

## Maltreatment of Children

### DEFINITION

This indicator reports the average annual number of substantiated maltreatment victims per 1,000 children age 0 to 17 for federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2007 and 2008. Maltreatment is defined by federal law and New Hampshire statute. A case is “substantiated” when the state investigation supports the maltreatment claim (U.S. DHHS 2010).

Federal law provides the following baseline definition of child abuse and neglect: “Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm” (U.S. DHHS 2010).

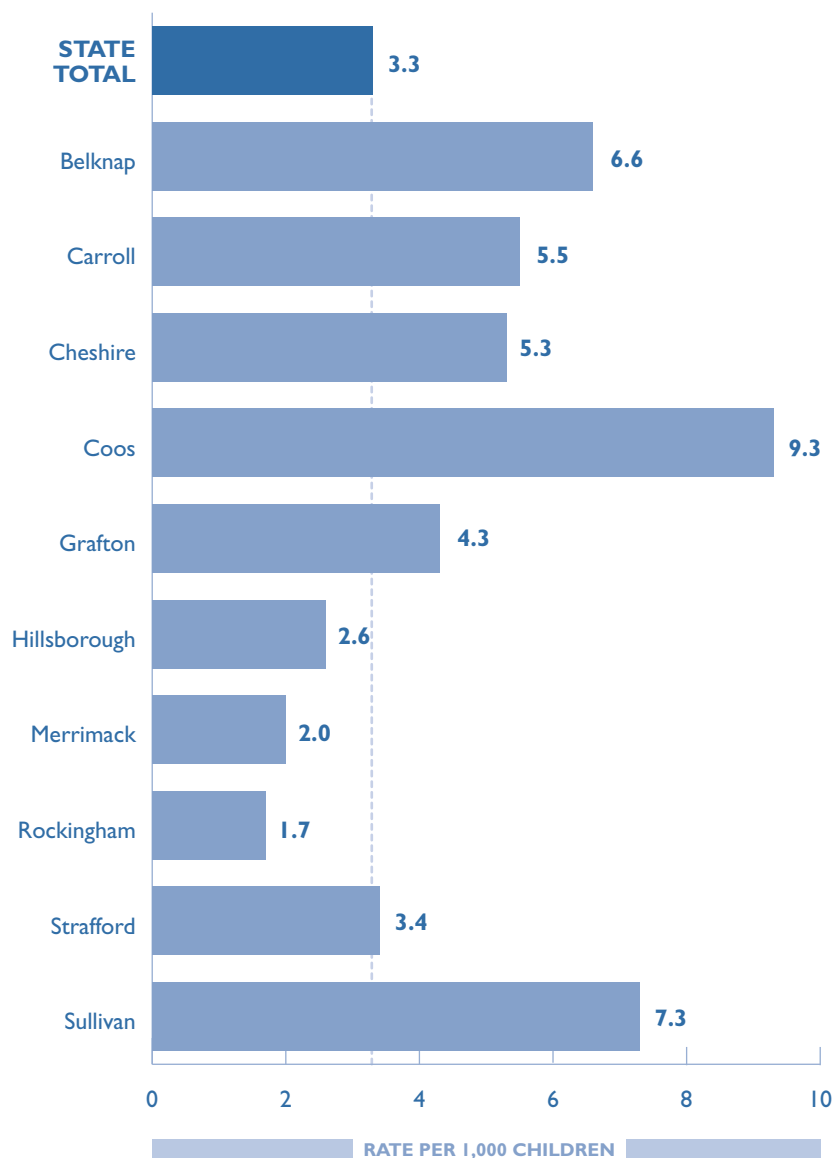
New Hampshire statute defines child abuse to include sexual abuse, intentional or non-accidental physical injury and psychological injury resulting in “emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect.” State statute defines a neglected child as one who is abandoned or one who lacks “proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law or other care or control necessary for his or her physical, mental or emotional health.” A child is also considered neglected when those responsible for the child are unable to provide care because of “incarceration, hospitalization or other physical or mental incapacity” (NH RSA 169-C3).

### CONTEXT

Children who are neglected and abused not only suffer during the period of neglect or abuse but can also experience repercussions throughout life. Over a child’s life, maltreatment increases the risk of physical and mental health problems not limited to brain damage, mental impairment, learning and developmental disabilities, psychiatric disorders, high blood pressure, asthma and ulcers. Abused and neglected children are more likely to smoke cigarettes, use alcohol and drugs, commit crimes, contract sexually transmitted diseases, become teen parents, perform poorly in school, and become antisocial or violent. Abused and neglected children are also more likely to abuse their own children (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2008).

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By County, 2007-2008



## NEW HAMPSHIRE FINDINGS

In 2009, New Hampshire had the fourth lowest Child Maltreatment Victimization rate among the 50 states with 3.2 substantiated unique victims of child maltreatment per 1,000 children under age 18 compared to a national average of 9.3 per 1,000. In New Hampshire in 2009, 813 perpetrators neglected or abused 924 children. One quarter (25 percent) of these substantiated, unique victims were first time victims compared to 73.4 percent nationally. More girls were victims (53.9 percent) than boys (46.1 percent). In 2009, in 79 percent of New Hampshire child maltreatment cases the perpetrator was a parent (U.S. DHHS 2010). More than half of the victims in New Hampshire had a reported disability compared to 11.1 percent nationally. In 2009, New Hampshire had one report of child fatality resulting from abuse or neglect (U.S. DHHS 2010).

In FFY 2008, 78 percent of substantiated maltreatment victims in New Hampshire were neglected, 14 percent were physically abused, 13 percent were sexually abused, and 1 percent were emotionally or psychologically abused. Some children suffered more than one form of abuse or neglect. Older children were less likely to be abused or neglected than younger children. Statewide nearly 30 percent of unique victims of child abuse or neglect were under four years old. Only 6 percent of victims were age 16 or older (NH DCYS 2010).

**In the period from FFY 2007-08, average rates of substantiated child abuse and neglect varied across the state with highest rates in the state's least populous counties. Rockingham County had the lowest rate with just 1.7 substantiated maltreatment cases per 1,000 children under age 18. Coos County in the North Country had the highest rate with 9.3 substantiated maltreatment cases per 1,000 children, nearly triple the state rate of 3.3 per 1,000 (NH DHHS 2010). (see chart on previous page)**

## SOURCE OF DATA FOR ILLUSTRATION/METHODOLOGY

New Hampshire Division of Children, Youth and Families. 2010. National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) Data FFY 2007- 2008.

N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 169:3c (in effect for 2010)

## REFERENCES

Child Welfare Information Gateway. 2008. *Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect*. April. [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long\\_term\\_consequences.pdf](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.pdf)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (U.S. DHHS), Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. 2010. *Child Maltreatment 2009*. [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/index.htm#can](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm#can).