



Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse occurs when a child is exploited sexually by another person. It may take many forms: exposure of the genitals, obscene phone calls, obscene internet solicitation, voyeurism, use of pornography, fondling, and oral, vaginal, or anal intercourse.

Children are most commonly sexually abused by someone they know and trust. When these acts occur within a family, the sexual abuse is called incest. There may be a single occurrence, but most likely the abuse will continue over a period of time, often for years. The abuse generally begins with acts such as fondling.

The child is coerced and manipulated into remaining silent. Victims are terrified of revealing the abuse due to confusion, guilt, and fear of being blamed, punished, or not believed.

The vast majority of child perpetrators are teenage or adult males. Most are heterosexual men, many with children and a wife or girlfriend. Perpetrators come from all socio-economic levels, religions, and ethnic backgrounds.

Victims/survivors of child sexual assault do not cause the abuse and are never to blame. The offender, not the victim, is responsible. If you know or suspect a child is being or has been sexually abused, you can call your local rape crisis program, child protective service agency, or the 24-hour National Child Abuse Hotline for assistance and referral: 1-800-422-4453.

- In 2008 in Wisconsin there were 1,594 substantiated cases of sexual abuse. (*Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report*, Wisconsin Dep't of Children and Families (2008), available at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/PDF/2008CANReport.pdf>)
- In Wisconsin in 2008, Female children were victims of sexual abuse at a higher rate than male children. Females were victimized slightly more frequently between the ages of less than 1 year to 11 years, but substantiated cases of sexual abuse of females between the ages of 12 to 18 years was about five times greater than cases of male victims. (*Id.*)
- A 2009 Wisconsin report on *reported* sexual assaults showed that over the past 5 years, children ages 15 and under represented over two-thirds of *all* victims in the state. (*Sexual Assaults in Wisconsin: 2009*, Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (2010)).
- In 2008, approximately 69,184 children in the United States were reported to Child Protective Services for suspected child sexual abuse. The actual number is likely to be higher because these numbers reflect only children whose cases are investigated by Child Protective Services. (*Child Maltreatment: 2008*, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm08/cm08.pdf>).
 - Of these substantiated reports of child sexual abuse, about 34% of victims were between 12 and 17 years. (*Id.*)
- In the U.S. in 2008, the most common perpetrators of child sexual abuse were friends or neighbors of the child/family (58%), "others" such as strangers and babysitters (41%), other professionals (36%) and other relatives (31%) (*Id.*).
- Research into the prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse shows that roughly 15% of males and 30% of females have been victims of child sexual abuse. (Baker, C. D. 2002, *Female survivors of sexual abuse: An integrated guide to treatment*. Hove: Brunner-Routledge).
- Almost 70% of all reported sexual assaults are of children under the age of 17. ("Statistics Surrounding Child Sexual Abuse" Darkness to Light Confronting Child Sexual Abuse with Courage, September 22, 2006).
- Worldwide, 73 million boys and 150 million girls under the age of 18 were victims of forced sexual intercourse or other sexual violence in 2002. ("Child Sexual Abuse" American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry November 2, 2006)
- Based on a study of 1,500 Internet users, ages 10 to 17, approximately 1 in 7 received an unwanted sexual solicitation between 1999 and 2000. 4% of these youths experienced an aggressive solicitation, where the solicitor attempted to contact the child offline. Only 5% of these solicitations were reported to law enforcement, an Internet service provider, or other authority (Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor. *Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later*. Alexandria, Virginia. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2006)
- Sixty-seven percent of all victims of sexual assault reported to law enforcement agencies were juveniles (under the age of 18); 34% of all victims were under age 12. One of every seven victims of sexual assault reported to law enforcement agencies

were under 6. Forty percent of the offenders who victimized children under age 6 were juveniles (under the age of 18). (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000).

- It is estimated that 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 6 boys are sexually abused in the U.S. The numbers of boys affected may be falsely low because of reporting techniques. (*Child Sexual Abuse*, Nat'l Center for PTSD (2010) available at <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/child-sexual-abuse.asp>)
- 90% of teenagers involved in trading sex for money or survival needs (prostitutes) are survivors of sexual violence, such as incest and sexual assault, according to the Michigan Family Impact seminars on prostituted teens, 2002.

Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse

Physical Signs MAY include

- bruises, welts or broken bones
- burns
- missing hair
- poor hygiene
- injuries or redness around the genitals
- injuries at different stages of healing
- injury or medical condition that hasn't been properly treated
- slowed physical development

Behavioral signs MAY include

- poor grades
- lack of concentration

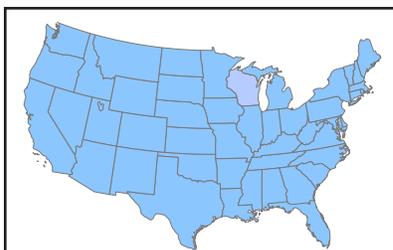
- frequent tardiness or absence from school
- difficulty making and keeping friends or withdrawal from others
- unhappiness, depression
- acts of anger, aggression, destruction of property, hurting themselves or others
- low self-esteem
- problems with expressing feelings
- fatigue and sleeping problems
- constant attention seeking
- speech problems
- reluctance to go home
- hunger, begging for food, stealing
- unusual fears and knowledge of sex

Source: Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin

Warning signs of online sexual child abuse may include:

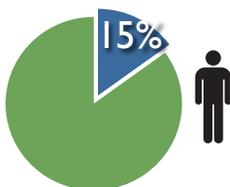
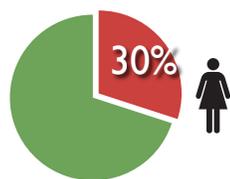
- Your child spends large amounts of time online, especially at night.
- You find pornography on your child's computer.
- Your child receives phone calls from people you don't know, or makes calls, sometimes long distance, to numbers you don't recognize.
- Your child receives mail, gifts, or packages from someone you don't know.
- Your child turns the computer monitor off or quickly changes the screen on the monitor when you come into the room.
- Your child becomes withdrawn from the family.
- Your child is using an online account belonging to someone else.

This fact sheet was updated in 2010 by the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Inc. (WCASA). WCASA is a membership organization of sexual assault centers, other organizations, and individuals throughout Wisconsin working to end sexual violence. For information sheets on other topics or to become a member, contact WCASA, 600 Williamson St., Suite N-2, Madison, WI 53703, (608)257-1516, www.wcasa.org. For more information about sexual assault or to receive support with a sexual assault experience, contact your local sexual assault program. This sheet may be reproduced in its original format only. This information does not constitute legal advice.



Nationally (2008)

69,184 victims/survivors
children reported to Child Protective Services for suspected child sexual abuse



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Race and Child Sexual Abuse

Race	Number
African-American	10,953
American Indian or Alaska Native	460
Asian	444
Hispanic	13,728
Multiple	1,164
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	120
Unknown	7,174
White	33,959
Total:	68,002 (data from 49 states)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2008 report on Child Maltreatment: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm08/cm08.pdf>

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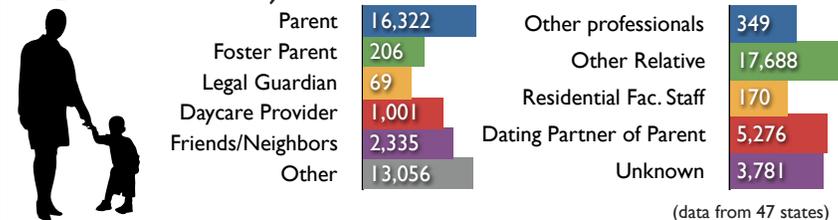
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Perpetrators 60,749



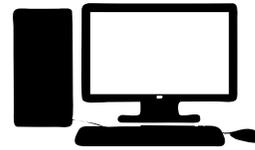


in Wisconsin
1,594 victims/survivors

this number represents *substantiated* cases [substantiated refers to cases in which Wisconsin Child Protective Services (CPS) determines that child maltreatment has occurred based upon a preponderance of the evidence; CPS's evidence standard is a lower standard of evidence than that implemented in juvenile or criminal court procedures]

4,842 unsubstantiated allegations
305 allegations with no information
6,741 total number of allegations presented to CPS

source: Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report, Wisconsin Dep't of Children and Families (2008)
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/PDF/2008CANReport.pdf>



WARNING
SIGNS OF ON-
LINE SEXUAL
CHILD ABUSE
MAY INCLUDE:

- YOUR CHILD SPENDS LARGE AMOUNTS OF TIME ONLINE, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.
- YOU FIND PORNOGRAPHY ON YOUR CHILD'S COMPUTER.
- YOUR CHILD RECEIVES PHONE CALLS FROM PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW, OR MAKES CALLS, SOMETIMES LONG DISTANCE, TO NUMBERS YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE.
- YOUR CHILD RECEIVES MAIL, GIFTS, OR PACKAGES FROM SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW.
- YOUR CHILD TURNS THE COMPUTER MONITOR OFF OR QUICKLY CHANGES THE SCREEN ON THE MONITOR WHEN YOU COME INTO THE ROOM.
- YOUR CHILD BECOMES WITHDRAWN FROM THE FAMILY.
- YOUR CHILD IS USING AN ONLINE ACCOUNT BELONGING TO SOMEONE ELSE.

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Please note that this is an abridged information sheet; for more information visit: http://www.wcasa.org/pages/Resources-Info_Sheets-Child-SA.php

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(608) 257-1516 • [HTTP://WWW.WCASA.ORG](http://www.wcasa.org) • WCASA@WCASA.ORG • [TWITTER.COM/WCASA](https://twitter.com/wcasa)