation in different CPS initial assessments during the calendar year.

**Maltreatment Allegation:** An assertion of one type of child abuse or neglect involving one or more alleged maltreater(s) for a single alleged victim. For the purposes of this report, maltreatment allegations are one of five types: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse.

**Maltreatment Finding:** The CPS agency's determination of whether a maltreatment allegation has already occurred or not (substantiated or unsubstantiated). If critical sources are unavailable for interview and it is impossible to make a finding, the maltreatment finding is "not able to locate sources of information and/or subjects of the report – unsubstantiated."

**Reporter:** Person who contacts a CPS agency with information regarding alleged maltreatment of a child or children.

**Safety Assessment and Analysis:** Information gathered by the agency during the CPS initial assessment and throughout the life of the case pertaining to whether the conditions present in the home make the child/children living in the home safe or unsafe. The results of the safety assessment and a safety analysis of the family environment are used to inform the safety decision.

**Safety Decision:** The CPS agency's determination of whether a child is safe or unsafe based on the safety assessment and analysis. If the home is unsafe, the CPS agency implements a safety plan to assure the child is safe and protected. If the home is safe, the CPS agency may refer the family for voluntary CPS services or other community services, as needed.

**Screened-in Referral:** One or more allegations of child maltreatment in the referral (which may include one or more children in a family) is deemed as rising to the level of maltreatment or threat of maltreatment as defined by Wisconsin statutes and therefore must be assessed.

**Screened-out Referral:** All allegations in the referral are deemed as not rising to the level of maltreatment or threat of maltreatment as defined by Wisconsin statutes. No further assessment of the allegation is required. The family may be referred for voluntary CPS services or other appropriate community services.

**Substantiation:** The information gathered during the CPS initial assessment provides a preponderance of evidence (that is, the proof shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not) that the maltreatment allegation made in the CPS report or identified during a CPS initial assessment has occurred. In general, a known maltreater is substantiated for the maltreatment, however, an allegation can also be substantiated when the maltreater is unknown or not identified.

**Victim:** A child who had at least one of their maltreatment allegations found to be substantiated as a result of a CPS initial assessment. The same child may be counted twice as a victim if they had at least one substantiated maltreatment allegation in more than one CPS initial assessment during the calendar year.

## Child Protective Services Process

This section explains the process counties undertake when they receive an allegation of child abuse and/or neglect. Please refer to **Appendix C** for a diagram of this process.

### Child Protective Services Access

The Child Protective Services (CPS) process begins when the CPS agency receives information regarding suspected child abuse and/or neglect from a reporter. This initial step is known as CPS Access. For the purposes of this report, the information received by the CPS agency pertaining to alleged child abuse and/or neglect is called a referral. The information a CPS agency gathers from a reporter may contain information about more than one child, more than one maltreater, and one or more maltreatment allegations for each child/maltreater.

Upon receiving a referral, the CPS agency must first determine if the information constitutes an allegation of child maltreatment or threatened harm as defined by Wisconsin statutes. Not all referrals received by agencies are appropriate for a CPS initial assessment. Although the reporters may have concerns for a child or family, the issues presented may not rise to the level indicated by statutory definitions of maltreatment. These referrals are generally not accepted by agencies and therefore, are not subject to a CPS initial assessment. These referrals are referred to as 'screened-out'. Referrals may also be screened-out if there is insufficient information reported to determine if the information constitutes maltreatment or if multiple reporters call about the same child and maltreatment. Families with screened-out referrals may still be offered voluntary services from the agency or referred to other appropriate community services.

If the referral is accepted, or 'screened-in', as an appropriate concern related to child maltreatment or the risk of child maltreatment, the agency must complete a CPS initial assessment. Depending on the severity of the abuse and level of imminent danger to the child, the CPS agency designates a time, ranging from an immediate response to within 5 days, by which initial face-to-face contact with the child/family must occur. The CPS initial assessment must be completed within 60 days. In response to reports of alleged maltreatment by individuals outside the family, the CPS role is to support the parents and other appropriate adults in meeting the child's needs. Respect for the privacy, values and rights of each family member underlie all aspects of assessment procedures.

As shown in Table 1, during calendar year 2008, CPS agencies received a total of 56,934 referrals; 30,234 of these were screened-out and 26,700 were screened-in. All screened-in referrals were subsequently assessed by the CPS agency, and are the subject of the next section of this report, CPS initial assessment. **Appendix E** shows a breakdown of referrals and screening decisions by county for calendar year 2008. Appendix E also shows screening decisions made on non-CPS reports (service referrals) by county.

**Table 1** Statewide Referrals and Screening Decisions, 2008

	Number of Referrals	Screened-out Referrals	Percent Screened-out	Screened-in Referrals	Percent Screened-in
<b>State Total</b>	56,934	30,234	53%	26,700	47%

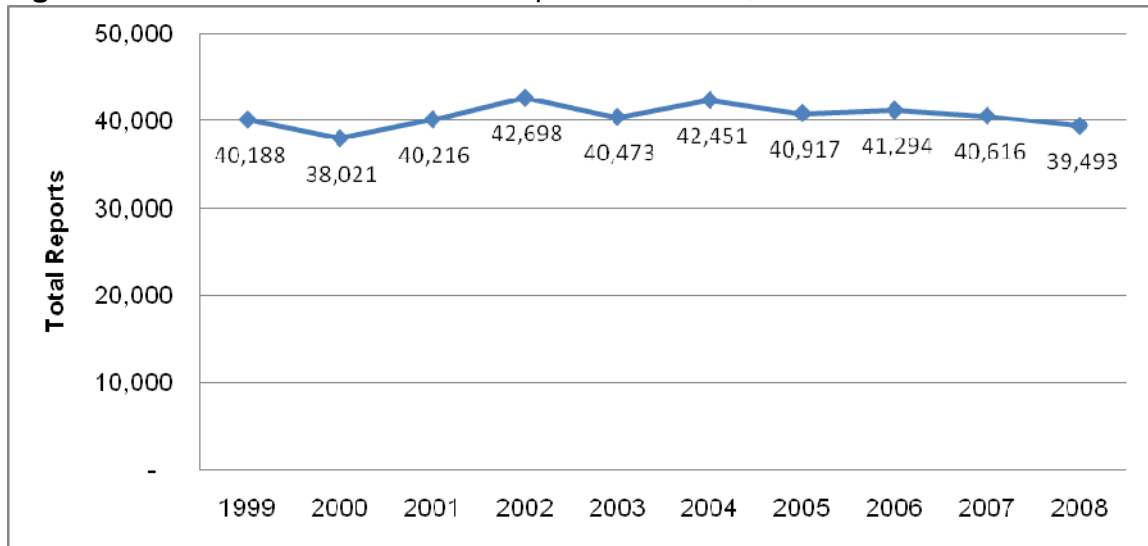
A CPS report is created for each child who is identified in a screened-in referral as an alleged victim of child maltreatment or threatened maltreatment. Notice that the number of CPS reports (39,493) is greater than the number of screened-in referrals (26,700) because one referral may include information about multiple children, however, each child in the referral is counted as a unique CPS report. For example, a referral from a community reporter may allege maltreatment against three children in a family. For purposes of this report, the CPS agency received 1 referral (the phone contact by the reporter) but 3 CPS reports (three children each with one or more maltreatment allegations). Table 2 shows the number of CPS reports per 1,000 children in Wisconsin during calendar year 2008. Out of a population of 1,000 Wisconsin children, about 30 children were involved in a report of alleged maltreatment in 2008. **Appendix F** lists the total number of CPS reports and CPS reports per 1,000 children by county during 2008.

**Table 2** CPS Reports Per 1,000 Children, 2008

	Child Population (Ages 0-17)*	Screened-in Referrals	Number of CPS Reports	CPS Reports per 1,000 Children
<b>State Total</b>	1,314,412	26,700	39,493	30.0

\*Source: Easy Access to Juvenile Populations, <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

Figure 1 displays the total number of CPS reports received by CPS agencies from 1999 through 2008. The number of CPS reports has fluctuated between 38,000 and 43,000 reports. The CPS reporting rate has remained fairly constant over the last five years at about 30 out of 1,000 children in Wisconsin involved in a CPS report of alleged maltreatment in a given year.

**Figure 1** Total Number of CPS Reports Statewide, 1999-2008

### Child Protective Services Initial Assessment

The primary purpose of the CPS initial assessment is to assure the child's safety and determine whether the child and family are in need of any services to help keep the child safe. The CPS initial assessment process does not result in establishing legal culpability – instead the case is referred to law enforcement and possibly the courts for that purpose. The CPS initial assessment must be conducted in accordance with the Child Protective Service Access and Initial Assessment Standards released in September 2007. These standards recognize that the CPS role must differ in cases of familial and non-familial maltreatment.

In cases of maltreatment involving primary caretakers, the CPS initial assessment includes an interview with and observation of the child, a visit to the family home, an interview with any siblings and an interview with the child's caregiver(s). Interviews may also be conducted with other persons that have contact with the child. Decisions that must be made during the CPS initial assessment include: whether the child is safe; whether risk conditions are present; whether maltreatment occurred; who the maltreater(s) was (if they can be identified), and whether the family is in need of services to assure the safety of the child. Many elements enter into the decision-making process including: the child's ability to function and communicate; parent/caregiver protective capacities; physical evidence; overall family functioning; and the absence or presence of stressful family circumstances.

Upon completion of a CPS initial assessment, the agency must determine whether child maltreatment has occurred. Initial assessment findings for allegations where maltreatment has occurred are either "substantiated" or "unsubstantiated." Additionally, a third finding may be used: "not able to locate sources of information and/or subjects of the report – unsubstantiated." This finding is to be used only when the agency is unable to locate critical family members or others involved in the report, making it impossible to gather the information needed to make a determination.

Beginning in 1996, "substantiated" cases refer only to cases in which CPS staff determines, based upon a preponderance of the evidence that child maltreatment has occurred. A preponderance of evidence is a lower standard of evidence than that needed for proof in juvenile or criminal court procedures. The agency may also determine that maltreatment has occurred without identifying a particular person that has maltreated or will maltreat a child. Therefore, the agency has the authority to respond to children in need of protection or services even when a specific maltreater cannot be positively identified. In all cases, a substantiated maltreatment finding is not necessary for a family to be offered services.

During the CPS initial assessment, the CPS agency must also assess whether the child or children in the home are in danger of child maltreatment. If the child or children are unsafe, regardless of the substantiation decision, the CPS agency creates a safety plan to control identified threats to child safety. The safety decision and services offered to the family as a result of the CPS initial assessment are the focus of the section of this report entitled 'Services to Families' (page 42).

Table 3 shows the statewide CPS initial assessment workload for calendar year 2008. The number of CPS initial assessments (24,901) is less than the number of children (33,110) because one CPS initial assessment is completed per family. **Appendix G** shows the number of CPS initial assessments completed by each county during 2007. Notice that the number of children (33,110) involved in a CPS initial assessment is less than the number of CPS reports (39,493) found in Table 2. If a CPS agency receives multiple reports containing different maltreatment allegations but concerning the same child, these reports can be assessed during one CPS initial assessment.

**Table 3** CPS Initial Assessment Workload, 2008

Number of CPS Initial Assessments	24,901
Related to →	44,258 Maltreatment Allegations
Involving →	33,110 Children

Table 4 shows the statewide substantiation rate (15%) for calendar year 2008. The substantiation rate is the proportion of maltreatment allegations that were found to be substantiated after the conclusion of the CPS initial assessment. The substantiation rate is calculated by dividing all substantiated maltreatment allegations for calendar year 2008 by the total number of CPS reports. **Appendix G** shows the substantiation rate by county for 2008.

**Table 4** Statewide Substantiation Rate, 2008

	<b>Number of CPS Reports</b>	<b>Maltreatment Substantiation Count</b>	<b>Maltreatment Substantiation Rate</b>
<b>State Total</b>	39,493	5,868	15%

Table 5 shows the child victimization rate for calendar year 2008. The child victimization rate is the number of children who were victims of substantiated maltreatment out of a population of 1,000 children. The child victimization rate is calculated by dividing the total number of children who were victims of substantiated maltreatment by Wisconsin's total child population. **Appendix H** shows the child victimization rate for 2008 by county.

**Table 5** Statewide Child Victimization Rate, 2008

	<b>Child Population (Ages 0-17)*</b>	<b>Number of Child Victims</b>	<b>Child Victims per 1,000 Population</b>
<b>State Total</b>	1,314,412	4,865	3.7

\*Source: Easy Access to Juvenile Populations, <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

Figure 2 depicts the trend in substantiation rates in Wisconsin from 1998 through 2008. The following policy changes and corresponding training are believed to have contributed to the decline in substantiation rates since 1997. First, a 1996 federal amendment to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act required all states to implement formal appeal processes for maltreaters substantiated of child maltreatment. Second, the Wisconsin Caregiver law was implemented in 1998. The Wisconsin Caregiver Law requires background and criminal history checks of certain personnel who are responsible for the care and safety of children and vulnerable adults. Under this law, a substantiation of child maltreatment can bar or create barriers to employment for individuals who wish to work with children and/or vulnerable adults. To comply with these federal and state law changes, the "Case Finding Determinations in Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect" policy was released and training was provided on making maltreatment findings according to statutory definitions and the appeals process. It is likely that these policy changes resulted in increased consistency in the interpretation and application of a substantiated finding, leading to a decline in the number of substantiated maltreatment allegations, particularly in cases of alleged neglect and more moderate cases of alleged physical abuse.

In addition, 2005 Wisconsin Act 232 eliminated the requirement, effective October 2006, that CPS agencies complete a CPS initial assessment in situations where the alleged maltreater is not a caregiver for the children. These situations may be referred to law enforcement and the family may be offered services. Due to this law change, there was a significant decline in the number of non-caregiver CPS

initial assessments in 2007. Non-caregivers tend to comprise a significant proportion of sexual abuse cases and the number of sexual abuse substantiations also declined by 44% from 2,871 in 2006 to 1,814 in 2007 to 1,594 in 2008. Non-caregiver sexual abuse generally involves sexual contact to a minor by peers, family friends, or strangers. This law change also contributed to the decline in the substantiation rate from 2006 to 2008, the first full year that the impact of the legislative change can be seen in the data.

**Figure 2** Statewide Substantiation Rates, 1999-2008

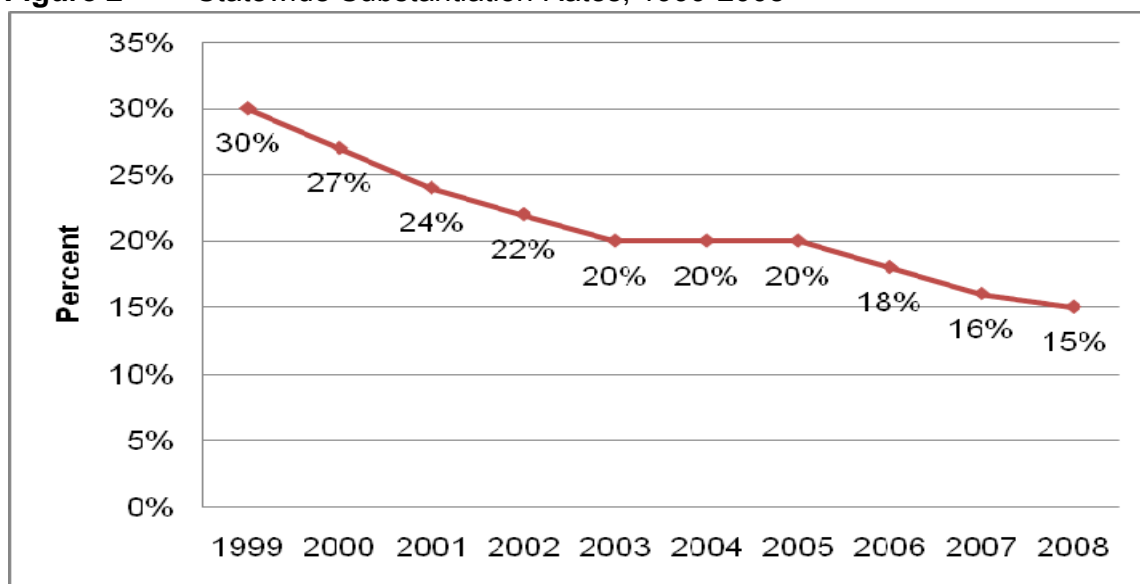
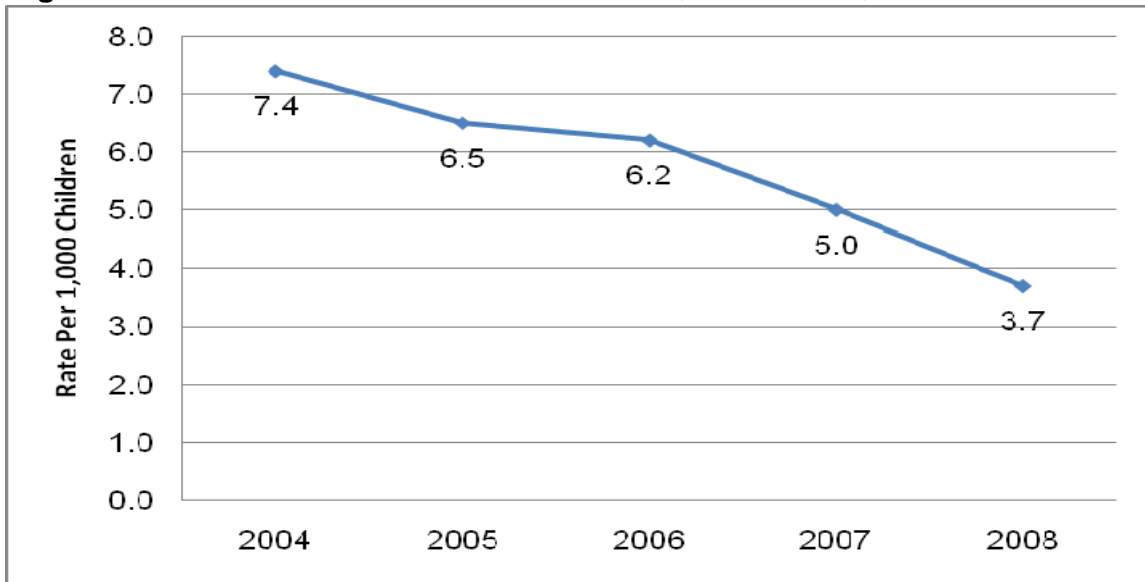


Figure 3 displays the child victimization rate in Wisconsin over a five year period. Starting with the 2005 Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report, a child is counted as a victim once for every CPS initial assessment he/she was in where he/she had at least one substantiated or abuse likely to occur allegation. The previous method used to calculate this rate in the 2004 and earlier editions of the Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report used total substantiated allegations rather than child victims. This approach elevated the victimization rate as the same child may have had multiple substantiated allegations. The decline in the victimization rate from 2006 to 2007 was also impacted by a policy change in the new Access and Initial Assessment Standards released in September 2007. The abuse likely to occur allegation and finding was removed as a maltreatment type. The full effect of this legislative change can be seen in the 2008 data.

Present danger and impending danger threats to child safety describe behaviors and conditions that indicate a child might be seriously harmed in the immediate to very near future. Reports that, taken together with other information available to CPS, support a suspicion that a child may be unsafe must be screened in. These reports are not separated out from the rest of the data.

**Figure 3** Statewide Victimization Rates Per 1,000 Children, 2004-2008

**NOTE:** The 2004 victimization rates were adjusted to include likely to occur allegations.

Table 6 examines maltreatment allegations by maltreatment type (neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse) and maltreatment finding for 2008. For specific allegations of maltreatment, the maltreatment finding may be substantiated, unsubstantiated, or not able to locate sources of information and/or subjects of the report – unsubstantiated. **Appendix I** shows a county-by county breakdown.

**Table 6** Total Maltreatment Allegations by Type and Finding, 2008

Maltreatment Type	Maltreatment Finding			Total
	S	U	N	
Neglect	3,063	19,975	879	23,917
Physical Abuse	1,175	11,274	284	12,733
Sexual Abuse	1,594	4,842	305	6,741
Emotional Abuse	36	816	15	867
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,868</b>	<b>36,907</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>44,258</b>

**S=Substantiated U=Unsubstantiated N= Not Able to Locate Information Sources/Report Subjects - Unsubstantiated**

Figure 4 shows the maltreatment findings from all CPS initial assessments by maltreatment type for calendar year 2008. The figure displays the maltreatment types with the most to least allegations from left to right. Thus, (1) neglect is the most alleged type of maltreatment, followed by (2) physical abuse, (3) sexual abuse, and finally (4) emotional abuse. The figure also shows the maltreatment type with the most substantiations: (1) neglect, followed by (2) sexual abuse, (3) physical abuse, and finally (4) emotional abuse.

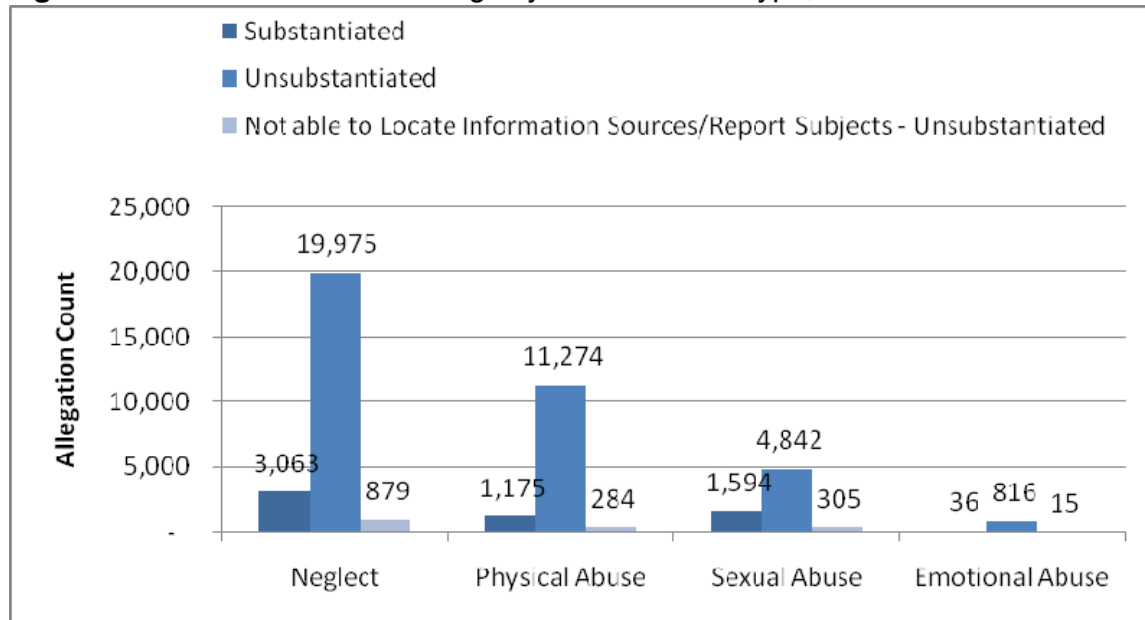
**Figure 4** Maltreatment Findings by Maltreatment Type, 2008

Table 7 answers the question - given all the allegations of one type of maltreatment, how many of those allegations were substantiated as part of the CPS initial assessment? Refer to Table 6 for the allegation counts used to calculate the maltreatment type substantiation percents. For example, the physical abuse maltreatment substantiation percent was calculated by dividing the total number of substantiated physical abuse allegations (1,175) by the total number of physical abuse allegations (12,733). **Appendix J** shows the substantiation percent within maltreatment type by county for 2008.

**Table 7** Statewide Maltreatment Allegation Substantiation Percent By Maltreatment Type, 2008

	Neglect Substantiation Rate	Physical Abuse Substantiation Rate	Sexual Abuse Substantiation Rate	Emotional Abuse Substantiation Rate
<b>State Total</b>	13%	9%	24%	4%

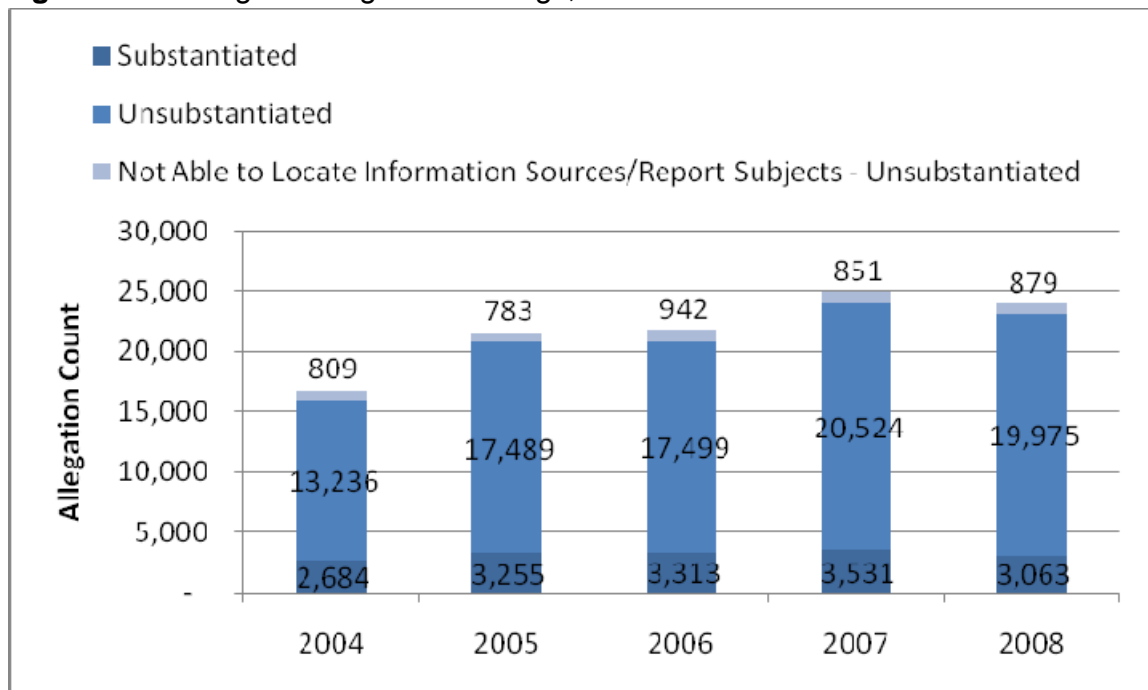
The following figures (Figures 5-8) depict the maltreatment findings for each maltreatment type for 2004 through 2008. Neglect allegations increased substantially in 2005 and again in 2007, with a slight decrease in 2008. The increases in allegations resulted in a significant increase in neglect substantiations in 2005 and a slight increase in neglect substantiations in 2007. Changes in Wisconsin's data entry system have impacted usage of neglect allegations and substantiations. Please refer to **Appendix D** for further information regarding data interpretation.

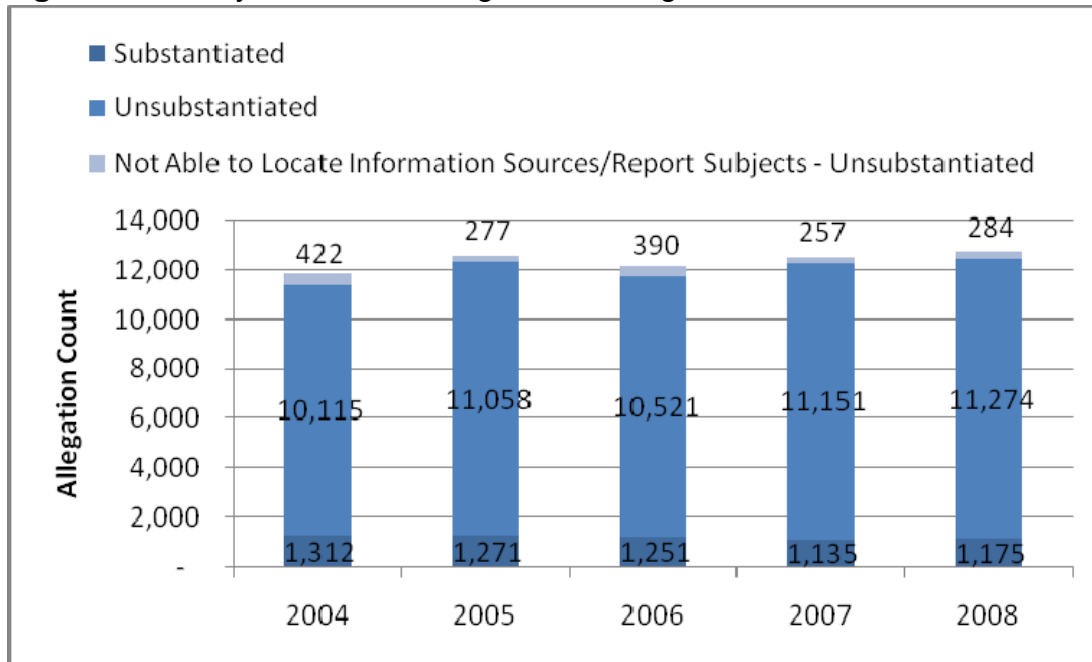
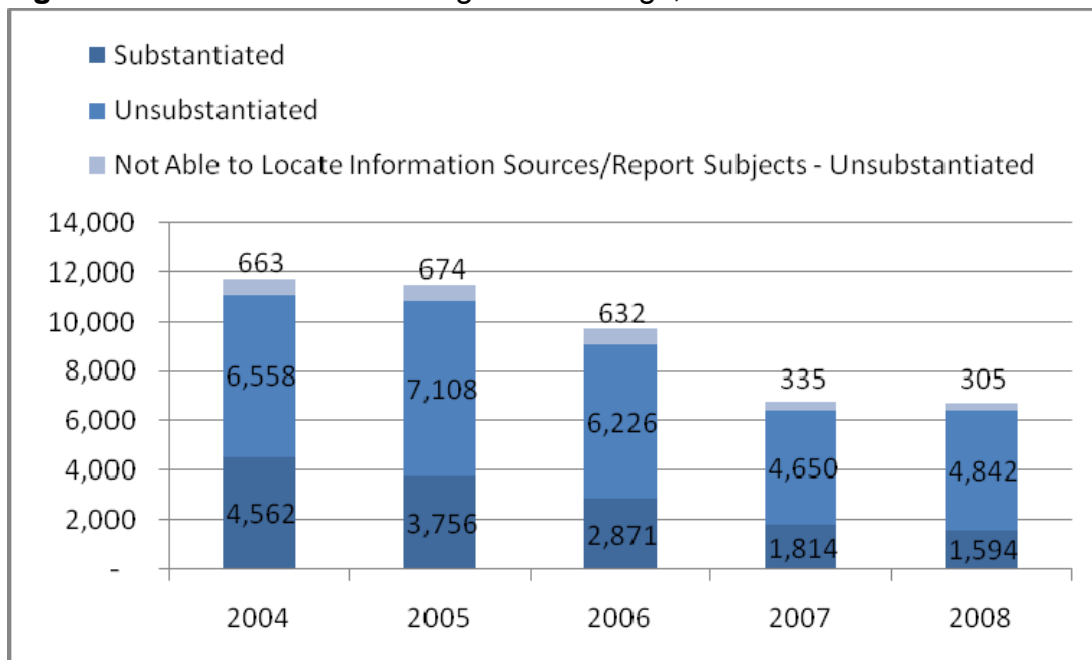
The number of physical abuse allegations from 2005 to 2008 has remained relatively stable; however, the number of substantiated allegations of physical abuse has slowly declined until 2008 when there was a slight increase from 2007.

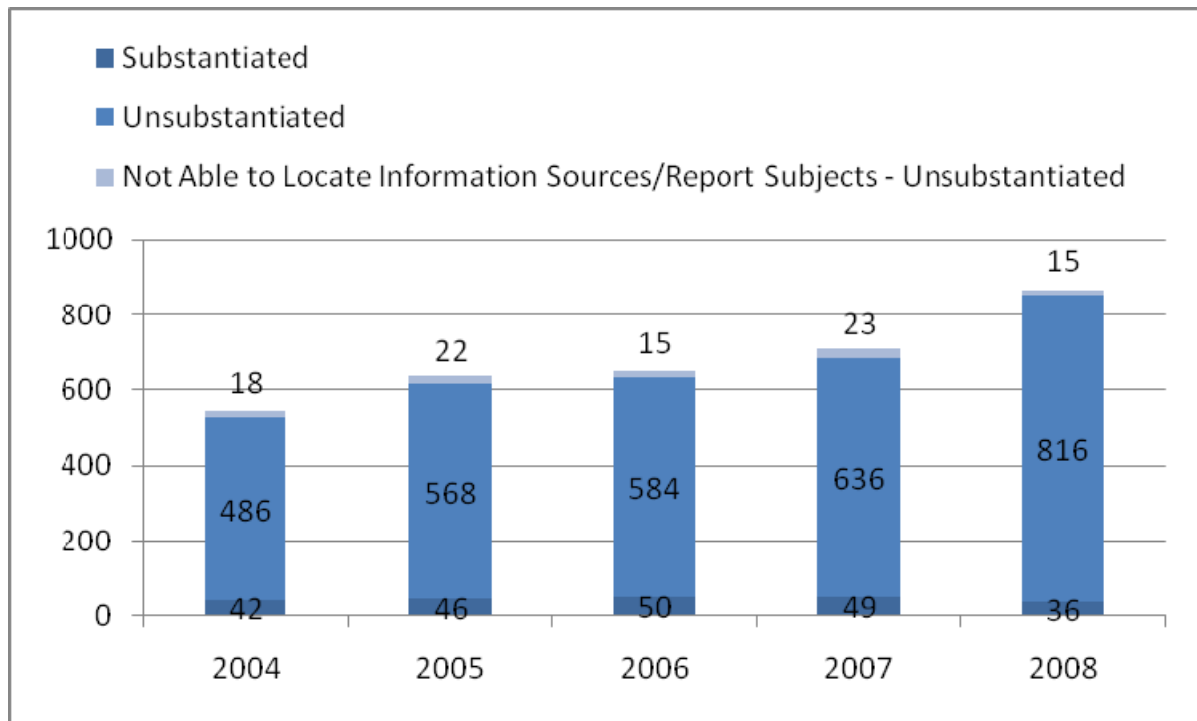
The number of sexual abuse allegations and substantiations has steadily declined since 2004. From 2006 to 2007, the number of sexual abuse allegations decreased by 30% and the number of sexual abuse substantiations decreased by 37%. 2005 Wisconsin Act 232 eliminated the requirement, effective October 2006, that CPS agencies complete a CPS initial assessment in situations where the alleged maltreater is not a caregiver for the children. As non-caregivers comprise a significant proportion of sexual abuse cases, this statutory change contributed significantly to the decline in the number of sexual abuse allegations and substantiations in 2006 and 2007. There was an additional 12% decline in substantiations from 2007 to 2008.

Emotional abuse allegations have increased steadily since 2004, with a 59% increase in allegations over that time period. During the same period, substantiations peaked in 2006, with a 28% decline in substantiations from 2006 to 2008. Still, emotional abuse remains a small portion of total allegations assessed and the numbers are so small that minor variations tend to change the percentages.

**Figure 5** Neglect Allegation Findings, 2004-2008



**Figure 6** Physical Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008**Figure 7** Sexual Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008

**Figure 8** Emotional Abuse Allegation Findings, 2004-2008

## Reporters

Reporters are persons who contact CPS agencies with information regarding alleged maltreatment of a child. This section reflects data on the reporters who made the reports received by CPS agencies (both screened-in and screened-out referrals) during calendar year 2008.

### Reporter's Relationship to Alleged Child Victim

Certain individuals whose employment brings them into contact with children are required by law to report any suspected child maltreatment seen in the course of their professional duties. These individuals are referred to as **mandated reporters**. However, anyone who suspects a child is being maltreated may make such a report. Persons making referrals in good faith are immune from criminal or civil liability. Wisconsin's CPS delivery system requires any concerned individual to report suspected child maltreatment directly to the local CPS agency or law enforcement. Please refer to **Appendix L** for a list of where to report in your area. Any referral of alleged child maltreatment received by law enforcement officials must subsequently be referred to the local CPS agency. More information about reporting suspected child maltreatment is available on the Internet at <http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/index.HTM>.

Table 8 displays the count of all screened-in and screened-out referrals by the type of reporter during calendar year 2008. The table lists the reporter types in descending order from the most frequent reporters to the least frequent reporters.

**Table 8** Referrals (Screened-in and Screened-out) by Reporter's Relationship to Alleged Child Victim, 2008

<b>Reporter</b>	<b>Count of Referrals</b>	<b>Percent of Total Referrals</b>
Educational Personnel	9,588	17%
Social Service Worker	8,732	15%
Legal/Law Enforcement	8,729	15%
Parent	5,772	10%
Other	4,585	8%
Relative	3,993	7%
Mental Health Personnel	3,707	7%
Medical Personnel	3,264	6%
Anonymous	2,428	4%
Neighbor/Friend	2,418	4%
Unknown or Missing	2,418	4%
Child Care Provider	855	2%
Alleged Victim	272	<1%
Foster Care Provider	157	<1%
Alleged Maltreater	16	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,934</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Note:** For purposes of this report, all mandated reporter professions have been condensed into categories.

Table 9 shows the types of maltreatment allegations that were screened-in for a CPS initial assessment by reporter type. The number of allegations (44,258) exceeds the total number of screened-in referrals (26,700) because reporters may have made more than one allegation of maltreatment per child in the screened-in CPS report. The reporters are listed in descending order, from the reporters who made the most maltreatment allegations to those who made the least maltreatment allegations.

**Table 9** Total Maltreatment Allegations (Screened-in Referrals Only) by Reporter's Relationship to Alleged Child Victim, 2008

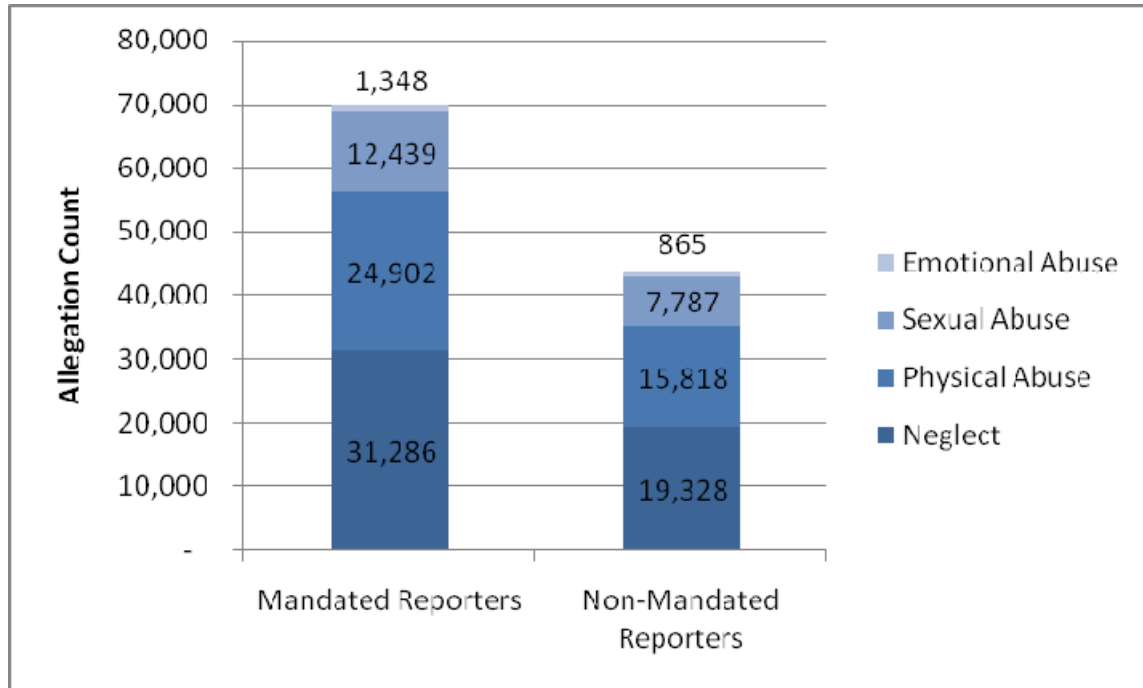
Mandated?	Reporter Category	Maltreatment Allegation Type				Grand Total
		Neglect	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse	
Yes	Legal/Law Enforcement	4194	1728	1361	83	7366
Yes	Social Services Personnel	3658	2007	1219	121	7005
Yes	Educational Personnel	2059	3289	911	164	6423
No	Other	2371	764	459	84	3678
No	Parent	1909	960	650	97	3616
No	Other Relative	2554	655	285	87	3581
No	Anonymous	2236	382	142	45	2805
No	Friend/Neighbor	1934	432	170	42	2578
Yes	Medical Personnel	1028	713	410	24	2175
No	Unknown or missing	1021	620	400	28	2069
Yes	Mental Health Personnel	625	725	595	73	2018
Yes	Child Care Provider	197	311	78	9	595
No	Alleged Victim	98	104	36	10	248
No	Foster Care Provider	22	39	21		82
No	Alleged Maltreater	11	4	4		19
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>23917</b>	<b>12733</b>	<b>6741</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>44258</b>

**Note:** For purposes of this report, all mandated reporter professions have been condensed into categories.

Figure 9 shows total maltreatment allegations (screened-in referrals only) made by mandated versus non-mandated reporters by the maltreatment type alleged. As shown in Table 9, the category mandated reporters includes legal/law enforcement personnel, social service workers, educational personnel, medical personnel, mental health workers, and child care providers (a full list of mandated reporters by professions is found in s. 48.981(2), Stats., or visit <http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/progserv/manrpts.HTM>). All other reporter categories are considered non-mandated.

Mandated reporters made more total allegations than non-mandated reporters and accounted for the majority of each type of allegation.

**Figure 9** Total Maltreatment Allegations by Maltreatment Type (Screened-in Referrals Only), Mandated versus Non-Mandated Reporters, 2008

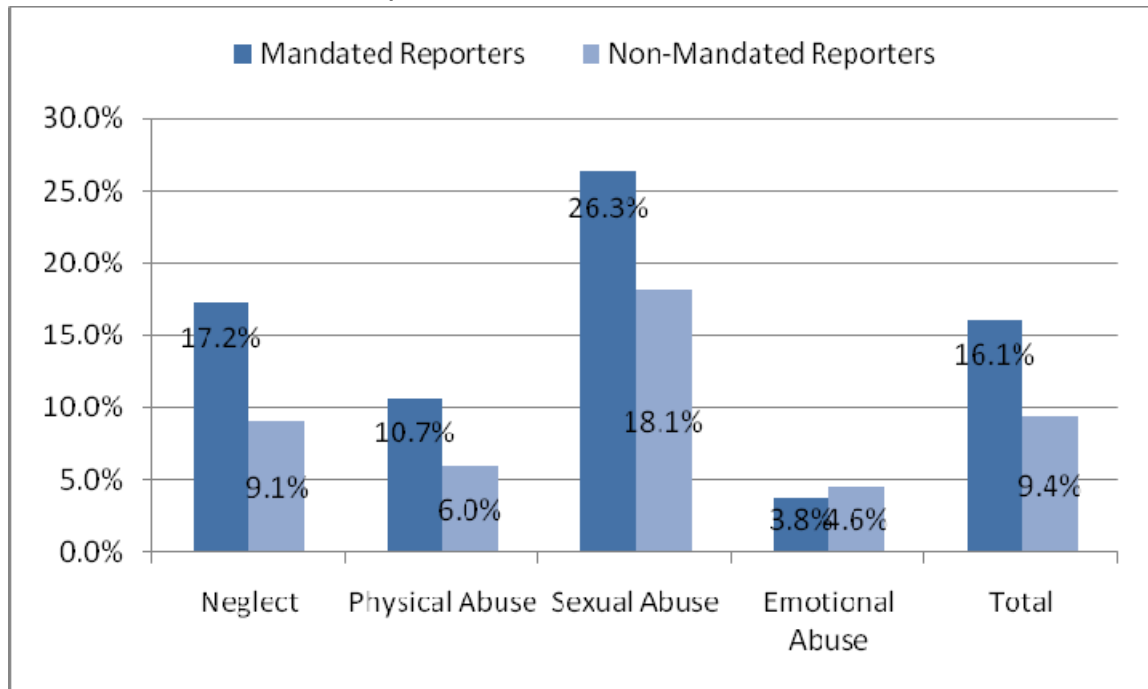


### Reporter's Allegations and Subsequent Findings

This section examines the question: of all the maltreatment allegations which reporters made during calendar year 2008 (screened-in reports only), how many of the allegations were found to be substantiated or likely to occur by the CPS agency after they completed the CPS initial assessment?

Figure 10 compares the categories of mandated versus non-mandated reporters, showing the proportion of their total maltreatment allegations which were later found substantiated after CPS initial assessment. Across all categories of maltreatment except sexual abuse, a higher percentage of the mandated reporter's total maltreatment allegations were found to be substantiated after CPS initial assessment than non-mandated reporter's maltreatment allegations. Mandated reporters are more educated on child maltreatment reporting protocol so they are less likely to report situations that do not meet the definition of child maltreatment than non-mandated reporters.

**Figure 10** Percentage of Reporter's Total Maltreatment Allegations Found Substantiated After CPS Initial Assessment, Mandated versus Non-Mandated Reporters, 2008



**Note:** The category mandated reporters includes legal/law enforcement personnel, social service workers, educational personnel, medical personnel, mental health workers, and child care providers. All other reporter categories are considered non-mandated.

## Victims

A child is considered a maltreatment victim when the CPS agency identifies that at least one maltreatment allegation was found to be substantiated upon completion of the CPS initial assessment. Therefore, if a child is a victim of substantiated neglect and physical abuse in the same CPS initial assessment, they are counted as a victim once. However, if the same child was involved in two or more CPS initial assessments (for example, one in January and one in October), in which he/she had at least one substantiated maltreatment allegation, they are counted more than once. Based on this method, there were 4,865 victims of substantiated maltreatment in 2008.

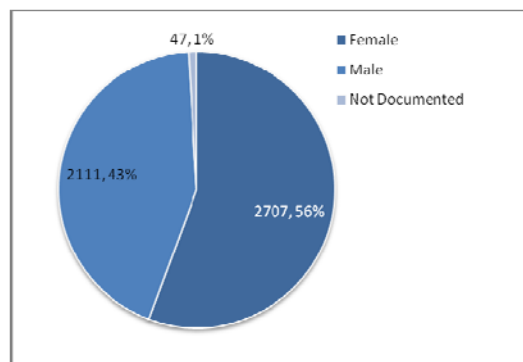
### Characteristics of Maltreated Children

#### Gender

Figure 11 displays calendar year 2008 victims by frequency and proportion according to their gender. In 2008, more females were the victims of child maltreatment than were males. Table 10 displays the child victimization rate by gender for calendar year 2008. The victimization rate by gender is calculated by dividing the number of female victims in 2008 by the Wisconsin female child population (ages 0-17), and by dividing the count of male victims in 2008 by the

Wisconsin child male population (ages 0-17).

**Figure 11** Gender of Victims, 2008



In 2008, females comprised a disproportionate share of the victims given their number in the Wisconsin child population.

**Table 10** Child Victimization Rate by Gender, 2007

Gender	Child Population (Ages 0-17)*	Count of Victims	Child Victims Per 1,000 Population
Females	642,153	2,707	4.2
Males	672,259	2,111	3.1

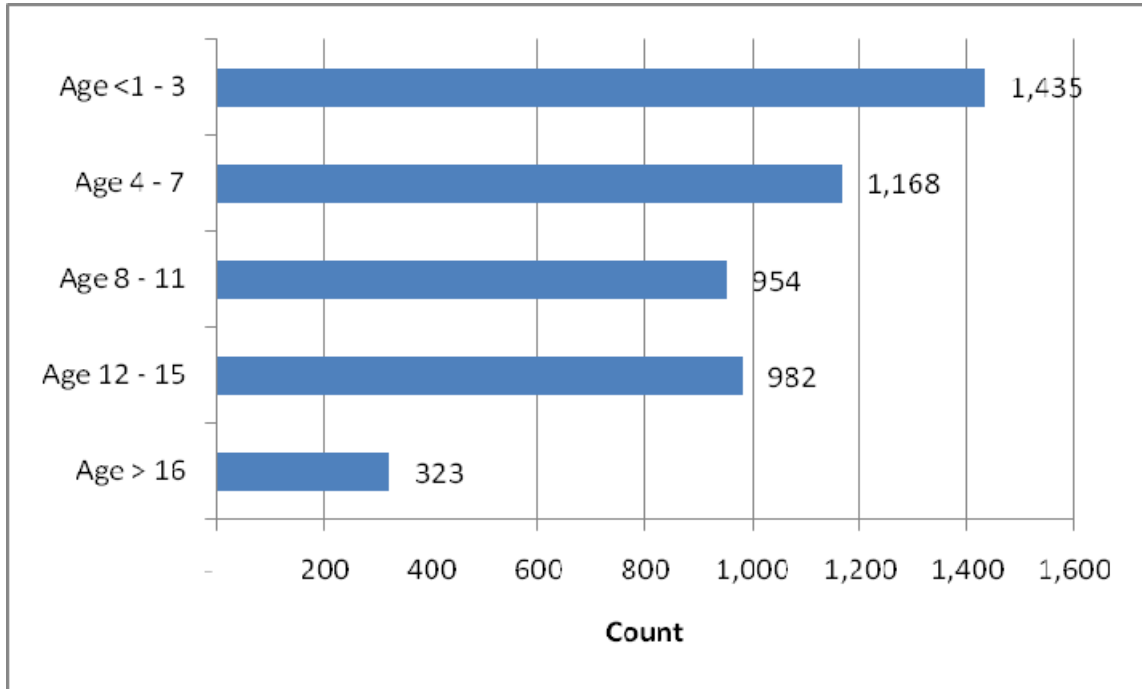
\*Source: Easy Access to Juvenile Populations, <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

**NOTE:** 47 victims are missing from the gender counts because their gender was not reported.

Age

Figure 12 displays the count of victims by age group for calendar year 2008. In 2008, the <1-3 age group accounted for the largest number of victims and 53% of victims were under the age of 8.

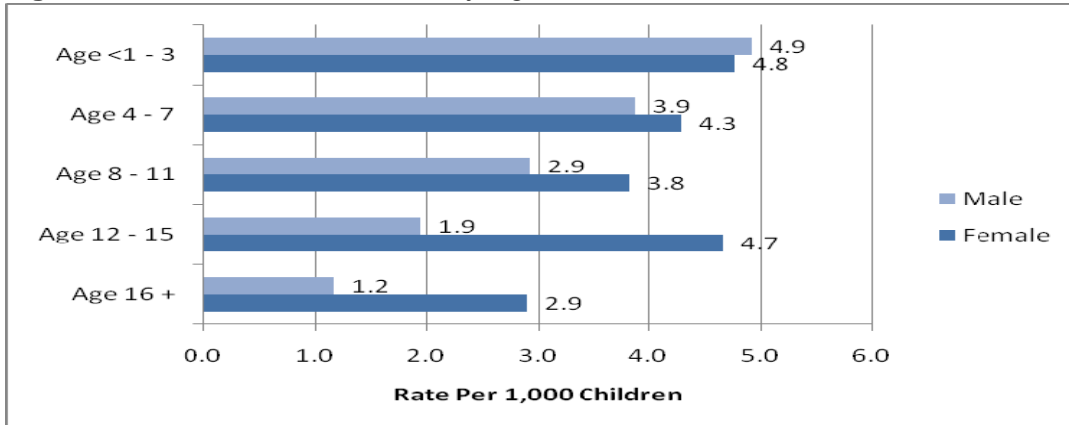
**Figure 12** Victims by Age Group, 2008



**NOTE:** 3 child victims are not depicted in this graph because age data was missing or incorrect.

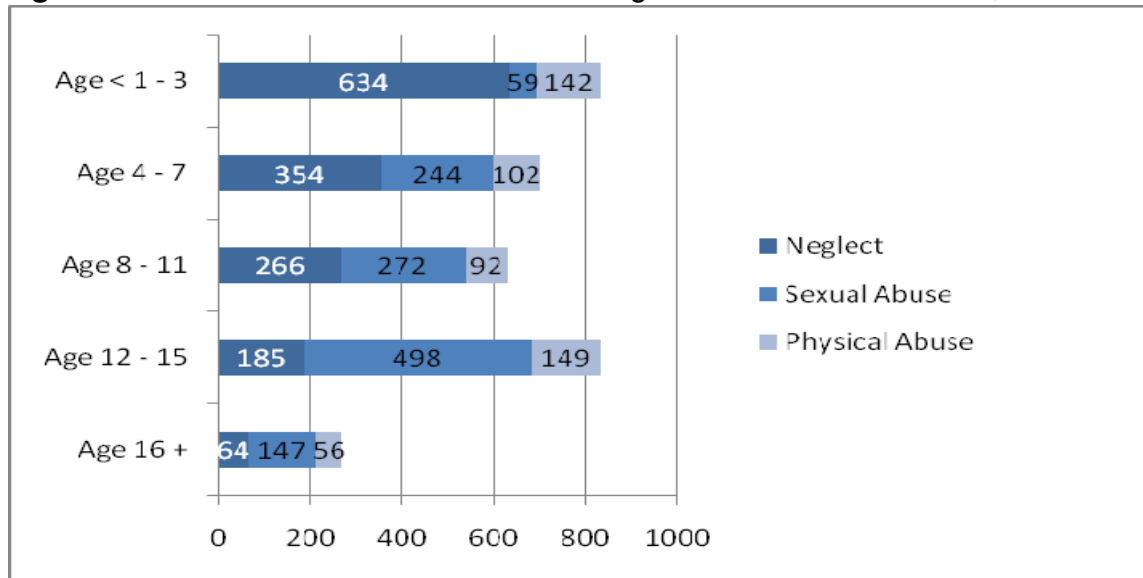
Figure 13 displays the victimization rate by age and gender for calendar year 2008. The victimization rate by age and gender is calculated by dividing the number of 2008 child victims of each gender and age group by the respective number of children in the state's population of the same gender and age group. In the younger age groups, males and females are victimized at similar rates. At older ages, females are victimized at greater rates than males, primarily due to sexual abuse.

**Figure 13** Victimization Rate by Age and Gender, 2008

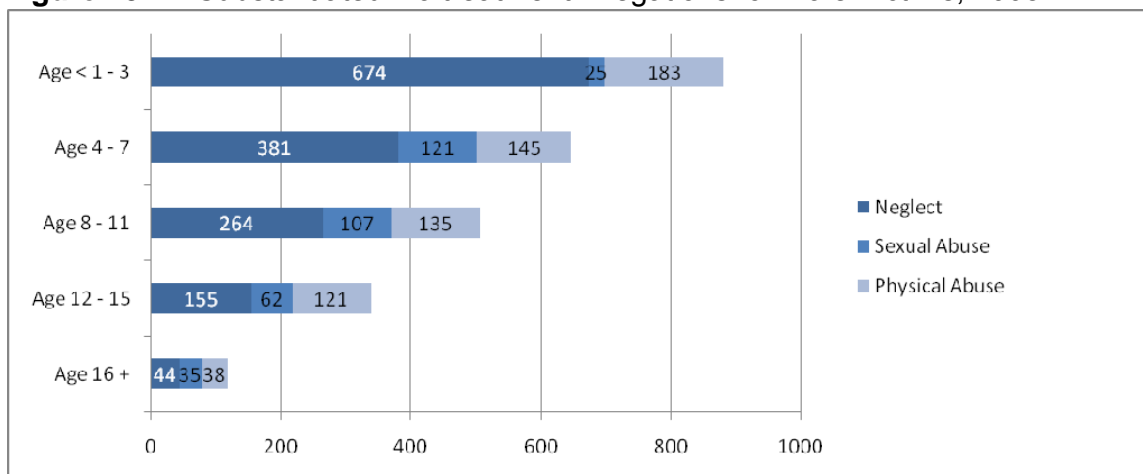


Figures 14 and 15 provide an explanation for the greater rate of female victimization among the two older age groups. These figures show all maltreatment types except emotional abuse for victims by their age group and gender. Females are victims of many more counts of substantiated sexual abuse than males and in the two older age groups females are sexually abused at nearly five times the rate of males. Neglect declines with age for both males and females. Physical abuse occurs at all age levels for both genders; however, males are physically abused at almost twice the rate of females in the 4-7 and 8-11 age groups.

**Figure 14** Substantiated Maltreatment Allegations for Female Victims, 2008



**Figure 15** Substantiated Maltreatment Allegations for Male Victims, 2008

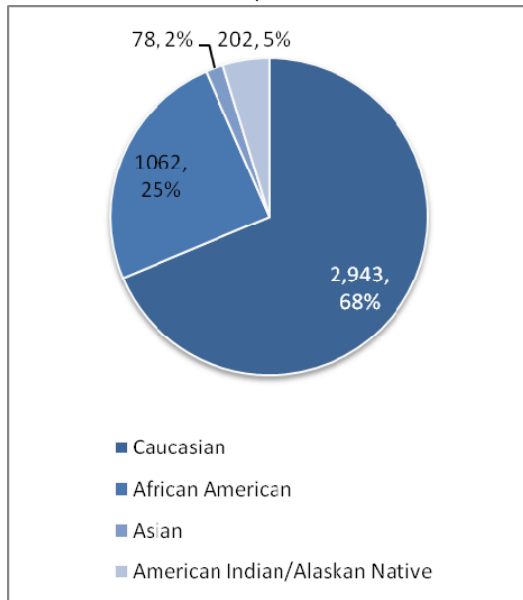


**NOTE:** Figures 16 and 17 do not display the 35 substantiated emotional abuse allegations (19 female, 16 male) due to their small number.

*Race and Ethnicity*

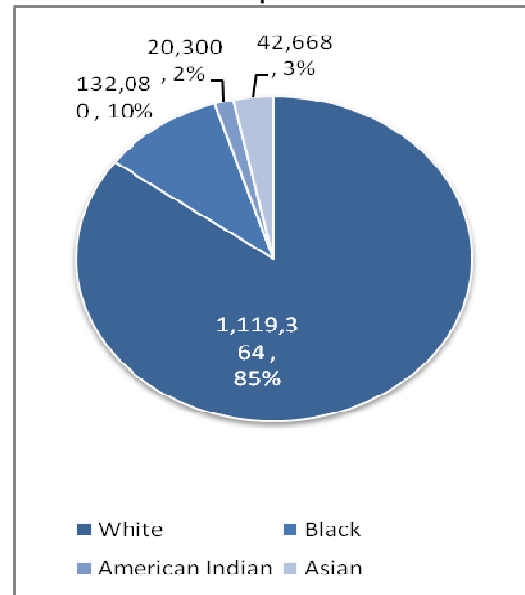
Figure 16 displays the count of victims by race for calendar year 2008. Figure 17 displays the race of the Wisconsin child population in calendar year 2008. African American children and American Indian children are victims of child maltreatment at higher proportions than their comparative share of the general Wisconsin child population.

**Figure 16** Race of Victims Where Known, 2008



**NOTE:** 576 victims (12%) are not depicted above because their race was unknown or not documented. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (4 victims) is not depicted.

**Figure 17** Race of WI Child Population



**NOTE:** Based on data from the 2005 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander is not depicted above.

Of the 4865 victims, 2865 victims (59%) were identified as not Hispanic/Latino, 452 victims (9%) were identified as Hispanic/Latino, and for 1,548 victims (32%) their ethnicity was unknown or not documented. People of Hispanic ethnicity may be of any race.

## **Fatalities**

The death of a child is one of the most tragic consequences of child maltreatment. The role of Child Protective Services in the case of a child maltreatment death is to assure the safety of any other children present in the family and to assess the family's need for services. Investigations of child deaths are generally handled by law enforcement agencies. For purposes of this report, the only fatalities included are child deaths that were substantiated as maltreatment. County CPS agencies and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare reported 27 substantiated cases of a child having died from maltreatment in calendar year 2008. Three (3) children were in open cases for child welfare services with the county agency or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare at the time of their death.

During calendar year 2008, the majority (89%) of the children who died of substantiated maltreatment were age one or under. The majority of maltreaters substantiated for the child's death were the biological parent or the parent's partner (71%). The median age of the maltreaters was 27 years.

**Table 11** Profile of Substantiated Child Fatalities, 2008

County	Maltreatment Type	Child Victim			Maltreater			
		Age	Sex	Race	Age	Sex	Race	Relationship to the Child
Brown	Physical Abuse	<1	M	B	20	M	B	Parent**
Brown	Neglect	1	M	W	27	M	W	Partner/Friend of parent
Clark	Neglect	1	M	W	22	M	W	Parent
					22	F	W	Parent
Dane	Physical Abuse	<1	M	W	20	M	W	Parent**
Dane	Neglect	<1	M	B	21	F	B	Parent
Dane	Neglect	<1	F	B	19	F	B	Parent
Kenosha	Neglect	8	M	W,H	33	M	W,H	Partner/Friend of parent
	Physical Abuse				25	F	W,H	Parent
Marathon	Neglect	11	F	W	46	M	W	Parent
					40	F	A,H	Parent
Milwaukee	Neglect	<1	F	B	20	M	B	Parent
					20	F	B	Parent
Milwaukee	Physical Abuse	<1	M	B	38	F	B	Parent
Milwaukee	Neglect	<1	F	B	28	F	B	Parent
Milwaukee	Neglect	<1	M	B	47	F	B	Licensed Day Care Employee
					49	F	B	Licensed Day Care Employee
Milwaukee *	Neglect	<1	M	B	21	F	frcn Am	Parent
Milwaukee	Physical Abuse and Neglect	<1	F	W	39	F	W,H	Parent
	Neglect				39	M	W,H	Parent
Milwaukee *	Physical Abuse	<1	M	B	24	F	B	Relative/Court-Ordered Care Provider(s)
	Neglect				26	M	B	Relative/Court-Ordered Care Provider(s)
Milwaukee*	Physical Abuse	<1	M	B	33	M	B	Unknown**
Milwaukee	Physical Abuse	<1	M	W	23	M	W	Parent**
Milwaukee	Physical Abuse	<1	M	B	17	M	B	Parent**
Milwaukee	Physical Abuse	<1	M	U	23	M	U	Unknown
					21	F	U	Unknown
Milwaukee	Neglect	<1	F	W	26	F	W	Parent
Racine	Physical Abuse	<1	F	U	U	U	U	Unknown
Rock	Neglect	<1	F	W	20	M	W	Parent
Sauk	Physical Abuse and Neglect	<1	F	W	45	M	U	Parent**
					28	F	W	Parent**
Sauk	Physical Abuse and Neglect	<1	M	W	45	M	U	Parent**
					28	F	W	Parent**
Washington	Physical Abuse	<1	F	W	30	M	W	Parent
Winnebago	Neglect	<1	F	W	32	M	W	Parent
					28	F	W	Parent
Winnebago	Physical Abuse	2	M	W	27	F	U	Parent

Sex

F - Female

M - Male

U - Unknown

Race/Ethnicity

W - White/Caucasian

B - Black/African American

I - American Indian

H - Hispanic

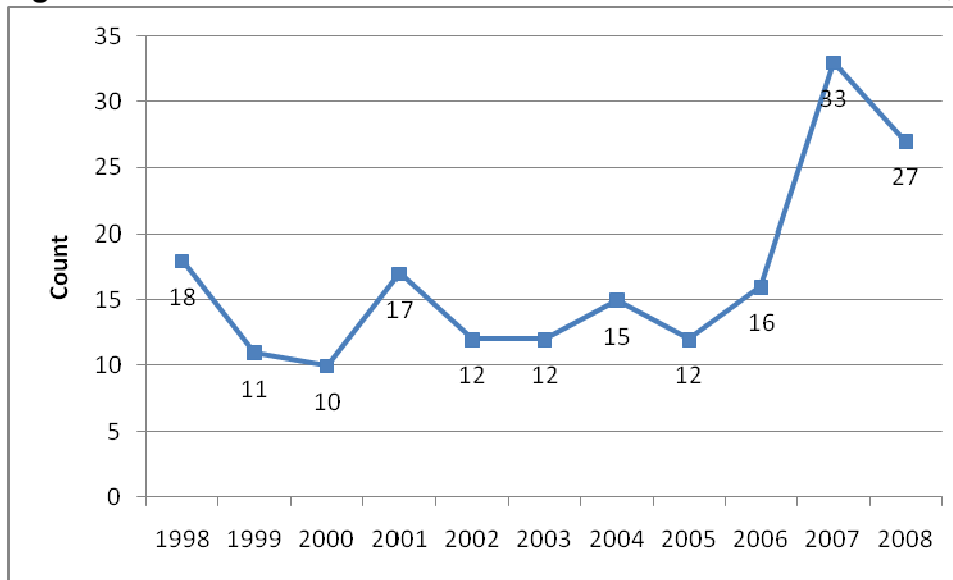
A - Asian/Pacific Islander

U - Unknown

\*Family was open for child welfare services with the county agency or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare at the time of the child's death.

\*\*Maltreater substantiated for committing the abuse that led to child's death by abusive head trauma or as an impacted baby.

**Figure 18** Count of Child Fatalities Substantiated as Maltreatment, 1998-2008



The new CPS Access and Initial Assessment Standards, released in September 2007, require that county CPS agencies and the BMCW complete a CPS initial assessment in cases where a child dies due to maltreatment and there are no other children in the household. In previous years a CPS initial assessment was not required in these cases as there were no other children present to assure the safety of and criminal prosecution is handled by law enforcement agencies. The new standards require CPS initial assessments of these cases so that family case and maltreater records contain this critical information in case of future concerns to child safety.

A review of the cases reported by CPS agencies of a child having died from maltreatment during the past 5 years (2004-2008) highlights trends among child maltreatment fatalities in Wisconsin. First, the majority of children who are victims of maltreatment which leads to their death are babies or very young children. Of the reported child maltreatment fatalities from 2004-2008, 91% of the deaths were children age 3 or under and 68% of the deaths were children under age 1.

Second, for the child maltreatment fatalities reported by CPS agencies from 2004-2008, the most frequent maltreaters were the biological mother (35%), biological father (27%), partner of parent/family friend (15%), day care provider (9%), and other relative (8%). In cases where the biological mother was substantiated for the child's death, the maltreatment type was predominantly neglect of the child. In cases where the biological father was substantiated for the child's death, the majority of the time the maltreatment type was physical abuse.

## **Abusive Head Trauma and Impacted Babies**

2005 Wisconsin Act 165 amended state statutes by creating provisions for the training of individuals who care for or supervise children under age 5 on abusive head trauma and impacted babies. Abusive head trauma is defined as “a severe form of brain injury that occurs when an infant or young child is shaken forcibly enough to cause the brain to rebound against his or her skull.” [Ref. s. 253.15(1)(f), Stats.] Impacted baby is defined as “an infant or young child who suffers death or great bodily harm as a result of being thrown against a surface, hard or soft.” [Ref. s. 253.15(1)(d), Stats.]

2005 Wisconsin Act 165 also created provisions for the identification of infants and young children who have abusive head trauma or who are impacted babies. In September of 2006, new description values were added to eWiSACWIS to allow workers to indicate abusive head trauma and impacted baby related diagnoses. Examples of these description values include subdural hematoma, cranial cerebral trauma, and retinal hemorrhage.

In 2008, there were 125 maltreatment allegations where one of the abusive head trauma and impacted baby related diagnoses were used to describe the maltreatment allegation. Of these 125 allegations, 61 (48%) were found to be substantiated upon completion of the CPS initial assessment. There were 53 victims associated with these allegations. Of these victims, 36 (68%) were male and 17 (32%) were female (for one gender was not documented). Sixty six percent of the 53 victims were under age one. The maltreater was the child’s biological parent in 42% of the cases. The second most common named maltreater was a non-parent relative in 8% of the cases.

Of the 27 child maltreatment fatalities in 2008, seven were attributable to abusive head trauma or were impacted babies. The maltreater who abused the child causing death by abusive head trauma or as an impacted baby is indicated with a double asterisk in Table 11.

## Maltreaters

A person is considered a maltreater when the CPS agency, after completing the CPS initial assessment, identifies the person as having committed one or more types of child maltreatment. A person is counted as a maltreater once per CPS initial assessment no matter how many substantiated maltreatment types they have committed. However, a maltreater is counted more than once if they are involved in two or more separate CPS initial assessments in which he/she had at least one substantiated maltreatment finding during the calendar year (for example, one in January and one in October).

Based on this method, in calendar year 2008 there were 4,095 maltreaters of substantiated child maltreatment. There are fewer maltreaters than victims (4,865) because some maltreaters were found to have maltreated more than one child. The CPS agency can also designate that a maltreatment type is substantiated for a child without identifying a maltreater (i.e. maltreater unknown). Of the 4,095 maltreaters, 189 (5%) were identified as an unknown maltreater.

2005 Wisconsin Act 232 eliminated the requirement, effective October 2006, that CPS agencies complete a CPS initial assessment in situations where the alleged maltreater is not a caregiver for the children. As these matters are referred to law enforcement, the characteristics of non-caregivers who maltreat children are underrepresented in this report.

## Characteristics of Maltreaters

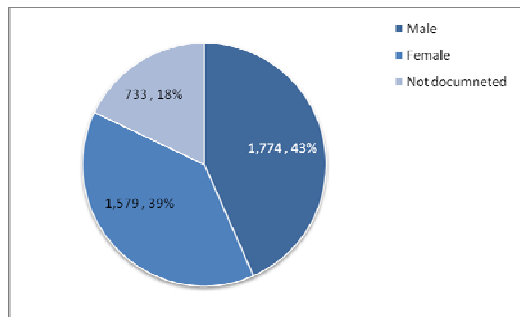
### Gender

Figure 19 displays the frequency and proportion of maltreaters by their gender.

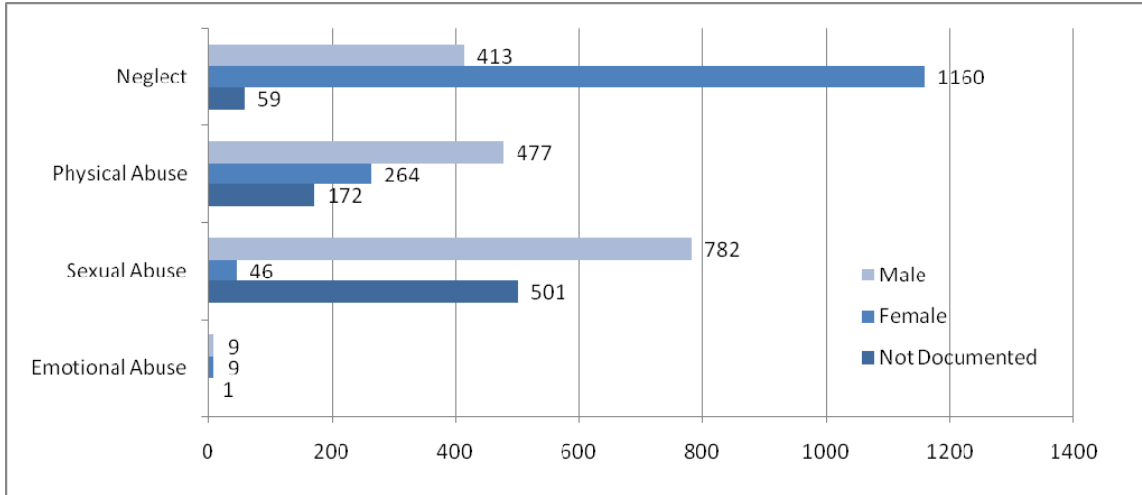
Figure 20 depicts all maltreatment allegation findings for maltreaters by their gender during calendar year 2008. If a maltreater had more than one substantiated allegation finding during the year they will be depicted more than once in this graph. Males are sexual perpetrators are much greater rates than females. The

majority of female perpetrators' maltreatment was related to neglect.

**Figure 19** Gender of Maltreaters, 2008



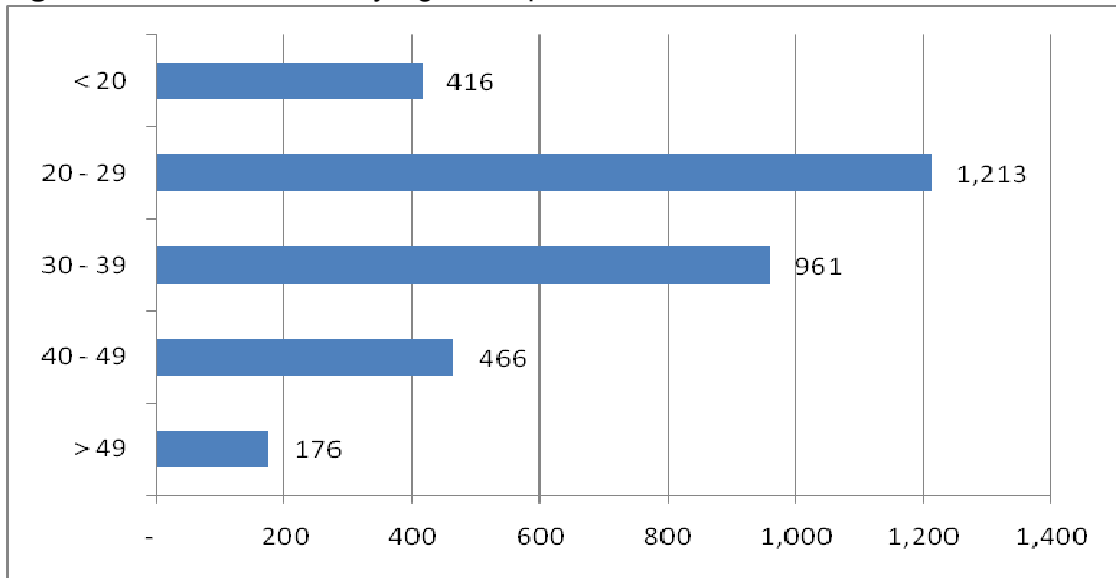
**Figure 20** Substantiated Allegations by Abuse Type and Maltreaters Gender, 2008



*Age*

Figure 21 shows the count of maltreaters by their age group for calendar year 2008. Age data was unknown for 863 maltreaters (21%). Since the majority of maltreaters are parents, the most common child-rearing age groups account for the largest number of maltreaters.

**Figure 21** Maltreaters by Age Group, 2008

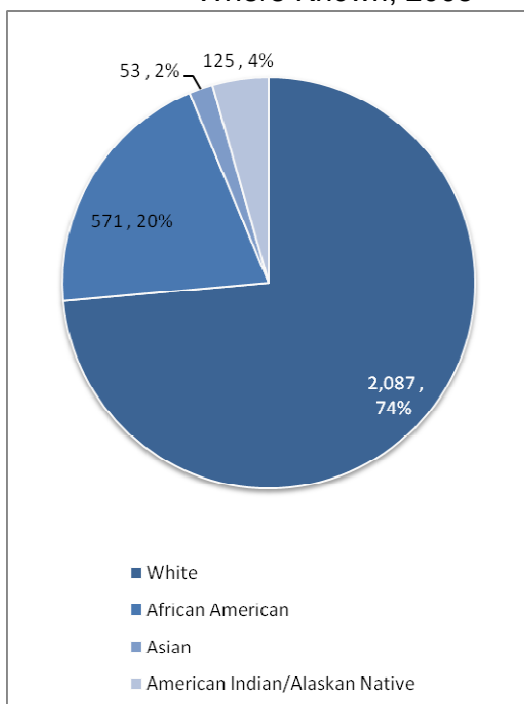


**NOTE:** This graph does not depict 863 maltreaters whose age was unknown or not documented.

### Race/Ethnicity

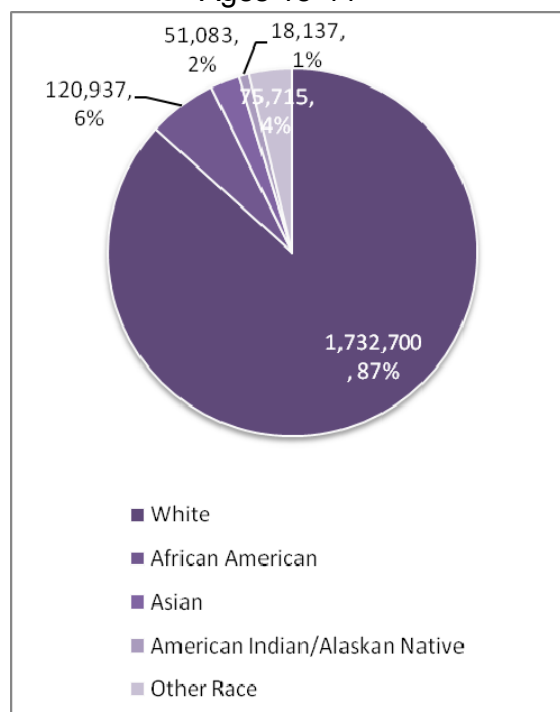
Figure 22 displays the count of maltreaters by race for calendar year 2008. Figure 23 depicts the race of Wisconsin's population ages 18-44. This age segment of the Wisconsin population was chosen as it portrays race for the age groups which comprise the majority of identified adult maltreaters. Persons who identified as African American and American Indian comprise a larger share of identified maltreaters than their proportional share of Wisconsin's general adult population in calendar year 2008.

**Figure 22** Race of Maltreaters Where Known, 2008



**NOTE:** 1,253 maltreaters (31%) are not depicted above because their race was unknown or not documented. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (6 maltreaters) is not depicted.

**Figure 23** Race of WI Population Ages 18-44



**NOTE:** Based on data from the 2005 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander is not depicted.

Of the 4,095 maltreaters, 1,837 (45%) were identified as not Hispanic/Latino, 241 (6%) were identified as Hispanic/Latino, and for 2,017 (49%) maltreaters their ethnicity was unknown or not documented. People of Hispanic ethnicity may be of any race.

### Relationship to Victim

This section outlines the relationship of maltreaters to the child victims they were found to have maltreated. Table 12 shows all substantiated maltreatment allegations by maltreatment type and the person designated as the maltreater. The first category, primary caregivers, is comprised of maltreaters who live in the home, regularly or intermittently, with the child victim. In 2008, primary adult caregivers in

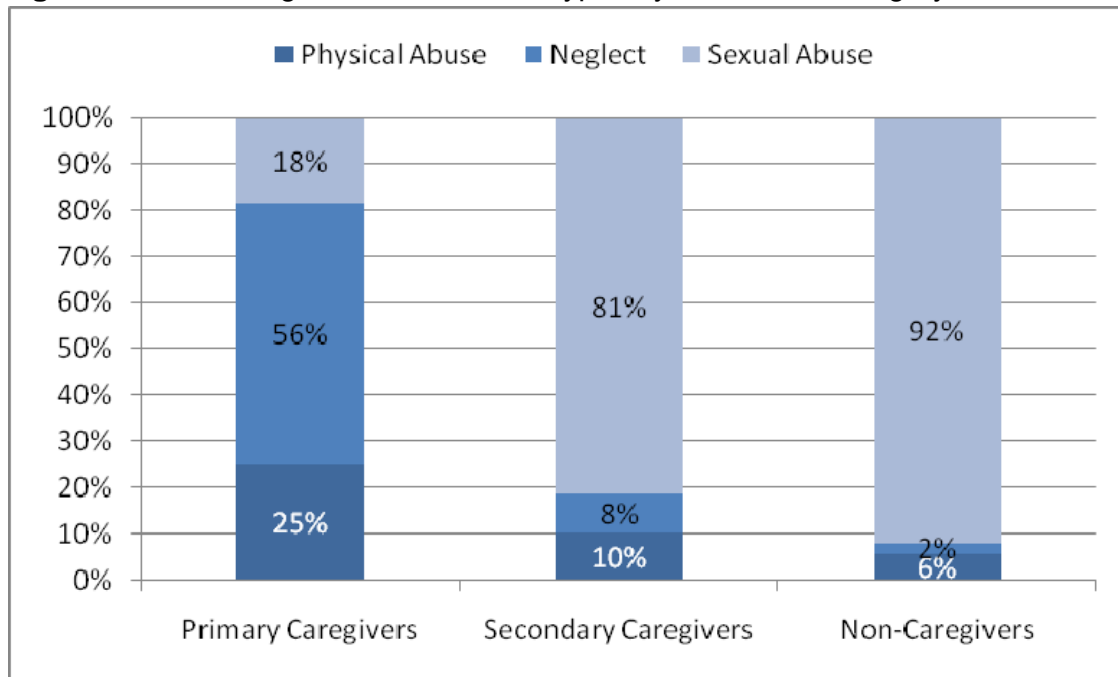
the home (i.e. parents, step-parents, partners of parents, and foster parents) were the maltreaters in 75% of the substantiated maltreatment allegations. The second category, secondary caregivers, is comprised of adults who have temporary caregiving responsibility for the child victim but do not live in the child's home. The third category, non-caregivers, is individuals who interact with the child but do not have caregiving responsibility. The last category depicts those allegations where the maltreater is unknown/not verified. CPS agencies may have a preponderance of evidence that a child was maltreated but not enough information to verify that a specific maltreater committed the abuse.

**Table 12** Substantiated Allegations by Maltreater Relationship to Child Victim, 2008

	EMOTIONAL	PHYSICAL	NEGLECT	SEXUAL	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
<b>PRIMARY CAREGIVERS</b>						
Parent	20	547	1619	119	2305	54%
Step Parent(s)	2	64	29	76	171	4%
Partner/Friend of parent sharing dwell	1	97	65	130	293	7%
Sibling(s), Step Sibling(s)	0	38	3	184	225	5%
Foster Parent	0	5	4	4	13	0%
Other sharing a Foster Home	0	2	0	3	5	0%
Relative in Home	0	38	68	62	168	4%
Other Primary Caregiver	0	6	4	9	19	0%
PRIMARY CAREGIVER SUBTOTAL	23	797	1792	587	3199	75%
<b>SECONDARY CAREGIVERS</b>						
Licensed/Certified Child Care Provider	0	5	13	5	23	1%
Other Child Care Provider	0	2	2	14	18	0%
Relative not in Home	0	8	4	190	202	5%
Correctional Facility Staff	0	1	0	0	1	0%
Residential Facility Staff	0	3	3	1	7	0%
Teacher/Other school employee(s)	0	8	1	11	20	0%
Youth Organization Staff/Volunteer	0	1	0	2	3	0%
SECONDARY CAREGIVERS SUBTOTAL	0	28	23	223	274	6%
<b>NON-CAREGIVERS</b>						
Family Friend(s)	0	10	8	82	100	2%
Neighbor(s)	0	1	0	20	21	0%
Peer Maltreater(s)	0	8	0	97	105	2%
Stranger(s)	0	0	0	22	22	1%
Other non-caregiver(s)	0	13	4	274	291	7%
NON-CAREGIVERS SUBTOTAL	0	32	12	495	539	13%
<b>UNKNOWN/NOT VERIFIED</b>						
	0	122	15	98	235	6%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>1842</b>	<b>1403</b>	<b>4247</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 24 shows the percentage of each type of substantiated maltreatment by the three maltreater categories (primary, secondary, and non-caregiver). For primary caregivers (total substantiated maltreatment allegations 3,199), the largest share of their total substantiated maltreatment allegations is neglect related. However, for secondary caregivers (total substantiated maltreatment allegations 274) and non-caregivers (total substantiated maltreatment allegations 539) the largest share of their total substantiated maltreatment allegations is sexual in nature.

**Figure 24** Percentage of Maltreatment Types by Maltreater Category, 2008



**NOTE:** The counts used to calculate the above percentages can be found in Table 13. Emotional abuse is not depicted above. Emotional abuse comprises 1% of primary caregivers' substantiated maltreatment allegations, 0% of secondary caregivers' maltreatment allegations, and 0% of non-caregivers' maltreatment allegations.

## **Federal Performance Standards**

Given the important role CPS agencies have in ensuring child safety, the federal government has placed greater emphasis on the CPS initial assessment function. As part of the Child and Family Services Review process, the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has established casework performance indicators related to child safety and national performance standards. Casework performance indicators are assessed through case reviews and monitored by states as part of their quality improvement efforts. These indicators include timeliness for initiating CPS initial assessments and agency response to identifying, understanding and responding to child safety threats.

For the second round of state reviews, the federal DHHS has modified the national performance standard definitions. The new definitions are presented below. Wisconsin is scheduled to participate in a second round of the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process in 2010.

The national performance standards measure state performance on the absence of incidents of repeat maltreatment (Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence Rate) and the absence of maltreatment of children in out-of-home care (Absence of Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care Rate). The Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence Rate is calculated by identifying all children who were victims of maltreatment in the first 6 months of a year and determining the percentage of children who were not victims of another substantiated report within a 6-month period after the initial substantiated report.

The Absence of Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care Rate is calculated by identifying all the children who were not victims of substantiated maltreatment by a court-ordered relative provider, foster parent provider, or group home or residential facility provider during a given period. This number is then divided by the cumulative number of children who were in placement during the same period to establish the maltreatment in out-of-home care rate.

Because annualized data was not available from eWiSACWIS to determine Wisconsin's performance on these two national performance standards until calendar year 2004, Wisconsin used a survey methodology approved by the federal DHHS to estimate the state's performance for prior time periods. Beginning in 2004 all data was produced from eWiSACWIS reports. These reports were developed to be consistent with the federal report methodology and have been approved by the federal DHHS.

The national performance standards for both of these measures are set at the 75th percentile of all states based on the available data provided by states. For the first round of the federal CFSR, the national standard for absence of maltreatment recurrence was 93.9% or more. This standard will be raised to 94.4% or more for the second round of the federal CFSR. The first round national standard for absence of maltreatment in out-of-home care was 99.43% or more. This standard will be raised to 99.67% or more for the second round.

**Table 13** Federal Performance Measures, 2004- 2008

Safety Performance Measures	National Standard 1 <sup>st</sup> Round	Wisconsin Performance				
		CY 2004	CY 2005*	CY 2006*	CY 2007	CY 2008
<b><u>Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence</u></b> Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment report, what percent were NOT victims of another substantiated report within a 6-month period?	<b>93.9% or more</b>	94.75%	92.62%	92.92%	91.90%	94.14%
<b><u>Absence of Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care</u></b> Of all children in out-of-home care, what percent were NOT victims of maltreatment by foster parents, including court-ordered relative providers or facility staff members?*	<b>99.43% or more</b>	99.43%	99.53%	99.63%	99.44%	99.65%

\*The 2005 and 2006 absence of maltreatment recurrence rates have been re-calculated using a corrected report methodology.

\*\*In FFY 2007, the federal definition of "foster parent" was changed to include both licensed and unlicensed providers (i.e. court-ordered relative providers) who were providing placement for children due to child welfare concerns. The CY 2007 absence of maltreatment in out-of-home care rate includes unlicensed provider maltreatment.

## Services to Families

The role of CPS differs in cases of familial and non-familial maltreatment and this affects the services the CPS agency offers to a family. In all cases, a substantiated maltreatment finding is not required for a family to be offered services. In cases of maltreatment involving primary caregivers, the decision to provide services to the family is based on the safety assessment and analysis and resulting safety decision. The safety decision is the CPS agency's determination, based on the information gathered during the CPS initial assessment, as to whether the conditions present make the child/children unsafe in the family home. A designation of safe or unsafe is required for all children who reside within the household. If at least one child is designated as unsafe, then the initial assessment safety decision finding for the home is unsafe. In calendar year 2008, primary caregiver CPS initial assessments comprised 91% of the 24,901 CPS initial assessments completed by agencies that year.

The role of CPS in cases of maltreatment by secondary and non-caregivers is to collaborate with and support the primary caregivers in providing protection and services for the child, when necessary. A safety assessment and analysis is not required in secondary CPS initial assessments and non-caregiver investigations because the child's safety within the home is not the focus of the case. CPS agencies completed 2,180 secondary CPS initial assessments and non-caregiver investigations (9% of all assessments) during calendar year 2008.

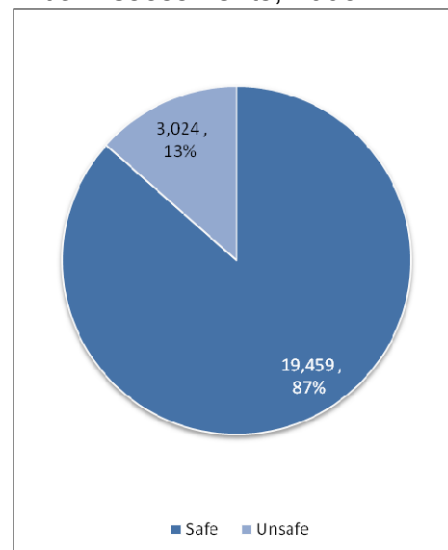
## Safety Decisions & Services

Figure 25 shows the safety decisions for completed safety assessments in primary caregiver CPS initial assessments. In calendar year 2008, the majority (87%) of primary caregiver CPS initial assessments resulted in a decision that children were safe. There were 3,024 primary caregiver CPS initial assessments (13%) which resulted in a decision that children were unsafe. In an additional 208 primary caregiver CPS initial assessments (not depicted) the safety decision was not documented. **Appendix L** shows safety assessment results in primary caregiver CPS initial assessments by county.

If a child is determined to be safe, the CPS agency is not required to offer or refer the family for services; however, the CPS agency may still inform the family about voluntary services or available community resources to

better meet family needs or support family functioning.

**Figure 25** Safety Assessment Results in Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008

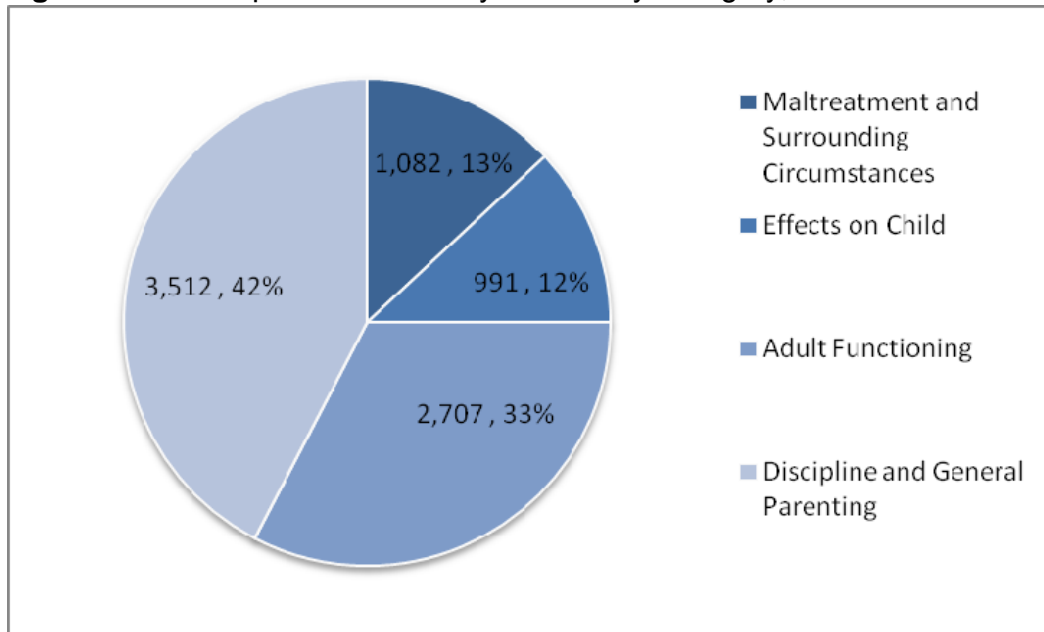


If a child is determined to be unsafe, the CPS agency is required to implement a safety plan to assure the child is safe and protected. The CPS Safety Intervention Standards provide CPS workers with a structured analysis and decision-making framework used to assess what specific, observable factors are making the child unsafe. These factors are known as safety threats. The identified safety threats and the analysis of these safety threats form the basis for safety planning. Safety planning ensures that safety threats are controlled to keep the child safe while the CPS agency works with the family to develop a plan to change those conditions or behaviors negatively affecting child safety. The goal of this change process is a family without safety threats or with the resources necessary to control safety threats on their own.

While there are several distinct safety threats that can be identified as part of a CPS initial assessment process, for analytical purposes, these threats can be grouped into four categories based on the nature of the concern. First, there are safety threats that relate to the act of maltreatment itself and the surrounding circumstances, for example, premeditation and lack of remorse by the maltreater or a hazardous living environment. Second, there are situations where the maltreatment has caused serious effects to the child such as emotional problems, lack of behavior control, and/or severe physical injury. Third, there are safety threats caused by deficiencies in adult functioning such as out-of-control behavior and/or violent tendencies. Finally, there are safety threats characterized by issues involving discipline and parenting practices such as blaming the child for the adult's problems, a lack of knowledge, resources, and/or motivation necessary to provide basic care for child, and/or ability to provide necessary supervision of a child.

In the 3,108 primary caregiver CPS initial assessments which resulted in a decision that children were unsafe, 32% of CPS initial assessments had one safety threat identified, 27% had two identified, 16% had three, 10% had four, and the remaining 14% had 5 or more identified safety threats.

In the 3,108 primary caregiver CPS initial assessments which resulted in a decision that children were unsafe, 8,292 safety threats involving 4,262 children were identified. Figure 26 shows the frequency of identified safety threats by the groupings described above.

**Figure 26** Frequencies of Safety Threats by Category, 2008

Safety-related services are provided in the family home whenever possible, to maintain and support the family unit. Services provided to ensure child safety are intended to immediately control any conditions or behaviors that place a child in danger. Some of these safety-related services may include parenting assistance, supervision/observation, child care/respite, mental and physical health services, and/or resources to help meet basic needs. In addition to services offered as part of the safety plan, the family may also be offered additional services to meet family needs and/or support family functioning. The use of in-home safety services for families reduces the need for more intrusive interventions such as removal of the child from the family home and may be used in response to children and families involved in both substantiated and unsubstantiated cases.

### **CPS Removals of Children to an Out-of-home Placement**

If the conditions in the home pose immediate danger to a child and in-home services are insufficient to assure the safety of the child, the child may be removed from the family home and placed temporarily in out-of-home care. A substantiated maltreatment finding is not required or necessary for a child to be placed in out-of-home care when the child is unsafe. An out-of-home placement may be with a relative(s), a foster parent(s), a group home or shelter, or a residential child-caring facility.

During 2008, 2,198 children were removed from their family home and placed in out-of-home care as a result of the safety analysis and planning conducted in the CPS initial assessment. Sixty-nine percent of these children had been found to be victims of substantiated maltreatment in the CPS initial assessment that led to their removal to out-of-home care. Twenty percent of these children had been in a CPS initial assessment prior to 2008 where they had been found to be victims of substantiated maltreatment. Children who were placed in an out-of-home placement as a result of

unborn child abuse are not included in the figures above and are presented separately in **Appendix B**.

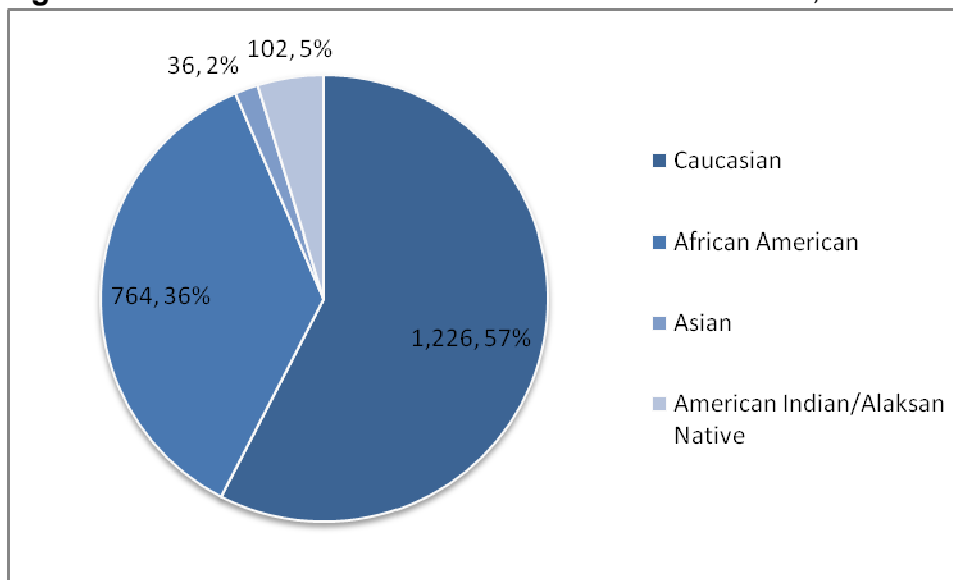
Table 14 displays the mean and median age of children removed as a result of a CPS initial assessment in 2008 by their gender. Of the 2,198 children removed from their family home and placed in out-of-home care in order to address safety threats identified during the CPS initial assessment, 50% were female and 50% were male.

**Table 14** Median and Mean Age of Male and Female Children Removed to an Out-of-home Placement, 2008

Gender	Count of Children Removed	Median Age	Mean Age
Females	1,109	6	6.6
Males	1,089	4	5.4

Figure 27 displays the primary race of the children who were removed to out-of-home care during a CPS initial assessment. African American children and American Indian children are removed to out-of-home care at a disproportionate rate given their size in the Wisconsin child population. Of the children removed to out-of-home care, 242 (11%) were identified as Hispanic, 1,634 (74%) were identified as not Hispanic, and for 322 children (15%) their ethnicity was unknown or not documented.

**Figure 27** Race of Children Removed to Out-of-Home Care, 2008



**NOTE:** 70 children are not depicted, 3 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander and 67 with no documentation of race.

## Initial Assessment Disposition

The initial assessment disposition is the action the CPS agency took upon completion of the CPS initial assessment. In some cases, after the CPS initial assessment, the case is closed as continued CPS intervention is not needed. Some closed cases are referred to appropriate community resources. In other cases, the case is opened but the family is referred to services that are not under the purview of the CPS agency (case opened – non-CPS services). In other cases, the case is opened and the family is provided services through the CPS agency (case opened – ongoing CPS services: petition and voluntary). Finally, in some cases the family already had a CPS case open and services will continue for this family after this CPS initial assessment (case already open – ongoing services). Figure 28 shows the count and percentage of initial assessment dispositions in the 22,691 primary caregiver CPS initial assessments for calendar year 2008.

**Figure 28** Initial Assessment Dispositions in Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008

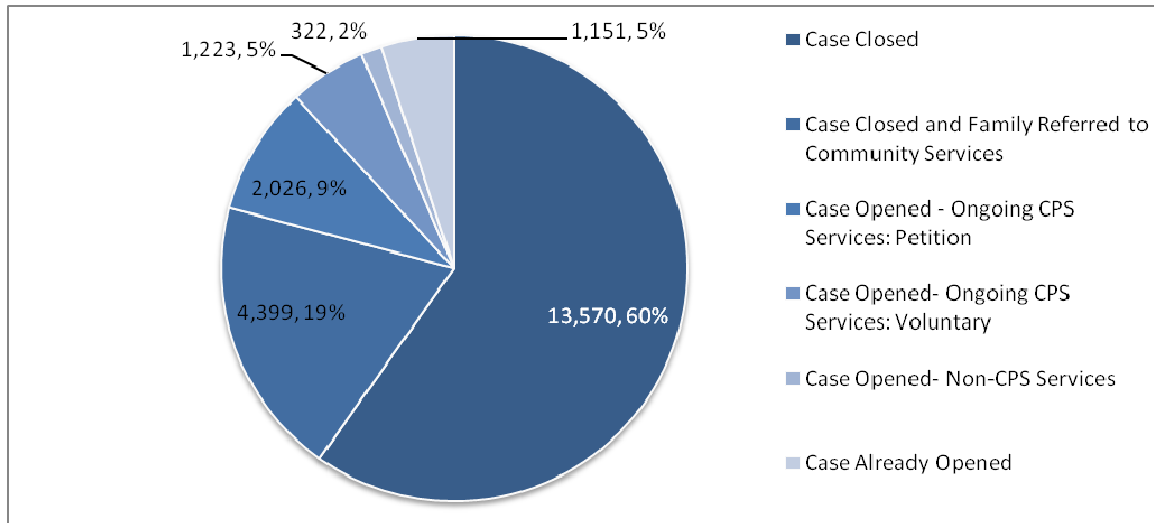


Figure 29 shows 2,179 secondary CPS initial assessments and non-caregiver investigations by initial assessment disposition (30 are not depicted because no assessment type was documented).

**Figure 29** Initial Assessment Dispositions in Secondary CPS Initial Assessments and Non-Caregiver Investigations, 2008

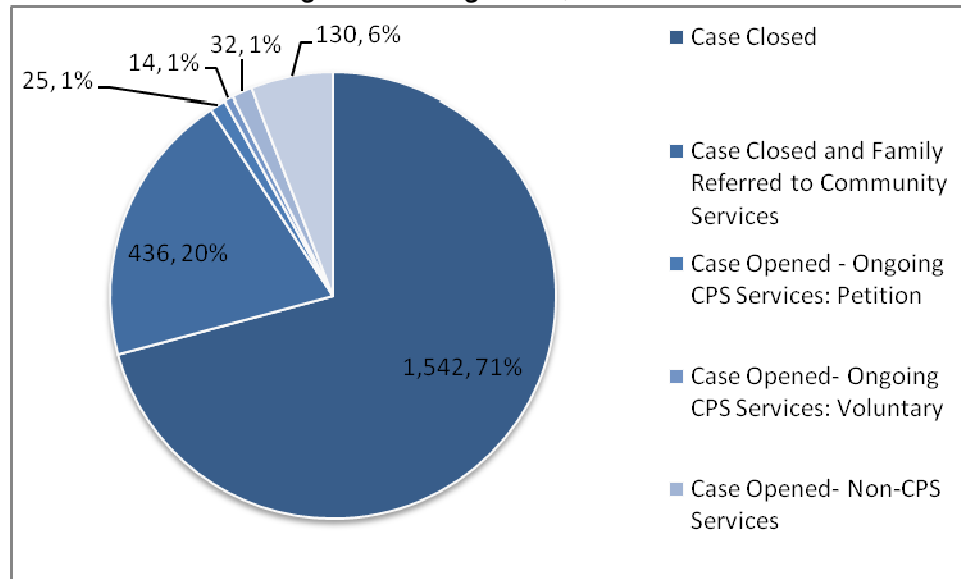


Table 15 shows the frequency and percentage of initial assessment dispositions according to the safety decision for primary caregiver CPS initial assessments. In the majority (90%) of cases where the safety decision is safe, the case was closed. In the majority (87%) of cases where the safety decision was unsafe, the case was either opened for some type of services or was already opened for ongoing CPS services. A safety assessment and analysis is not required in secondary CPS initial assessments and non-caregiver investigations because the child's safety within the family home is not the focus of the case.

**Table 15** Safety Decision by Initial Assessment Disposition for Primary Caregiver CPS Initial Assessments, 2008

Initial Assessment Disposition	Safety Decision							
	Safe		Unsafe		Not Documented		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Case Closed	13,149	68%	256	8%	165	79%	13,570	60%
Case Closed and Family Referred to Community Services	4,220	22%	151	5%	28	13%	4,399	19%
Case Opened - Ongoing CPS Services: Petition	579	3%	1,440	48%	7	3%	2,026	9%
Case Opened - Ongoing CPS Services: Voluntary	476	2%	745	25%	2	1%	1,223	5%
Case Opened - Non-CPS Services	299	2%	22	1%	1	0%	322	1%
Case Already Open - Ongoing CPS Services	736	4%	410	14%	5	2%	1,151	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,459</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,024</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22,691</b>	<b>100%</b>

**DCF-P-PFS2013Q (N. 06/2010)**