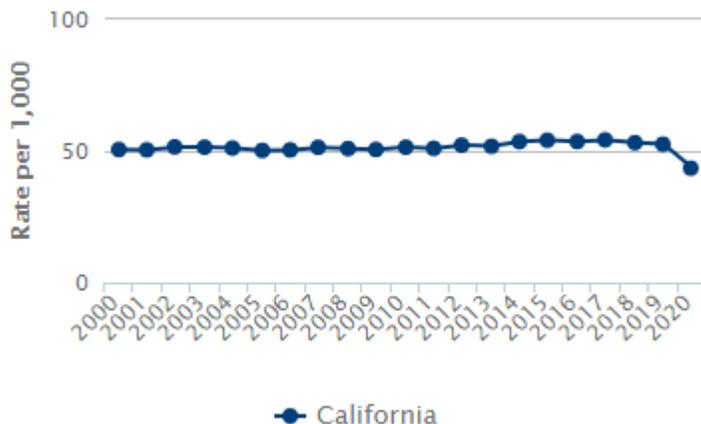


Child Abuse and Neglect in California

Children Ages 0-17 with Reports of Abuse or Neglect



Definition: Number of children ages 0-17 with reports of abuse or neglect per 1,000 children (e.g., in 2020, 43.5 per 1,000 California children were reported to have been abused or neglected).

Data Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project, [CCWIP Reports](#). University of California at Berkeley & California Dept. of Social Services (Oct. 2021).

Children with Substantiated Cases of Abuse or Neglect: 2020; Showing Counties

What It Is

Kidsdata.org provides county-level numbers and rates of children ages 0-17 with one or more reports of abuse or neglect, along with numbers and rates of children with maltreatment allegations verified as substantiated cases of abuse or neglect, overall and by race/ethnicity. Numbers and percentages of children with allegations and substantiations of maltreatment by age group and by type of maltreatment also are available.

Additionally, numbers and rates of emergency department (ED) visits and hospital discharges for maltreatment-related injuries among children are provided at the state level overall, by age group, and by race/ethnicity. Numbers and percentages of ED visits and hospitalizations also are available by expected source of payment, by type of maltreatment, and by length of hospital stay.

Why This Topic Is Important

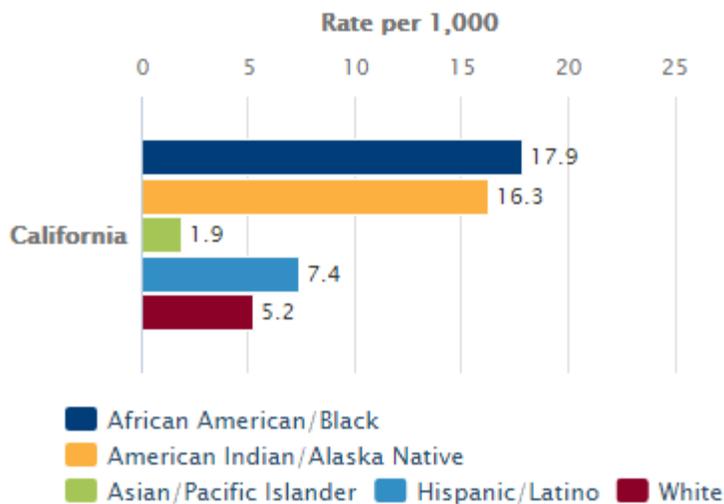
An estimated one in four U.S. children experience abuse or neglect. Child maltreatment can cause serious physical injury and even death. It also can cause lifelong physical, emotional, and behavioral problems, which can lead to multigenerational impacts. Children who are abused or neglected are at increased risk for anxiety, depression, delinquency, difficulty in school, and early sexual activity. Child maltreatment (along with other adverse childhood experiences) can cause toxic stress that disrupts brain and physical development, increasing the risk for numerous health problems in adulthood, such as heart disease, cancer, substance abuse, and mental illness. While most survivors do not repeat the cycle of abuse later in life, they are more likely to mistreat their own children. The harmful effects of child maltreatment can be interrupted by stable and nurturing relationships and environments, and trauma-informed support services.

Beyond the impact on individuals and families, child abuse and neglect have a significant impact on society. Between 2001 and 2016, the estimated average annual cost of hospitalizations due to child maltreatment in the U.S. was \$116 million. The total lifetime economic burden of substantiated nonfatal child maltreatment cases in 2018 has been estimated at \$563 billion for the U.S. and \$53 billion for California.

How Children Are Faring

In 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, 391,546 California children ages 0-

Children with Substantiated Cases of Abuse or Neglect, by Race/Ethnicity: 2020



Definition: Number of children ages 0-17 with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect per 1,000 children, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2020, 7.4 per 1,000 Hispanic/Latino children in California were found to have been abused or neglected).

Data Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project, [CCWIP Reports](#). University of California at Berkeley & California Dept. of Social Services (Oct. 2021).

Hospital Discharges for Injuries Related to Abuse or Neglect, by Age Group: 2020

California	Rate per 100,000
Under Age 1	80.9
Ages 1-2	13.5
Ages 3-5	4.7
Ages 6-10	2.7
Ages 11-15	6.2
Ages 16-17	9.0
Total for Ages 0-17	9.7

Definition: Number of hospital discharges for injuries related to suspected or confirmed abuse or neglect per 100,000 children ages 0-17, by age group (e.g., in 2020, the hospitalization rate for abuse and neglect among California infants under age 1 was 80.9 hospitalizations per 100,000 infants).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, custom tabulation of data from the [California Dept. of Health Care Access and Information](#) and [California Dept. of Finance](#) (Aug. 2022).

17 were reported to have been neglected or abused. After 20 years of relatively stable rates between 50 and 55 children per 1,000, the statewide rate of children with allegations of maltreatment fell to 44 per 1,000 in 2020, a drop of more than 17% compared with 2019 (53 children per 1,000).

Among California children reported to have been neglected or abused in 2020, fewer than 1 in 6 (61,419) had one or more allegation substantiated by the state child welfare system. Overall, the statewide rate of substantiated maltreatment declined from 12 children per 1,000 in 2000 to 7 per 1,000 in 2020. Nearly half of California children with substantiated cases of maltreatment are ages 5 and younger—46% in 2020, up from 39% in 2000.

Child maltreatment allegations and substantiations disproportionately involve African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native children. Statewide, more than 87 per 1,000 children in these groups had a report of neglect or abuse in 2020 and more than 16 per 1,000 had a substantiated case of maltreatment. These rates are more than double the rates for Hispanic/Latino children, more than 2.5 times the rates for white children, and more than 5 times the rates for Asian children.

Rates of emergency department (ED) and hospital use for injuries related to suspected or confirmed child maltreatment also fell in 2020, to 31 ED visits and 10 hospital discharges per 100,000 children. As in previous years, the rate of ED visits for child abuse and neglect among girls was more than double that for boys in 2020 (46 vs. 17 visits per 100,000), with girls accounting for 72% of all visits (up from 67% in 2019). A majority of maltreatment-related ED visits involve sexual abuse or exploitation (60% in 2020), whereas hospitalizations most frequently involve physical abuse (54% in 2020), followed by neglect or abandonment (26% in 2020). Infants under age 1 consistently experience the highest rate of hospitalization for abuse and neglect among age groups (81 discharges per 100,000 in 2020).

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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