

PREVALENCE OF CHILD ABUSE

California:

- In 2001 there were 671,422 reported cases of child abuse.
- Physical abuse and neglect represented over 50% of all reported cases.
- From 1990-2000 child abuse reports increased 18%.
- One-tenth of all substantiated cases of child abuse in the U.S. are from California.

Nationally:

- A child is abused once every 32 seconds.
- An estimated 1100 children died as a result of abuse and neglect in 1999 and 1200 in 2000.
- The Health and Human Services agency estimates there were 3 million referrals of maltreatment to child protective service agencies in 2000. Approximately 879,000 cases were substantiated. Of these substantiated cases, 739,000 were abused by a parent or parents, and 140,000 by someone other than a parent.
- Child abuse kills more children in America than do falls, choking, suffocation, or fires.
- An estimated one of every four female children will be molested by age 18.
- An estimated one of every six male children will be molested by age 18.
- The OJJDP reports there were an estimated 58,200 child victims of non-family abduction, defined more broadly to include all non-family perpetrators (friends, acquaintances & strangers) last year - over half were sexually assaulted by the perpetrator.
- The direct and indirect costs of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. is estimated at \$258 million per day.

Characteristics of the offenders:

- All but 3% of offenders who committed violent crimes against children were male.
- Inmates who victimized children were less likely than other inmates to have a criminal record – nearly 33% of child victimizers had never been arrested prior to the current offense, compared to less than 20% of those who victimized adults.
- Violent child victimizers were substantially more likely than those with adult victims to have been physically or sexually abused as children.
- About 10% of violent offenders with child victims received life or death sentences and the average prison term was 11 years, a shorter average sentence than received by those with adult victims.

Miscellaneous:

- 68% of released prisoners were rearrested within 3 years. Of this 68%, half were reconvicted.
- In 1990, the mean sentence lengths for rape and other sexual assault were 10 and 6 years respectively. The percent of actual time served for rape was 7 years and for other sexual assault 4 years.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics
Child Victimization: Violent Offender and Their
Victims--Executive Summary
March 1996, NCI-158625
Full text with tables available from:
Bureau of Justice Statistics Clearinghouse
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