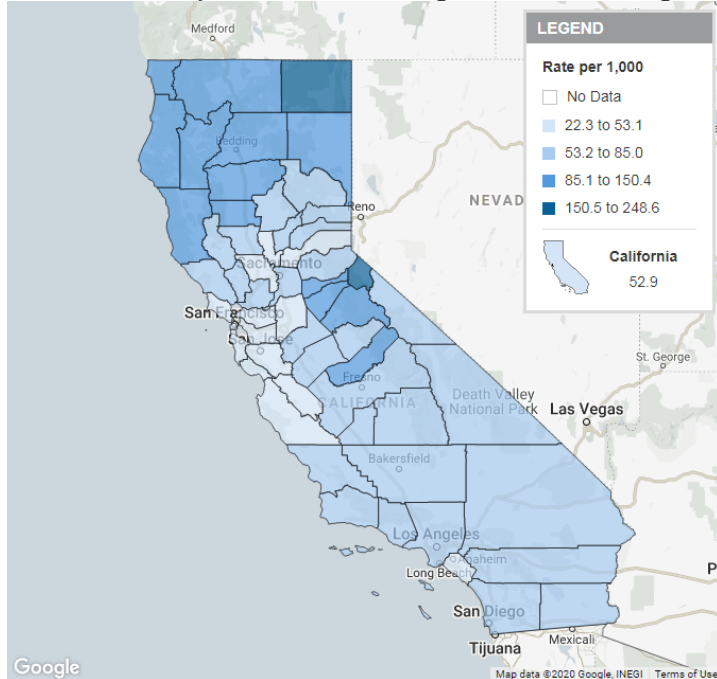


## Child Abuse and Neglect in California

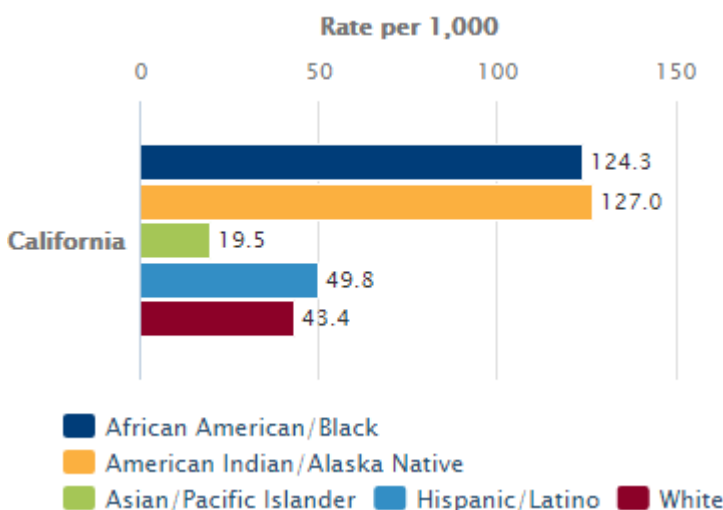
Children with Reports of Abuse or Neglect: 2018; Showing Counties



**Definition:** Number of children with reports of abuse or neglect per 1,000 children ages 0-17 (e.g., in 2018, 52.9 per 1,000 California children were reported to have been abused or neglected).

**Data Source:** Webster, D., et al. [California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports](#), UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (Jul. 2019).

Children with Reports of Abuse or Neglect, by Race/Ethnicity: 2018



**Definition:** Number of children with reports of abuse or neglect per 1,000 children ages 0-17, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2018, 49.8 per 1,000 Hispanic/Latino children in California were reported to have been abused or neglected).

**Data Source:** Webster, D., et al. [California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports](#).

### What It Is

Kidsdata.org provides the number and rate of children ages 0-17 with one or more reports of abuse or neglect, along with the number and rate of children with maltreatment allegations verified as substantiated cases of abuse or neglect. Data on both allegations and substantiations of child maltreatment also are available by age group, by race/ethnicity, and by type of maltreatment.

### Why This Topic Is Important

An estimated one in four children experience abuse or neglect in the U.S. Child maltreatment can cause serious physical injuries and even death. It also can cause lifelong physical, emotional, and behavioral problems, which can lead to intergenerational impacts. Children who are abused or neglected are more likely to have problems such as anxiety, depression, delinquency, difficulty in school, and early sexual activity. Child maltreatment (along with other adverse childhood experiences) can disrupt brain and physical development, particularly when experienced in early childhood, increasing the risk for numerous health problems in adulthood, including heart disease, cancer, substance abuse, mental illness, and suicidal behavior, among others. While most victims do not repeat the cycle of abuse later in life, they are more likely to enter into unhealthy relationships as teens and adults and to mistreat their own children.

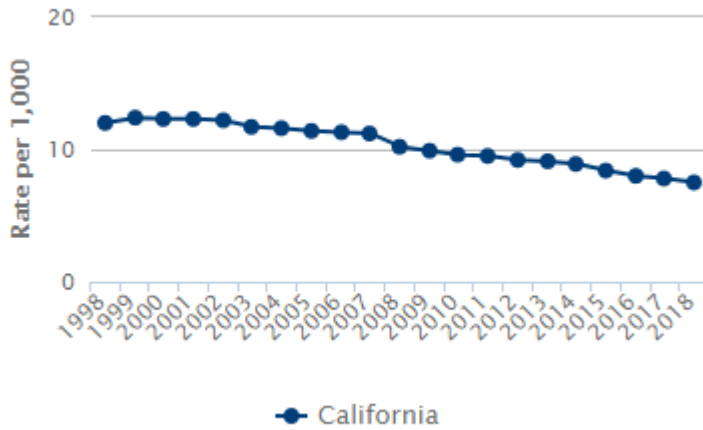
Beyond the impact on individuals and families, child abuse has a significant impact on society. The economic cost of nonfatal child maltreatment is estimated at \$428 billion annually in the U.S., based on 2015 data.

While abuse and neglect occur in all types of families, certain factors place children at increased risk. For example, children under age 4 (especially infants) and those with special needs are at greatest risk for maltreatment. Examples of family and community risk factors include substance abuse or mental illness in the family, social isolation, parenting stress, young parental age, poverty, domestic violence, and neighborhood violence. Children of color, particularly American Indian/Alaska Native and African American children, are overrepresented in the child welfare system.

### How Children Are Faring

In 2018, there were 486,634 California children ages 0-17 with reports (allegations) of child abuse or neglect. Of those, 68,773, or 14%, had one or more allegation substantiated

### Children with Substantiated Cases of Abuse or Neglect



**Definition:** Number of children with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect per 1,000 children ages 0-17 (e.g., in 2018, 7.5 per 1,000 California children were found to have been abused or neglected).

**Data Source:** Webster, D., et al. *California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports*, UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (Jul. 2019).

### Children with Substantiated Cases of Abuse or Neglect, by Type of Maltreatment: 2018

California	Percent
At Risk / Sibling Abused	5.3%
Caretaker Absence / Incapacity	3.6%
Emotional Abuse	3.7%
Exploitation	0.2%
General Neglect	71.1%
Physical Abuse	7.0%
Severe Neglect	4.1%
Sexual Abuse	5.0%

**Definition:** Percentage of children ages 0-17 with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect, by type of maltreatment (e.g., among California children found to have been abused or neglected in 2018, 7% were physically abused).

**Data Source:** Webster, D., et al. *California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports*, UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (Jul. 2019).

(verified) by the state child welfare system. Almost three-fourths (71%) of children with substantiated cases in 2018 suffered general neglect, which occurs when a parent, guardian, or caregiver fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision for the child but no physical injury occurs. Among types of verified and reported child maltreatment, neglect is consistently the most common statewide and in a majority of counties for which data are available. California's rate of substantiated abuse and neglect declined from 12 per 1,000 children in 1998 to 7.5 per 1,000 in 2018. Nearly half of California children with substantiated cases of maltreatment are ages 5 and younger—46% in 2018, up from 40% in 1998.

Statewide, child maltreatment allegations and substantiations disproportionately involve African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native children. More than 120 per 1,000 children in these groups had a report of abuse or neglect in 2018 and at least 20 per 1,000 had a substantiated case of maltreatment. By comparison, rates of reported maltreatment among Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and white children were lower than 50 per 1,000 and rates of substantiated maltreatment were lower than 8 per 1,000.

*View references for this text and additional research on this topic:*

<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/2/child-abuse-and-neglect/summary>



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