



# Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect – 2003

## MAJOR FINDINGS

### *Authors*

Nico Trocmé  
Barbara Fallon  
Bruce MacLaurin  
Joanne Daciuk  
Caroline Felstiner  
Tara Black  
Lil Tonmyr  
Cindy Blackstock  
Ken Barter  
Daniel Turcotte  
Richard Cloutier

### *Funded by*

Public Health Agency of Canada

With support from the provincial and  
territorial governments of Canada

the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society  
and the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit,  
Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto



This report is dedicated to the children and families who are served by Canadian child welfare

This report presents the major findings of the second cycle of the Canadian Incidence Study of

.....	i
.....	ii
.....	iii
.....	1
.....	9
Background: CIS-1998 .....	9
Funding.....	10
Objectives and Scope of the CIS.....	10
Child Welfare Services in Canada.....	12
Quebec.....	15
Definitional Framework for the CIS-2003.....	15
Categories and Forms of Maltreatment	





<b>Figure 1</b>	Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003 .....	1
<b>Table 1</b>	Child Maltreatment Investigations, by Level of Substantiation, in Canada in 2003 .....	2
<b>Figure 2</b>	Primary Category of Substantiated Child Maltreatment in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003 .....	2
<b>Table 2</b>	Primary Category of Substantiated Child Maltreatment in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003 .....	3
<b>Figure 3</b>	Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 1998 and 2003 .....	3
<b>Figure 4</b>		

**Figure 2-1**



<b>Table 7-9(b)</b>	Male Caregiver Functioning, by Primary Category of Substantiated Child Maltreatment, in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003.....	83
<b>Table 7-10</b>	Custody Disputes, by Primary Category of Substantiated Child Maltreatment, in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003 .....	

The Canadian Incidence Study of  
Reported Child Abuse and Neglect – 2003  
(CIS-2003) is the second nation-wide  
study to examine the incidence of

repo18 TD5(t)11.2(ed c)10(h)0.4(il)6.1(d mal)14.2(t)-6.6(r)25.3(e)-0.6(a)18.2(t)-10.7(men)23.2(t)0.4( and th)7(e)]TJT\*0.00a5 Tc0.0193 T

When the Quebec administrative data  
are included, an estimated 235,315  
child maltreatment investigations  
(38.33 investigations per 1,000 children)

cases represented 3% of all cases of



Service dispositions documented by the CIS-2003 include:

- (1) previous child welfare contact;
- (2) provision of ongoing child welfare services; and
- (3) placement of children in out-of-home care.

CIS service disposition statistics should be interpreted with care, because they track only events that occurred during the initial child welfare investigation. Additional referrals for services and

Figure 10 presents the age and sex of children by the primary category of substantiated maltreatment. While girls made up 49% of victims, girls made up



The CIS-2003 Major Findings report provides a first glance at the dramatic changes in child welfare services that have taken place across Canada since 1998. In a period of five years the number of investigations of suspected child



The largest proportion of physical abuse cases were single incidents involving older children, and these were more likely to involve injuries than were other forms of maltreatment. Although sexual abuse cases predominantly involved female victims, the study also drew attention to the large proportion of pre-adolescent male victims of sexual abuse reported to



Specifically, the CIS-2003 is designed to:

- (1) determine rates of investigated and substantiated physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment, and exposure to domestic

viol Tc0.4(n)21.2(c)28.3(e)17.5(-)139.7(a)19.4(s)17.5(w)37.1(e)22.4(l)11.5(l)17.5(a)19.3(s)17.5(m)38.3(u)15.4(l)31.3(t)6.4(i)2





Because of the recent implementation  
of a common information system,  
Projet Intégration Jeunesse (PIJ), for

## Categories and Forms

**of Maltreatment** The first area of potential in interpreting child maltreatment statistics is the inconsistency in the categories of maltreatment included in

term is used by epidemiologists, where

During a 12-month follow-up, rates of recurrence range from 5.2% to 31%.<sup>21</sup>

**Investigation**, the third stage in the case identification process, can lead to confusion when child maltreatment statistics are compared. As noted earlier, all reports are not necessarily investigated. Some may be screened out because of insufficient information about a child's whereabouts to launch an investigation; others may be screened out because they are not considered to be within the defined mandate of the child welfare services. **Screening practices**

welfare services in 2003 (screened-out reports not included). The estimates are broken down in Chapter 3 into

The 2003 Canadian Incidence Study  
of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect







were moved into the caregiver risk factor section. The household income levels were collapsed from eight categories to five, and housing from eight categories to six. Maltreatment codes were also modified as a result of the focus group and pilot testing process. Physical abuse categories were anchored

The primary sampling unit for the study was a study-defined child welfare service area (CWSA). CWSAs are distinct geographic areas served by one or several child welfare authorities. In Montreal, for example, two agencies

cases were selected by asking investigating workers to determine case eligibility using the Intake Face Sheet of the Maltreatment Assessment Form.

over (N=108), yielding a sample of  
2,638 child maltreatment investigations







This chapter presents estimates of



child maltreatment statistics gathered in many jurisdictions. In Canada, outside Quebec, an estimated 130,594 families









**Voyeurism:** included activities where the alleged perpetrator observes the child for the perpetrator's sexual gratification.

**Exhibitionism:** included activities where the perpetrator is alleged to have exhibited himself/herself for his/her own sexual gratification.

**Exploitation:** included situations











Emotional abuse was investigated in an estimated 39,984 cases (8.40 investigations per 1,000 children), and substantiated in 44% of these investigations. Emotional neglect was the primary or secondary form of maltreatment in an estimated 17,051

This chapter describes the character-





was generally required. Medical treatment was required in 61% of the cases of substantiated maltreatment that involved burns or scalds, 100% of cases involving broken bones, 80% of cases involving head trauma, and 58% of cases involving other health conditions.





51% of substantiated physical abuse (see Appendix I, Table 4).

In 4% of cases where physical abuse was the primary substantiated concern, other relatives were considered perpetrators. The boyfriends

Biological fathers/stepfathers were considered perpetrators in 56% and mothers/stepmothers in 66% of investigations where substantiated emotional abuse was the primary substantiated maltreatment.

exposure to domestic violence in 88% of investigations where exposure to domestic violence was the

Biological fathers/stepfathers were considered to be responsible for

Six service dispositions were documented by the 2003 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child

In cases where emotional maltreatment was the primary substantiated maltreatment, 63% of cases involved children whose families had at least one previous case opening (an estimated 9,772 investigations).

maltreatment had no previous case history, 38% had previous cases that had been closed less than 12 months before the CIS-2003 investigation, while another 24% had previous cases that had been closed for more than 12 months.

In child maltreatment investigations where physical abuse was the primary substantiated maltreatment, 31% had previous

This included referrals made internally to a specialized program provided by a child welfare agency/office, and referrals made externally to other agencies or services. A referral selection indicated that a formal referral had been made, not that the child or family had actually started to receive services.

Sixteen referral categories were tracked:

**Parent Support Program:**

ro122.5ulally

S

h

•

•

•





Child victims of neglect experienced the greatest rate of placement, with an estimated 23% of substantiated child investigations

An application to child welfare court  
was made in 3% of investigations  
where exposure to domestic violence







In cases where sexual abuse was indicated as the primary substantiated maltreatment, 63% (an estimated 1,075) involved males. The proportion of males to females varied considerably by age group. There were approximately the same number of male and female victims under 8 years of age, with slightly more males in the 4 to 7 age group and slightly more females in the group up to 3 years of age. Females, however, constituted 79% of the adolescent victims.

In cases with neglect as the primary substantiated maltreatment, 52% (an estimated 14,630) involved males, and 48% (an estimated 14,630) involved females. The proportion of males is higher for children up to 3 years of age (58%) and 8 to 11 years of age (55%), while more females are in the groups age 4 to 7 (54%) and 12 to 15 (52%).

In cases where emotional maltreatment was identified as the primary substantiated maltreatment, 54% (an estimated 14,630) involved females, and 46% involved males

(an estimated 14,630) involved males. There are more males in the 8 to 11 age group (53%), but more females in the groups aged up to 3 years (56%), 4 to 7 years (56%), and 12 to 15 years (57%).

In cases where exposure to domestic violence was the primary substantiated maltreatment, 52% involved males (an estimated 14,630) and 48% involved females (an estimated 14,630).

Child functioning was documented using a checklist of problems that child welfare workers were likely to discover through their investigations. The child functioning checklist (see Appendix D, Maltreatment Assessment Form) was developed in consultation with child welfare workers and researchers to





school attendance (13%), negative peer involvement (13%), ADD/ADHD (13%),

In cases where neglect was identified as the primary substantiated maltreatment, the most common child functioning issues were irregular school attendance (24%), other emotional or behav-

In cases

thamf.7(19)-7Ab9(5)8.9(15)8.r.782(in)6ele63 cthas(3)51v.9( Ma4 ind3(r8)-r.1n)7.1(t)-16.9(n we)1v.9(3)511()41me9(h16.9(n F1l)((3)511)





In investigations where physical abuse was the primary form of substantiated maltreatment, 55% involved children in two-parent households (35% in households with two biological parents and 20% in two-parent blended households), 30% involved children in lone female-parent households, 7% in lone male-parent households, 14.3% in blended families, and 14.3% in lone parent households. In a sample of 547 involved children in two-parent households (354 in households with two biological parents and 213 in two-parent blended households), 34% involved children in lone female-parent households, 7% in lone male-parent households, 14.3% in blended families, and 14.3% in lone parent households. In a sample of 547 involved children in two-parent households (354 in households with two biological parents and 213 in two-parent blended households), 34% involved children in lone female-parent households, 7% in lone male-parent households, 14.3% in blended families, and 14.3% in lone parent households.

w ggca-86(s)16-36(s)9173(f)h0-5(s)40(7)44734-)]TJT\*0.00719Tc0.0193Tw[(me)2124(tsh)-145.6(hnd 134 in)34.34v)17.45oavfd tw0-pafe

ages of the caregivers (see Appendix D,  
CIS Maltreatmo1.18(n)-7.7(d)-10.6( 2327.58GE 0.4(ts)JT\*ses)J5(sa)5.6d2(eF2.7(3r eac)2(m)-01

Investigating workers were asked to indicate the age of up to two caregivers for each household. Ten age groups were listed on the Household Information Sheet, enabling workers to estimate the

children who lived with female care-  
givers over 30 years of age, and 16%

In 26% of cases where physical abuse was the primary form of substantiated maltreatment, the child had no siblings 19 years of age or under living in the home, in 39% the child had one sibling, in 22% the child had two siblings, and 13% the child had three or more siblings.

In 40% of investigations where sexual abuse was the primary form of substantiated maltreatment, the child had no siblings 19 years of age or under living in

siblings who were not investigated, and 40% had no siblings.

Where neglect was the primary substantiated maltreatment, 66% of investigated children had at least one sibling who was also the subject of investigation, 10% had siblings who were not investigated, and 24% had no siblings.

Where emotional maltreatment was the primary substantiated maltreatment, 67% of children had at least one sibling who was also the subject of investigation, 9% had siblings who were not investigated, and 24% had no siblings.

benefits/El/social assits60t-0s60,

a(i)nd

In 1% of investigations children were living in unsafe housing conditions (Table 7-7). In 61% of





At least one functioning issue for  
male caregivers was identified in

Custody Disputes, by Primary Category of Substantiated Child Maltreatment, in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 2003

**Primary Category of Substantiated Maltreatment**

---

This chapter describes referral and agency characteristics, including referral sources, malicious and unsubstantiated

3.15fe10.15(rr7.98(a-3.45(e)).6(n)-15411(a)93.14g)-1.48se10.15(n)1.8(c)110.84ys szeand ustur



**School:** Any school personnel  
(teacher, principal, teacher's aide, etc.)

**Mental Health Professional/  
Agency:** Includes family servic



of referrals from these two sources. Although reports from professionals were rarely judged to have been intentionally false (2%, or an estimated 2,134 investigations), these reports

Very large agencies/  
offices conducted 44% of investiga-  
tions where sexual abuse was the  
primary form of substantiated mal-  
treatment. An additional 31% were



Table 8-6 presents child maltreatment investigations by the investigators' years

Workers with social work degrees (BSW or MSW) conducted 62% of investigations where the primary form of substantiated maltreatment was sexual abuse. Workers with BA or BSc degrees conducted 24% of these investigations, and workers with college diplomas or certificates conducted 11%.

Workers with BSW or MSW degrees conducted almost

This report provides a comprehensive statistical profile of children and families who came into contact with child welfare services in Canada in 2003. This final chapter examines the findings of the 2003 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-2003) against those of the 1998 study (CIS-1998).<sup>79</sup>

Tables 9-1 to 9-7 describe some of the

**More Children Investigated  
in Each Family**

Table 9-2 describes the relationship between the number of investigated families and the number of investigated

### **Variations by Category of Maltreatment**

Table 9-3 indicates some factors  
underlying the increase in the rate

In 1998, the incidence of substantiated maltreatment for this age group was 9.54 per 1,000 children (11,686 investigations). The incidence rate more than





placement or court involvement, pro-







where maltreatment is not confirmed.  
The CIS-2003 uses a three tiered classi-















questions during the study you are encouraged to contact your Site



### **Question 5: Describe referral and investigated maltreatment**

Provide a short description of the referral, including, as appropriate:

- the investigated maltreatment and major investigation results (e.g., type of maltreatment, substantiation, injuries);
- other reasons for referral, if not maltreatment (e.g., adoption home assessment, request for information).

### **Question 6: List all children in the home**

Please include biological, step, adoptive and foster children.

**A) List the first names of the children:** List the first name of all children who are currently living in the home.

**B) Age of all children in the home:** Indicated the age of all the children in the home. Use 0 for children less than 1 year of age.

**C) Sex of all children in the home:** Indicat the sex of all the children in the home.

**dren0104.3(:)1**

**Tf2-1.1127**

**-en**



Please check the ethno-racial category  
that best describes the caregiver and



***Cultural Services:***



*Neglect*



suffered life threatening or permanent harm (e.g.: three year old child







always asking for money from the till.

The following is the worker information





To calculate the variance, the stratified design allowed us to assume that the variability between strata was zero and that the total variance at the Canada level was the sum of the variance for each strata.

Calculating the variance for each



Sexual Abuse and Neglect Incidence per 1,000	350 0.07	106 0.02	30.24 30.24	142 0.03	557 0.11
Sexual Abuse and Emotional Maltreatment Incidence per 1,000	111 0.02	49 0.01	44.40 44.40	14 0.00	207 0.04
Sexual Abuse and Exposure to Domestic Violence Incidence per 1,000	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Neglect and Emotional Maltreatment Incidence per 1,000	3,942 0.83	715 0.00		2,542	5,343

Neglect and 1(e)x-28(p[N-27.25(m)s[6(s).7(l)-r2.7(t)e-44(t)-35.9(2-27.7(l)-32.7())]J0.4258 -1.1818 TD0.0074 TD70.0197 Do)26()-11s)8c)-11.5(t5(ic V





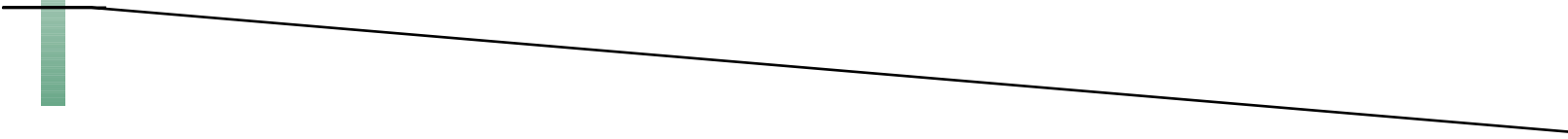


























---

