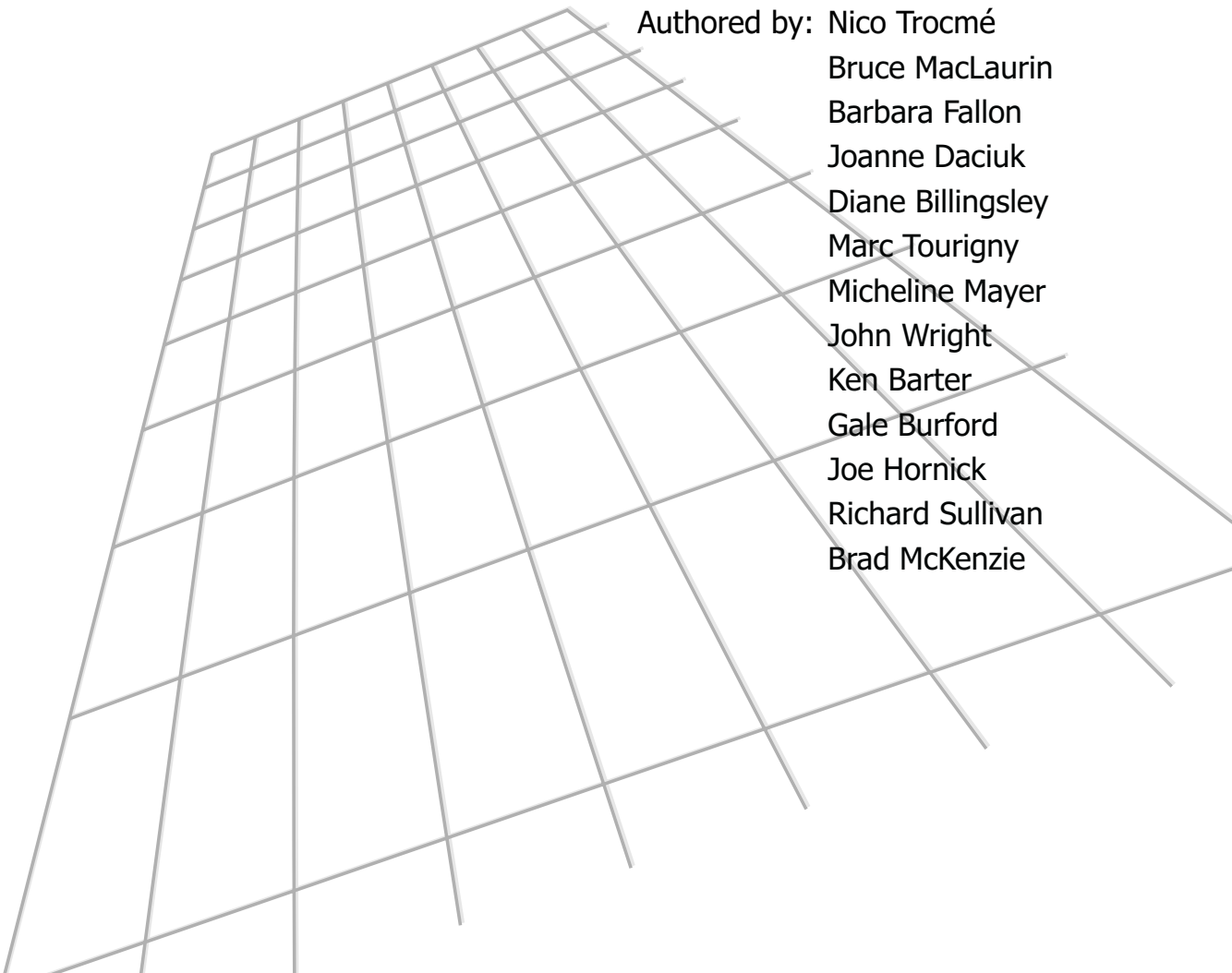




# Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect

## Final Report

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## ■ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The 1998 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS) reflects a truly national effort by a group of over 700 child welfare service providers, researchers and policy makers committed to improving services for abused and neglected children through research. Health Canada provided core funding for the study, with additional funds provided by the provinces of Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia and by the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit. In addition to its financial contribution, Health Canada, through the Child Maltreatment Division (CMD) of the Bureau of Reproductive and Child Health, provided a critical organizational infrastructure for the study, with the active support of the CMD Chief, Gordon Phaneuf, Sharon Bartholomew, Lil Tonmyr, and the Director of the Bureau, Catherine McCourt. The National Advisory Committee to the CIS (see Appendix B) provided key input into the design of the study and in supporting implementation. I would particularly like to acknowledge the contributions of Sandra Scarth (Committee Chair), who has championed this project for many years, and of Harriet MacMillan and David Wolfe, who provided constructive feedback and support throughout the project.

The CIS was conducted by a large team of researchers who demonstrated an exceptional ability to keep focused on the objectives of this collective effort

while bringing to bear their own expertise. In addition to the report authors, special acknowledgement should go to site-based researchers who played a critical role in presenting the study and generating support while maintaining high standards for case selection. These include Janet Douglas, Ralph Bodor, Avery Calhoun, Jairo Ortiz, Warren Helfrich, Julie Thompson, Joanne Boucher, Marie-Claude Larrivée, Sonia Hélie, Chantal Lavergne, Marie Jacob, Brian Kenny, Julia Foran, and Brenda Romans (see Appendix A for institutional affiliations). In addition to the formal members of the research team particular thanks must go to Mike Boyle, McMaster University, who assisted with the design of the study, and Tim Daciuk, who provided many useful data processing tips.

The child welfare social workers and managers who participated in the study deserve special recognition for finding the time and the interest to participate in the study while juggling their ever-increasing child protection responsibilities. Although for reasons of confidentiality we cannot list their names, on behalf of the CIS Research Team I thank the child welfare professionals who participated in the CIS.

Nico Trocmé  
CIS Principal Investigator  
June 2000

## ■ DEDICATION

---

This report is dedicated to the children and families who are served by Canadian child welfare workers. It is our sincere hope that the study contributes to improving their well-being.

In memory of Paul Steinhauer, a champion for Canada's children.

## ■ FOREWORD

---

The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS) provides, for the first time, national estimates of child abuse and neglect reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services in Canada. These data will strengthen our understanding of the extent of child maltreatment in Canada while also guiding our policy, program, and research responses to the problem. In addition to examining the incidence rates of child maltreatment, the study explored the characteristics of the children, youth and families who were the subject of child welfare investigations for alleged child abuse and neglect. The CIS also examined selected key determinants of health to better understand their relationship to the incidence of child maltreatment.

In January 1995, the Child Welfare League of Canada, with financial support from Health Canada, conducted an expert consultation, which affirmed the feasibility of developing a study to generate national estimates of the extent of child abuse and neglect in Canada. The consultation also underscored the importance of securing the support of the provincial, territorial, and federal governments for this effort. In 1996, Health Canada conducted bilateral consultations with senior provincial/territorial child welfare officials, native child welfare leaders, and key informants from the academic, research and non-government communities. The results corroborated the consensus view from the expert consultation that there was strong support for an initiative that would strengthen the national knowledge base on the incidence and characteristics of child abuse and neglect.

After a national request for proposals competition, Health Canada, through the Child Maltreatment Division, awarded a 3-year contract to a consortium of researchers led by Nico Trocmé of the University of Toronto to develop the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect. Each of the pro-

vincial and territorial governments contributed materially to the realization of the study, most commonly by furnishing in-kind donations, which served to facilitate the participation of child welfare workers in the respective data collection sites. Four provinces (Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia) elected to provide additional resources to the study to allow for over-sampling in their jurisdictions.

To help ensure that the study was both relevant to those who provide help and support to children and youth, and methodologically rigorous, a multidisciplinary National Advisory Committee was established to provide advice and counsel to the study. Expertise drawn from many disciplines was represented on the Committee, including child advocacy, child protection, native child welfare, children's mental health, public health, social work, and forensic medicine.

The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect constitutes the foundation for a national surveillance system on child maltreatment. The data collection and analysis undertaken within the CIS complements existing Health Canada child-related surveillance systems, including those addressing child injury and perinatal health. The study's descriptive analysis will be supplemented by in-depth secondary analysis, which will be pursued collaboratively with the academic, professional, and governmental sectors. The potential contribution of the CIS to the advancement of our understanding of child maltreatment is best appreciated within the context of a core system of periodic data collection, analysis and interpretation, and communication of information for action. The CIS provides the baseline against which future cycles of the study can be compared, thus allowing for the generation of trend analysis and the identification of patterns in the incidence and reporting of child maltreatment. The population health approach reflected in the child

health surveillance activities of Health Canada has helped to guide the design and implementation of the CIS. Similarly, the evidence base that the study has established will serve to enrich program and policy development work on children's issues while providing the knowledge and data to strengthen child advocacy efforts and direct future targeted research.

This report and the companion document *Child Maltreatment in Canada: Selected Results from the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect*, which was developed to make the results of the study easily accessible to a wide readership, provide descriptive data from the CIS data set. The study was based on child welfare workers' professional judgements about cases of reported child maltreatment that they had investigated. As such, it is truly the view from the "frontline" of child protection. The study only addressed cases that had been reported to child welfare services; therefore, unreported cases of alleged abuse and neglect are not included in the CIS. This constraint and other methodologic limitations of the study are carefully described in both reports.

The study used a tri-level substantiation format. Child welfare workers were asked to classify investigated cases of child abuse and neglect into one of three categories: unsubstantiated, suspected, or substantiated. By including both suspected and substantiated cases the study has furnished a wide range of child welfare case classifications. This will facilitate future

research into the factors that affect case determination, case planning, duration of service, and related issues.

Many people have worked diligently to ensure the realization of this study. The more than 700 child welfare workers from across the country who have participated directly in the study, the child welfare administrators at the local level, and the provincial/territorial directors of child welfare have all helped to ensure its success. The national research team and research associates, who are listed in Appendix A, have all demonstrated an unflagging commitment to the study. The National Advisory Committee (see Appendix B for a list of members), which is chaired by Sandra Scarth, Executive Director Emeritus of the Child Welfare League of Canada, has provided valuable direction and guidance. Gratitude is due as well to the Child Welfare League of Canada, which has been an ardent champion of the study.

The CIS demonstrates the value and importance of collaborative work within the child maltreatment prevention community. The model of partnerships formed across sectors, which draw different disciplines together with a common focus to improve efforts to prevent abuse, should inform future initiatives in this area.

Gordon Phaneuf  
Child Maltreatment Division  
Health Canada

---

## ■ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

### Introduction

The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS) is the first nation-wide study to examine the incidence of reported child maltreatment and the characteristics of children and families investigated by Canadian child welfare services. The primary objective of the CIS is to provide reliable estimates of the scope and characteristics of child abuse and neglect investigated by child welfare services across Canada. The study includes substantiated, suspected, and unsubstantiated child welfare investigations, but does not include reports that were screened out before investigation or cases that were investigated only by police. The CIS is not designed to document unreported cases (see Definitional Framework and Figure 1-2 in Chapter 1 for a detailed presentation of the scope of the study).

The study is designed to

1. examine the rates of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment, as well as multiple forms of maltreatment, reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services;
2. examine the severity of maltreatment in terms of chronicity and evidence of harm/risk;
3. examine selected determinants of health for investigated children and their families; and
4. monitor short-term investigation outcomes, including substantiation rates, placement in care, use of child welfare court, and criminal prosecution.

### Methodology

The CIS collected information directly from child welfare workers about children and their families investigated for reported child maltreatment. A multi-stage sampling design was used, first to select a representative sample of 51 child welfare service areas across Canada, and then to track child maltreatment investigations conducted in the selected sites during the months of October to December 1998. The final sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations was used to derive national estimates of the annual incidence rate and characteristics of investigated child maltreatment in Canada.

Information was collected using a three-page Maltreatment Assessment Form designed to be completed with the first written assessment by the investigating worker. The instrument collected information on the investigated child's family, child functioning, up to three different forms of maltreatment (including the levels of substantiation, alleged perpetrator(s), and duration of maltreatment), physical and emotional harm, the provision of ongoing child welfare services, out-of-home placement, court activity, and police involvement.

The CIS provides an estimate of the number of child-based investigations of suspected child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment) conducted by Canadian child welfare services in 1998. Incidents of suspected maltreatment that were investigated more than once during the year were counted as separate investigations; thus, the unit of analysis in the report is the child maltreatment investigation.<sup>1</sup> The estimates are presented

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<sup>1</sup> Because children who were reported and investigated more than once in a year were counted as separate incidents, the unit of analysis is the investigation, not the investigated child.

in this report in terms of three levels of substantiation, according to the following definitions:

- A case is considered **substantiated** if the balance of evidence indicates that abuse or neglect has occurred. The term is synonymous with the terms “verified” or “confirmed,” which are used in some jurisdictions.
- A case is **suspected** if there is not enough evidence to substantiate maltreatment, but there nevertheless remains a suspicion that maltreatment has occurred.
- A case is **unsubstantiated** if there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the child has not been maltreated.

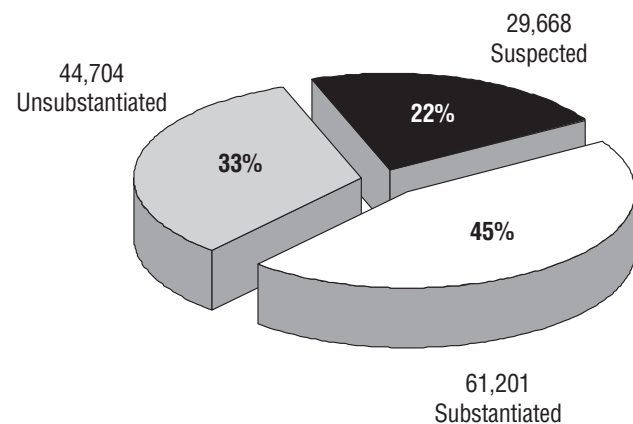
The Executive Summary highlights some of the major findings from this CIS Final Report. Corresponding tables, definitions, and interpretive notes in the main body of the report should be consulted in order to accurately interpret the statistics and figures highlighted in the Executive Summary. In order to maintain comparability with the tables presented in the CIS Final Report, multiple category substantiation is used for Figure 1, and primary category substantiation is used for Figures 2-15. For further discussion of the substantiation rates for cases with multiple forms of maltreatment, please refer to the CIS Final Report, Chapter 3, page 26.

## Incidence of Abuse and Neglect

An estimated 135,573 child maltreatment investigations were carried out in Canada in 1998, an annual incidence rate of 21.52 investigations per 1,000 children. An estimated 61,201 child maltreatment investigations (45%) were substantiated, an estimated 29,668 child investigations (22%) remained suspected, and an estimated 44,704 child investigations (33%) were unsubstantiated (Figure S-1).

Although the relatively large proportion of unsubstantiated cases may surprise some readers, it is consistent with substantiation rates documented in most jurisdictions.<sup>2</sup> Unsubstantiated cases stem from reports made in good faith by referral sources who are required by law to report suspected maltreatment. In the CIS, less than 4% of cases were considered by the investigating worker to have been knowingly false and malicious in intent (see Table 8-2(a)).

**Figure S-1**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998 (Weighted Estimates)**



<sup>2</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration of Children, Youth and Families. *Child maltreatment 1997: reports from the states to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999.

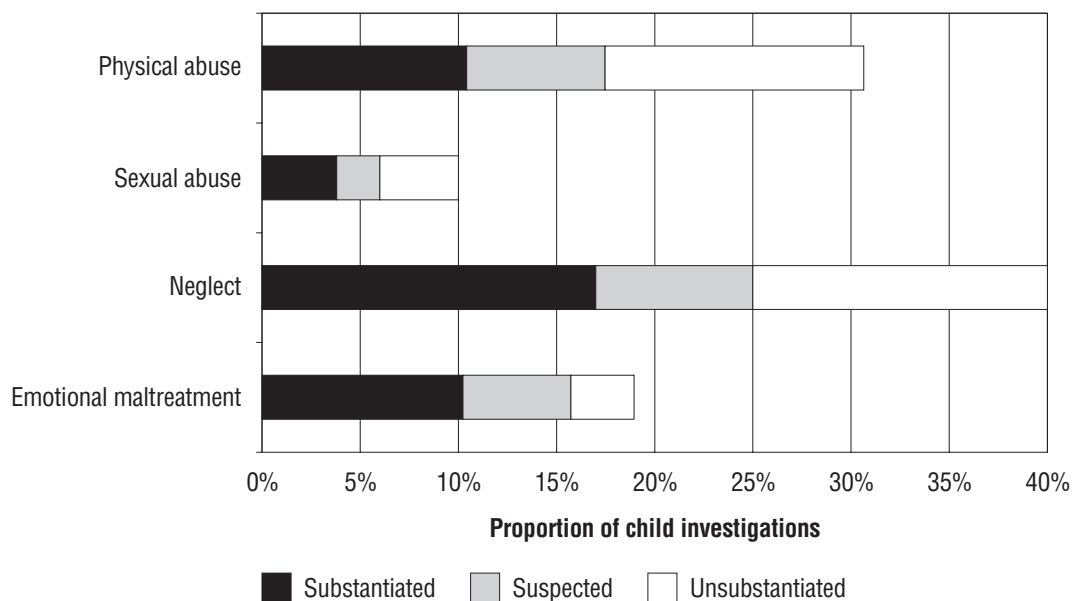


## Primary Categories of Investigated Maltreatment

The CIS tracked 22 forms of maltreatment subsumed under four categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment. Up to three forms of maltreatment were documented for each investigated child. The **primary category of maltreatment** is the one that is considered to best characterize the major investigatory concern. Figure S-2 shows the primary category of maltreatment by level of substantiation. Cases involving more than one category of maltreatment (24%) are not included in Figure S-2. For inclusive rates and counts for each form of maltreatment see Tables 3-5 to 3-8.

Thirty-one percent of child investigations involved alleged **physical abuse** as the primary category of investigated maltreatment (Figure S-2). Of this number, 34% were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 43% were unsubstantiated. Ten percent of child investigations involved **sexual abuse** as the primary reason for investigation, of which 38% were substantiated, 22% remained suspected, and 40% were unsubstantiated. **Neglect** was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment. Forty percent of child investigations involved allegations of neglect as the primary reason for investigation. Forty-three percent of these were substantiated, 20% remained suspected, and 37% were unsubstantiated. **Emotional Maltreatment** was the primary reason for investigation in 19% of child investigations, and of these cases 54% were substantiated, 29% remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated.

**Figure S-2**  
**Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



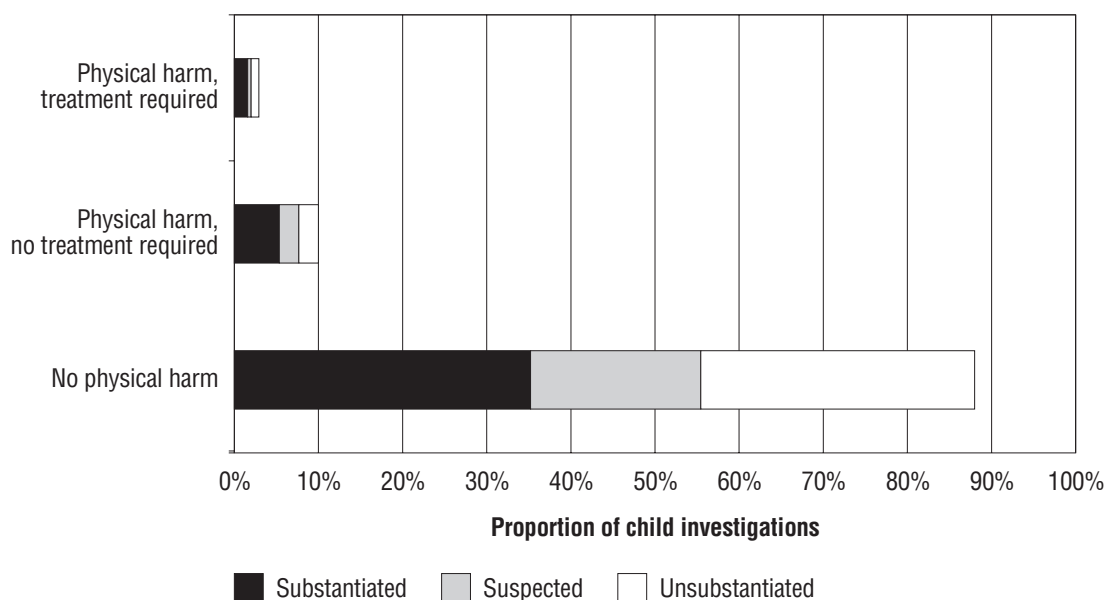
## Physical Harm

Some form of physical harm was documented in 13% of child maltreatment investigations (Figure S-3). In 3% of investigations, physical harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment; in a further 10%, harm was noted but no treatment was considered to be required. Sixty-three percent of cases in which treatment was required for physical harm were substantiated,

12% remained suspected, and 25% were unsubstantiated.

Documented harm involved primarily bruises, cuts, and scrapes (69% of harm situations) and other health conditions (24%). Five percent of child investigations in which physical harm was noted involved head trauma, 4% involved burns and scalds, and 3% involved broken bones (see Table 4-1(b)).

**Figure S-3**  
**Physical Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

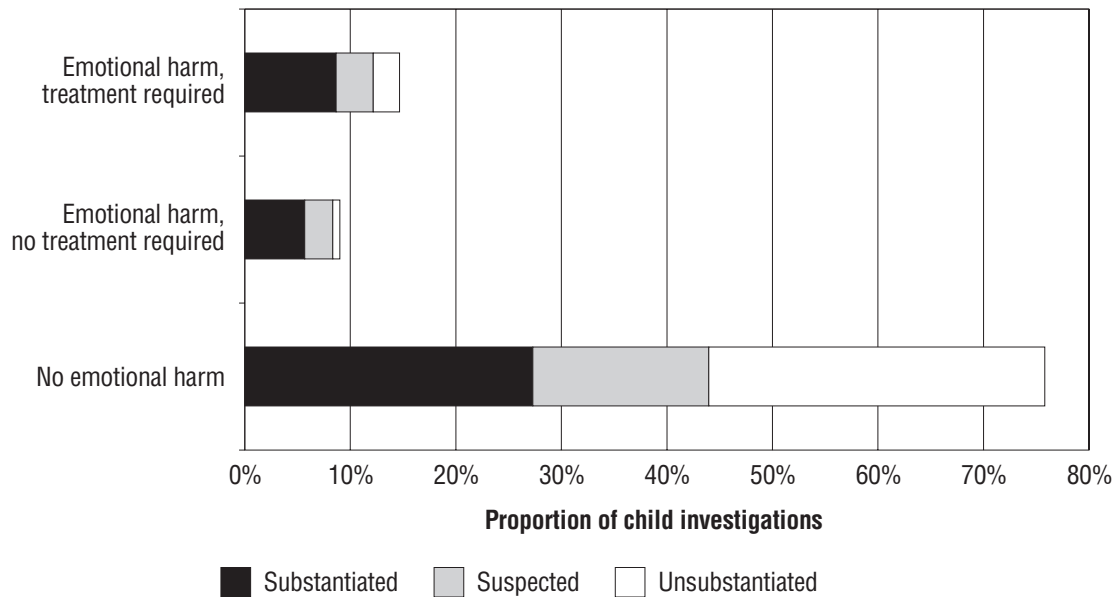


## Emotional Harm

Emotional harm was noted in 24% of child maltreatment investigations (Table 4-2). In 15% of investigations emotional harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment. In a further 9%, harm was noted but no treatment was considered to be required (Figure S-4).

Fifty-nine percent of cases in which treatment was required for emotional harm were substantiated, 24% remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated.

**Figure S-4**  
**Emotional Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



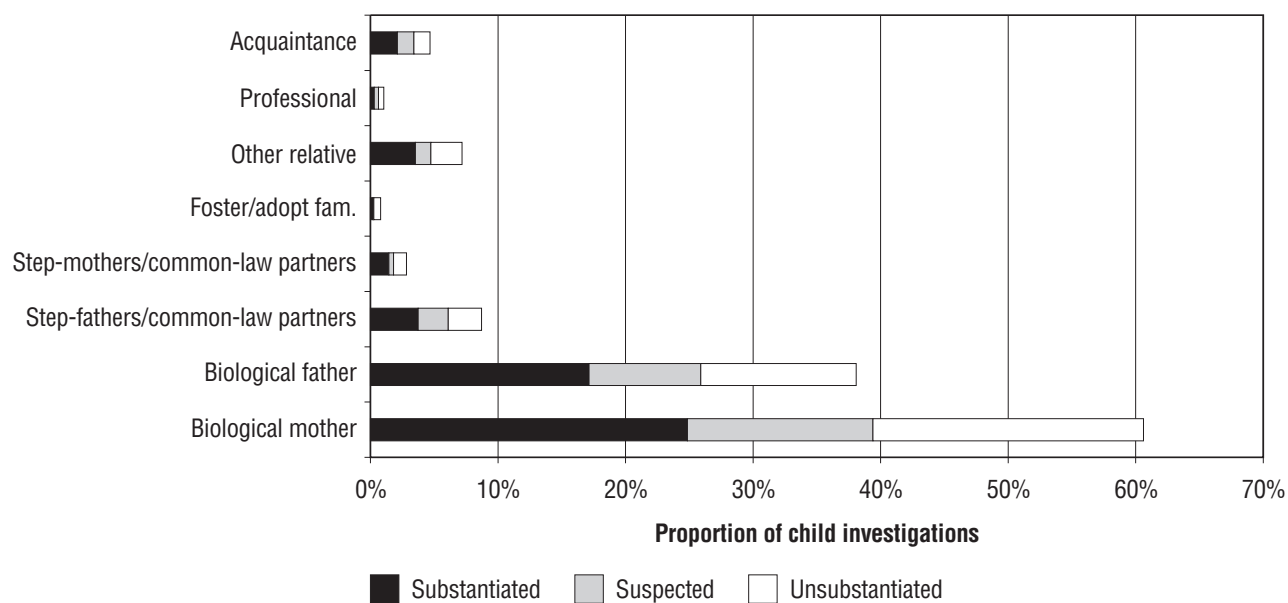
## Alleged Perpetrators

Most child investigations involved allegations against parents: biological mothers (61%), biological fathers (38%), step-fathers/common-law partners (9%), or step-mothers/common-law partners (3%). Other than parents, relatives were the most frequently suspected perpetrators (7%, see Figure S-5). It should be noted that many non-familial allegations of abuse

are investigated by the police, not by a child welfare service. One should also note that there is overlap between alleged perpetrator classifications, since multiple perpetrators were identified for the primary category of maltreatment in 24% of child investigations.

Substantiation rates for alleged perpetrators ranged from 18% for professionals to 51% for step-mothers.

**Figure S-5**  
**Alleged Perpetrator in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



## Ongoing Child Welfare Services

After the initial investigation, 34% of cases remained open for ongoing services, and 64% were to be closed (Figure S-6). In a further 2% of investigations, ongoing case status had not yet been determined.

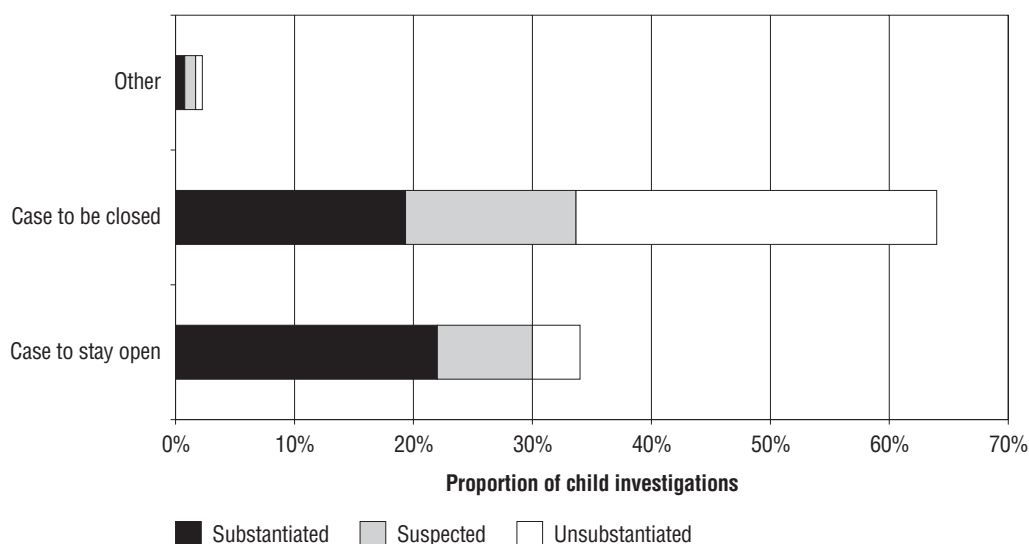
Sixty-five percent of child investigations remaining open were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 12% were unsubstantiated.

At least one child or family referral to a program designed to offer internal or external services beyond

the parameters of ongoing child welfare services was made in 60% of investigations (see Table 5-2(b)).

Twenty-eight percent were referred for other family/parent counseling, 21% for a parent support program, 10% for caregiver drug/alcohol counseling, and 6% for domestic violence counseling (see Table 5-2(a)). Child-focused referrals were made most frequently for other child counseling (16%), psychiatric or psychological services (15%), and recreational programming (5%, see Table 5-2(b)).

**Figure S-6**  
**Ongoing Child Welfare Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



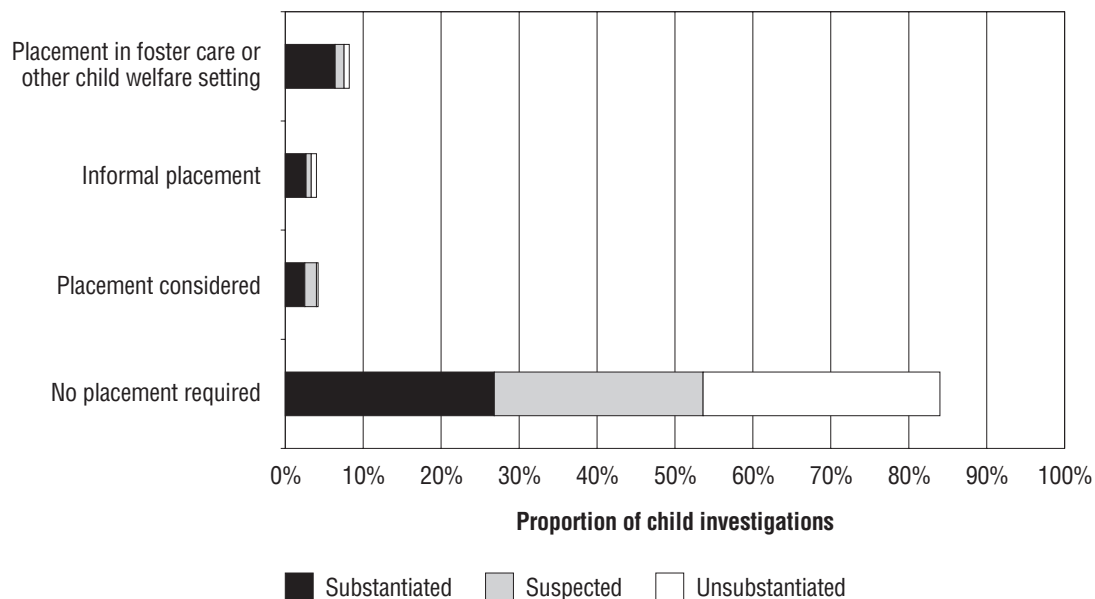
## Out-of-Home Placement

Eight percent of child maltreatment investigations led to a child being placed in child welfare care (foster placement, group home, or residential/secure treatment) during the initial investigation (Figure S-7). It should be noted that the CIS did not track children placed in care after the initial investigation.

Seventy-eight percent of these cases were substantiated, 14% remained suspected, and 8% were unsubstantiated.

In 4% of child maltreatment investigations, the investigated children were moved to an informal out-of-home care arrangement by the end of the investigation, staying either with relatives, neighbours, or another community care provider. In these circumstances, child welfare services do not assume formal care of the child. In an additional 4% the possibility of placement was considered. No placement was required for 84% of child maltreatment investigations.

**Figure S-7**  
**Out-of-Home Placement in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

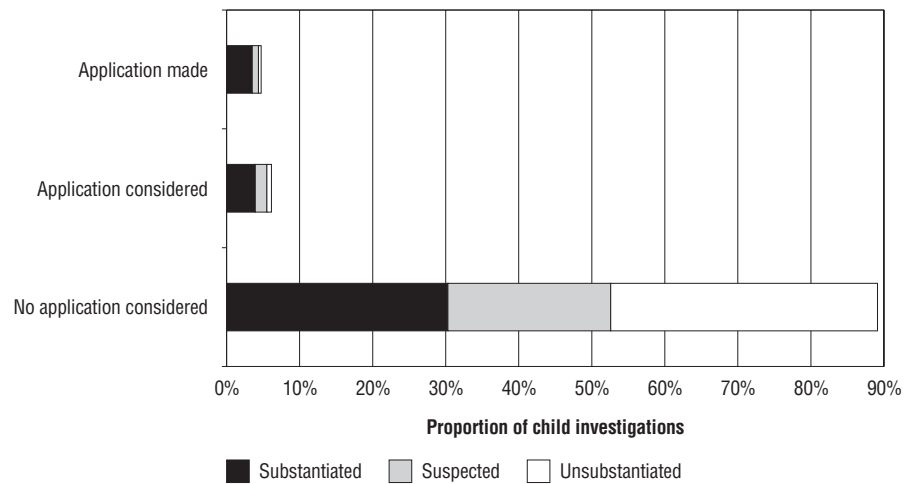


## Child Welfare Court

Applications to child welfare court were made in 5% of child maltreatment investigations and were being considered in an additional 6% of cases (Figure S-8). The CIS did not track court applications laid after the initial investigation.

Seventy-four percent of the investigations in which an application was made to child welfare court were substantiated, 18% remained suspected, and 8% were unsubstantiated.

**Figure S-8**  
**Applications to Child Welfare Court in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

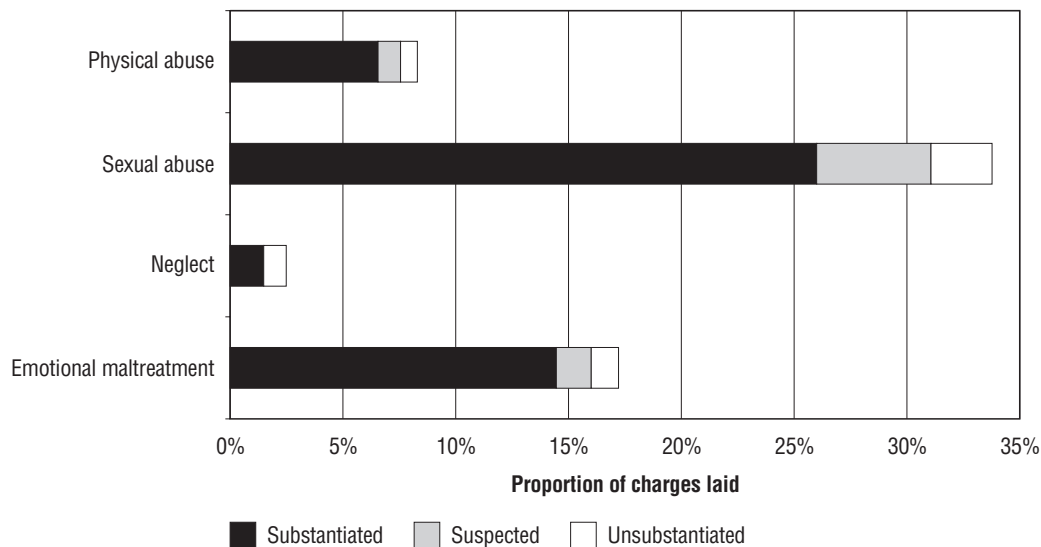


## Police Investigations and Charges

Police investigations occurred in 21% of child maltreatment investigations, and criminal charges were laid in 10% (see Table 5-5). Eight percent of physical abuse investigations and 34% of sexual abuse investigations resulted in charges laid, whereas only 2% of neglect investigations and 17% of emotional maltreatment investigations resulted in criminal charges being laid (Figure S-9).

Substantiation rates were generally high when criminal charges were laid regardless of primary category of maltreatment ranging from 68% for neglect to 84% for emotional maltreatment. The CIS did not track charges laid after the initial investigation.

**Figure S-9**  
**Charges Laid in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**





## Child Age and Sex

Provincial and territorial child welfare statutes vary in terms of the age range covered for child maltreatment investigations. Some jurisdictions limit their investigation mandates to children under 16, and others extend their investigations to youth up to 18. To ensure consistency in the application of definitions across Canada, CIS data are reported for children aged 0 to 15 years.

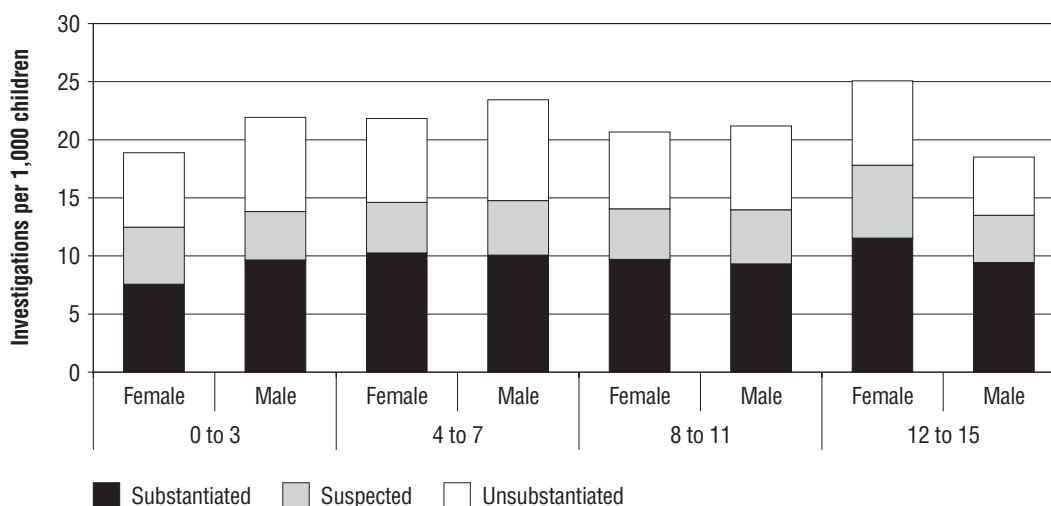
The incidence of investigated maltreatment ranged from 18.5 per 1,000 children among 12 to 15 year old males, to 25.08 per 1,000 for females in the same age group (Figure S-10). The overall incidence rate per

1,000 children was similar among females (21.65 investigations per 1,000 children) and males (21.26 investigations per 1,000 children, see Table 6-1).

Comparisons between age and sex categories must be made with caution because investigations by category of maltreatment confound these comparisons (e.g. male children were investigated less often in cases of sexual abuse, see Table 6-3).

Substantiation rates by age and sex ranged from 40% among females between 0 and 3 years old to 51% among adolescent males 12 to 15 years old.

**Figure S-10**  
**Child Age and Sex in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Incidence of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998 (Weighted Estimates)**



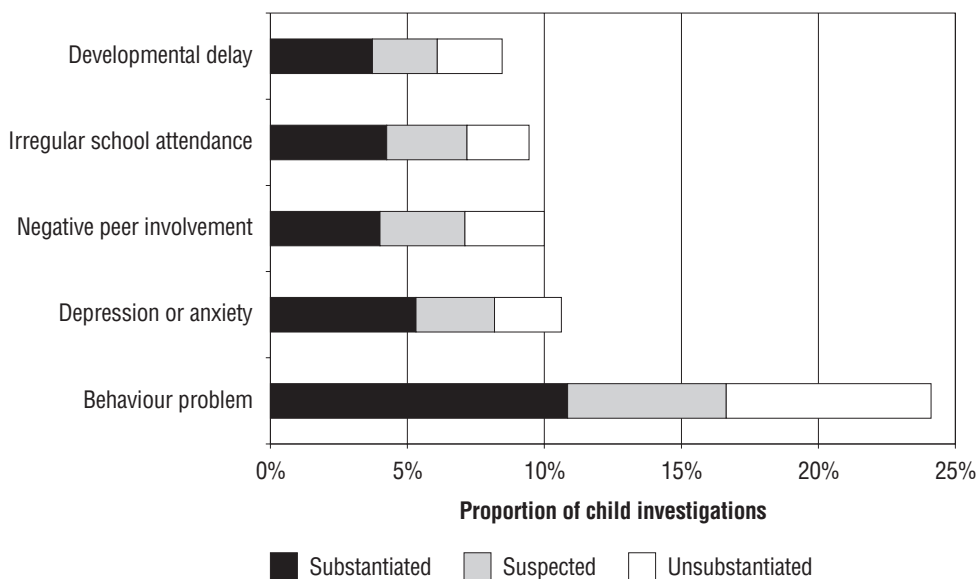
## Child Functioning

In 44 percent of child investigations, at least one child functioning issue was indicated by the investigating worker (see Table 6-4). The five most often indicated child functioning issues are detailed in Figure S-11. A behaviour problem in the home or community was indicated in 24% of investigations,

depression or anxiety in 11%, negative peer involvement in 10%, irregular school attendance in 9%, and developmental delay in an estimated 8% of child investigations.

Substantiation rates for cases involving these child functioning problems ranged from 40% for negative peer involvement to 50% for depression or anxiety.

**Figure S-11**  
**Child Functioning in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

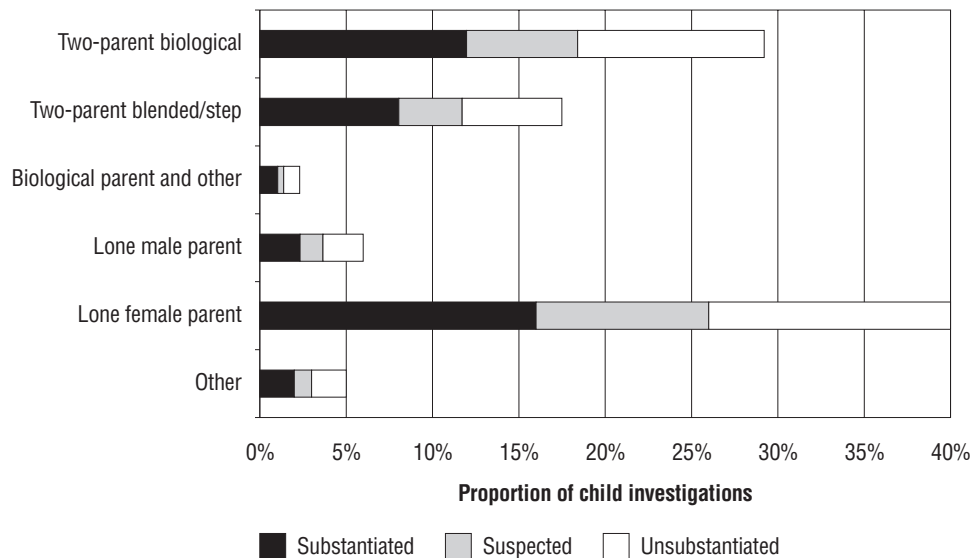


## Household Structure

Twenty-nine percent of child maltreatment investigations involved children who lived with their two biological parents, and in a further 18% children lived in a two-parent blended family (Figure S-12). Forty-six percent of cases involved children living in a family led by a lone parent: 40% in a lone female parent household and 6% in a lone male parent household. Rates of substantiation ranged from 40% (lone female parent) to 46% (two-parent blended/step).

Of those investigations involving children living with a mother, 61% lived with a mother who was over 30 years old and 17% with a mother aged 25 or under. Of investigations involving children living with a father, 75% lived with a father who was over 30 years old and 10% with a father aged 25 or under (see Table 7-2).

**Figure S-12**  
**Household Structure in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



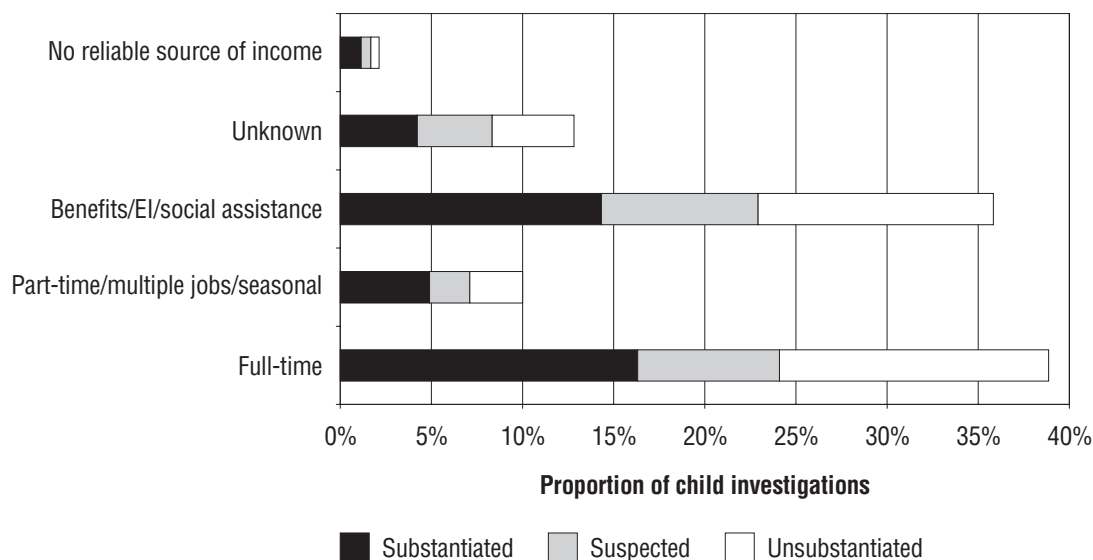
## Source of Income

Thirty-nine percent of child maltreatment investigations involved children in families that derived their primary income from full-time employment (Figure S-13). Thirty-six percent involved children from families that received social assistance or some other form of benefits, and an additional 10% involved children who lived in families relying on part-time employment/multiple jobs or seasonal employment. In 13% of child investigations the source of income was unknown by the investigating worker, and in 2% no reliable source of income was reported.

Substantiation rates ranged from 33% for cases in which the income source was unknown to 54% for cases in which no reliable source of income was identified by the investigating worker.

Fifty-seven percent of child investigations involved children living in rental accommodations (47% in private market rentals and 10% in rental units in a public housing complex). In 26% of investigations children lived in purchased homes, 6% in other accommodations, and 1% in shelters or hostels (see Table 7-6).

**Figure S-13**  
**Household Source of Income in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



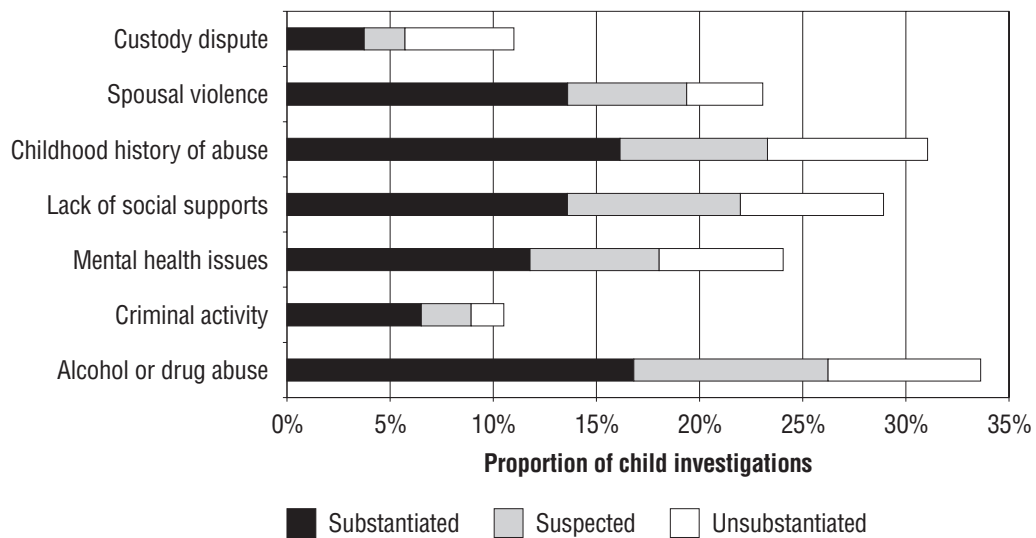
## Caregiver Functioning and Family Stressors

At least one caregiver functioning issue and/or other family stressor was identified in 73% of child investigations (see Table 7-10). The seven most frequently reported are detailed in Figure S-14. Alcohol or drug abuse was reported in 34% of investigations,

childhood history of abuse in 31%, lack of social supports in 29%, mental health problems in 24%, spousal violence in 23%, custody dispute in 11%, and criminal activity in 11% of child investigations.

Substantiation rates for the caregiver functioning and family stressors ranged from 34% for custody dispute to 62% for criminal activity.

**Figure S-14**  
**Caregiver Functioning and Other Family Stressors in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



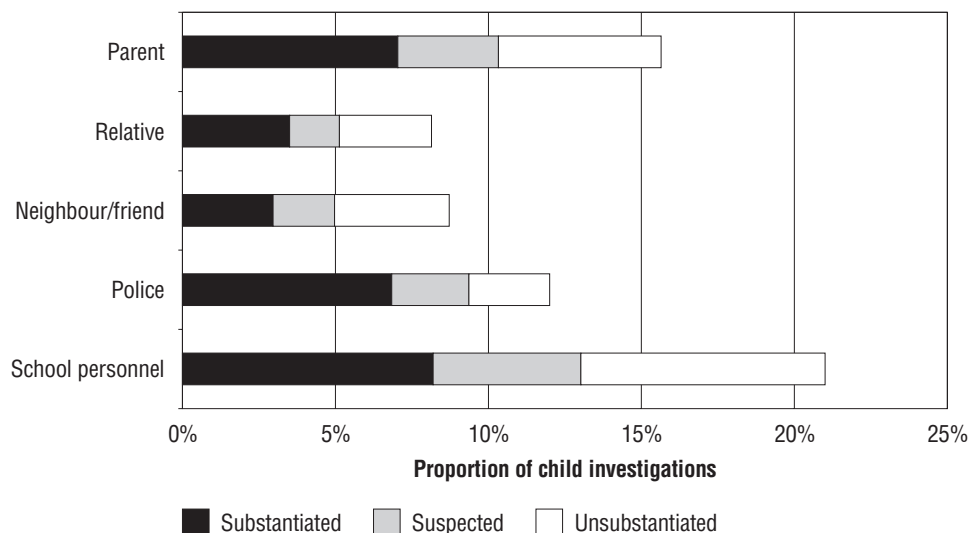
## Referral Sources

In 59% of investigations the initial referral was made by a professional (see Table 8-1(b)). The largest source of referrals was school personnel, who made 21% of maltreatment investigation referrals to child welfare services (Figure S-15). The second most common source of referral was parents, totaling 16% of cases. Twelve percent of maltreatment investigations were referred by the police. Neighbours/friends made 9% of referrals and relatives made 8%.

Substantiation rates ranged from 13% for anonymous referrals to 57% for referrals from police (see Table 8-1(a) & (b)).

Fifty-one percent of investigated children had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment; another 12% lived in families that had previously received child welfare services. Only 34% of children came from families for which no previous record of service was noted, and for an additional 3% of children, child welfare service history could not be determined (see Table 8-3).

**Figure S-15**  
**Referral Sources in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**



## Future Research

The CIS is a rich data set of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations with information on child and household characteristics, forms and severity of maltreatment, and outcomes of investigation. It is the largest national data set of its type available for research purposes and lends itself particularly well to three major lines of inquiry: (1) exploring the characteristics of different forms of reported maltreatment; (2) determining factors that influence outcomes of investigations (substantiation, child welfare court, criminal charges, placement in out-of-home care, and provision of services); and (3) comparing the CIS to comparable national and international statistics.

The greatest potential for the CIS lies in future studies that will build on the baseline information collected. Repeated cycles of the study will examine changes over time in rates of investigated maltreatment. Additional studies are needed to examine cases that are not reported to child welfare services. Such a series of coordinated studies will help to establish a national surveillance system that will provide the public, service providers, policy makers, and researchers with critical information for improving the well-being of children at risk of maltreatment.





## ■ 1. INTRODUCTION

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The following report presents the major descriptive findings from the 1998 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS). The CIS is the first nation-wide study to examine the incidence of reported child maltreatment and the characteristics of the children and families investigated by Canadian child welfare services. The incidence estimates presented in this report are based on a survey, completed by child welfare workers, of a representative sample of child maltreatment investigations conducted in Canada in 1998. This introduction presents the rationale and objectives of the study, provides an overview of the Canadian child welfare system, describes the definitional framework used for the study, and outlines the organization of the report.

### Background

There is currently no source of comprehensive, Canada-wide statistics on children and families investigated because of suspected child abuse or neglect. In Canada, most child abuse and neglect statistics are kept by provinces and territories. Because of differences both in definitions of maltreatment and methods for counting cases, it is not possible to aggregate provincial and territorial statistics. The lack of comparability of provincial and territorial data has hampered the ability of governments and social service providers to develop national and regional policies and programs that effectively address the needs of maltreated children. National data are also needed to provide a meaningful context for interpreting findings from Canadian and international child maltreatment research.

Health Canada responded to this evolving need by funding a feasibility study for a national study of reported child abuse and neglect.<sup>3</sup> The study examined

a number of potential case selection strategies and consulted with service providers, government officials, and researchers. The review concluded that, given the highly decentralized nature of child welfare services in Canada, a survey of a representative sample of child welfare services was the most timely and cost-effective approach.

Recognizing the need for better national child maltreatment information, Health Canada provided funding for a national incidence study. This study is the foundation of a national surveillance system on child maltreatment, which will provide a basis for trend analysis and will guide the development of public policies and programs for children and youth at risk of maltreatment.

In October 1997, a research contract for the CIS was awarded to a consortium of researchers headed by Nico Trocmé, Director of the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Social Work. The CIS selected a representative sample of Canadian child welfare offices and used a standardized case selection form to gather information on investigated children and their families directly from child welfare investigators.

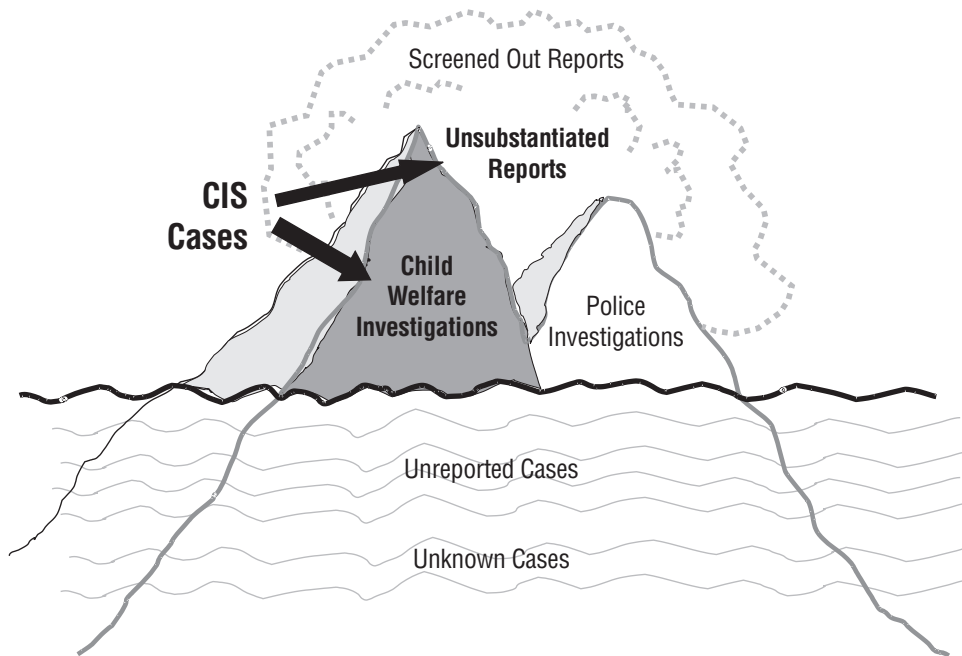
### Objectives and Scope of the CIS

The primary objective of the CIS is to provide reliable estimates of the scope and characteristics of child abuse and neglect investigated by child welfare services across Canada. As illustrated by Figure 1-1, the cases tracked by the study include substantiated and unsubstantiated child welfare investigations, but do not include reports that are screened out before the investigation or cases that are investigated only by the

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<sup>3</sup> Trocmé N, Michalski J, et al. *Canadian incidence study of reported child maltreatment: methodology and feasibility review*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto, Centre for Applied Social Research, Faculty of Social Work, 1995.

**Figure 1-1**  
**Scope of CIS\***



\* Adapted from Trocmé N, McPhee D et al. *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect*. Toronto: Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1994; Sedlak AJ, Broadhurst DD. *Executive summary of the third national incidence study of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

police. The CIS is not designed to document unreported cases (see Definitional Framework and Figure 1-2 for a detailed presentation of the scope of the study).

Specifically, the study is designed to

1. Examine the rates of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment, as well as multiple forms of maltreatment, reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services;
2. Examine the severity of maltreatment in terms of chronicity and evidence of harm/risk;
3. Examine selected determinants of health for investigated children and their families; and
4. Monitor short-term investigation outcomes, including substantiation rates, placement in care, use of child welfare court, and criminal prosecution.

## Child Welfare Services in Canada

Child welfare legislation and services are organized in Canada at the provincial and territorial levels. Child welfare is a mandatory service, directed by provincial and territorial child welfare statutes. Although all child welfare systems share certain basic characteristics organized around investigating reports of alleged maltreatment, providing various types of counseling and supervision, and looking after children in out-of-home care, there is considerable variation in the organization of these service delivery systems (see Table 1-1). Some provinces and territories operate under a centralized, government-run child welfare system; others have opted for decentralized models run by private, mandated agencies. Likewise, child welfare statutes vary considerably. Some jurisdictions limit their investigation mandates to children under 16, while others extend their investigations to youth under 19. Provincial and territorial statutes also vary in terms of the specific forms of maltreatment covered, procedures for investi-

gation, grounds for removal, and timelines for determining permanent wardship.

For aboriginal people in Canada, the organization of child welfare services falls under provincial and territorial statutes and regulations, although funding for on-reserve services is provided by the federal government under the *Indian Act*.<sup>4</sup> The structure of aboriginal child welfare services is changing rapidly. A growing number of services are being provided either by fully mandated aboriginal agencies or by aboriginal counseling services that work in conjunction with mandated services.<sup>5</sup>

## Definitional Framework for the CIS

Statistics on child abuse and neglect are collected and reported in very different ways.<sup>6</sup> Confusion can easily arise because of variations in the way a particular statistic is calculated. The following discussion and framework are provided to assist readers in interpreting the statistics included in this report.

Child abuse and neglect statistics can be misinterpreted because of two types of problems: confusion about the definitions of child abuse and neglect used, and misunderstanding of the case selection and reporting methods used. Definitional differences can have considerable impact on reported rates. For example, in the U.S. *National Incidence Study* (1991), estimates of the annual rate of reported neglect were three times

higher when the definition of physical neglect was expanded beyond the harm standard to include cases in which there was substantial risk of harm.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, estimates of the prevalence of child sexual abuse doubled when acts of exposure were included in the cross-Canada sexual abuse survey conducted for the federal Committee on Sexual Offences Against Children and Youths.<sup>8</sup>

Unfortunately, there is no consensus about definitions of child maltreatment. Definitions have been shown to vary on the basis of differences in legal mandates, professional practices, and social and cultural values. This lack of standards in defining child abuse and neglect has been repeatedly identified as a major obstacle in the development of child maltreatment research and practice.<sup>9</sup> Several provinces, such as British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario, have taken steps toward setting more explicit criteria for defining abuse and neglect, although the establishment of completely standardized definitions is constrained by the fact that, in practice, judgements about child maltreatment are shaped by a complex array of changing community interests and values.

Beyond differences between research and legal definitions, child welfare agencies and practitioners develop their own standards that do not necessarily reflect governing legislation. Furthermore, even within agencies there is evidence that, in practice, standards are influenced by factors such as neighbourhood characteristics and caseload sizes.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Indian Act*, R.S.C., 1985, cI-5, s.81.

<sup>5</sup> Table 1-1 does not include a breakdown of aboriginal-run services. Because of the rapid pace of change in this area, documentation of the full array of aboriginal services is beyond the scope of the study.

<sup>6</sup> Trocmé N, McPhee D, et al. *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect*. Toronto: Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Sedlak AJ. *National incidence and prevalence of child abuse and neglect: 1988* (rev. ed.). Rockville, MD: Westat, 1991.

<sup>8</sup> Government of Canada. *Sexual offences against children: Report of the committee on sexual offences against children and youths* (vols 1 & 2). Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre, 1984.

<sup>9</sup> National Research Council. *Understanding child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Wolock I. Community characteristics and staff judgements in child abuse and neglect cases. *Social Work Research and Abstracts* 1982;18(2):9-15.

**Table 1-1**  
**Administrative Structure of Provincial and Territorial Child Welfare Services in Canada in 1998<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Province</b>      | <b>Administration</b>   | <b>Child Welfare Statutes</b>            | <b>Age Coverage</b>   |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Newfoundland         | The Department of Health and Community Services is responsible for establishing the Provincial Policies and Standards for child welfare services in the province.<br><br>The programs and services in child welfare are delivered by six Health and Community Services and Integrated Health Boards.  | The Child Welfare Act                    | Under 16  |
| Prince Edward Island | The Ministry of Health and Social Services, Child, Family and Community Services Division, Children's Services Section is responsible for child welfare programs and services.<br><br>Child protection is delivered through five regional offices.  | Family and Child Services Act            | Under 18 <sup>2</sup>   |
| Nova Scotia          | The Department of Community Services, Family and Children's Services Division is responsible for child welfare programs and services.<br><br>Child protection services are provided through 20 child welfare offices, six of which are district offices and 14 privately run societies/family and children's services agencies.   | Children and Family Services Act         | Under 16  |
| New Brunswick        | Child welfare is the responsibility of the Department of Health and Community Services, Family and Community Social Services Division, Child Protection program area.<br><br>Child protection services are provided through 22 delivery sites in seven regions.   | Family Services Act                      | Under 16 and disabled youth under 19                                |
| Quebec               | The Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux is responsible for the provision of child welfare programs and services.<br><br>Child protection is provided through 16 offices in 18 regions.  | Youth Protection Act                     | Under 18  |
| Ontario              | The Ministry of Community and Social Services, Children's Services Branch within Child, Family and Community Service Division sets regulation, policy and legislation and provides the funding for child welfare programs and services.<br><br>Child protection is delivered through 54 independent Children's Aid Societies, which are governed by Boards of Directors elected from the local community.   | Child and Family Services Act            | Under 16, unless the child is subject to a protection order.        |
| Manitoba             | Child welfare is the responsibility of the Department of Family Services, Child and Family Services Division, Child, Family and Community Development Branch.<br><br>Child protection is provided through five of the eight regional offices; five private and eight First Nation agencies.   | Child and Family Services Act            | Under 18  |
| Saskatchewan         | Child welfare is the responsibility of the Department of Social Services, Family and Youth Service Programs.<br><br>Child protection is provided through 21 service offices in six regions.   | Child and Family Services Act            | Under 16, extended to youth under 18 who cannot protect themselves. |
| Alberta              | The Ministry of Family and Social Services is responsible for child welfare programs and services. Planning and delivery of child protection services is in the process of being devolved to 18 regional Child and Family Services Authorities, governed by government-appointed regional Authority Boards. Currently, services are provided through five regional offices of the Ministry, the Calgary Rockyview Child and Family Services Authority and 13 agreements with First Nations Agencies with delegated authority. | Child Welfare Act                        | Under 18  |
| British Columbia     | The Ministry for Children and Families, Child Protection Services is responsible for child welfare programs and services.<br><br>Child protection is provided by 429 offices in 11 regions, with support provided by the provincial office of the Child Protection Division.  | Child, Family and Community Services Act | Under 19  |

**Table 1-1 (continued)**  
**Administrative Structure of Provincial and Territorial Child Welfare Services in Canada in 1998<sup>1</sup>**

| Province                           | Administration  | Child Welfare Statutes        | Age Coverage   |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Yukon                              | The Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for the provision of child welfare programs and services.<br>Child protection is provided through 11 offices throughout the Territory.  | Children's Act                | Under 18   |
| Northwest Territories <sup>3</sup> | The Department of Health and Social Services, Community Programs and Services Division, Child and Family Services Unit is responsible for child welfare programs and services.<br>Child protection is delivered through 11 regional health and social service boards. | Child and Family Services Act | Protection services provided to under 16. <sup>4</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Information was compiled through interviews with ministerial officials and reviewing information posted on provincial and territorial websites. Several provinces (e.g., Newfoundland and Alberta) have recently changed many aspects of child welfare services administrative structure and organization.  
<sup>2</sup> If a child is in permanent custody of the Director then services can be extended to 19 or 21 years of age depending on the circumstances (e.g., enrolled as a full-time student).  
<sup>3</sup> Nunavut was part of the Northwest Territories at the time of the CIS data collection.  
<sup>4</sup> Protection services can be extended to child's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday if deemed necessary. Voluntary support services are available to children who are 16, 17, and 18.

A second source of variation in maltreatment rates arises from differences in the way statistics are collected and reported. Child maltreatment statistics can end up measuring very different things, depending on who collects them and how they are collected. Some rates refer to the number of reported incidents; others refer only to allegations that have been substantiated by a thorough investigation. Some rates are based on annual incidence counts, whereas others measure childhood prevalence. These differences limit direct comparison of maltreatment statistics derived from different data sources. However, unlike the more intractable definitional problems, these issues can be resolved by clearly specifying case selection methods. The following framework (Table 1-2) provides a basis for comparing child maltreatment statistics by considering how they are affected by different case selection methods.

### ***Categories and Forms of Maltreatment***

A first area of potential confusion in interpreting child maltreatment statistics lies in inconsistencies in the categories of maltreatment included in different statistics. Most child maltreatment statistics refer to both physical and sexual abuse, but other categories of maltreatment, such as neglect and emotional maltreatment, are not systematically included. There is even

less consensus with respect to subtypes or forms of maltreatment. For instance, some child welfare statistics include only intra-familial sexual abuse, the justice system dealing with extra-familial sexual abuse.

The CIS definition of child maltreatment includes **22 forms of maltreatment** subsumed under **four categories**: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment. This classification reflects a fairly broad definition of child maltreatment, and includes several forms of maltreatment that are not specifically included in some provincial and territorial child welfare statutes (e.g. educational neglect and exposure to family violence).

Documentation of **multiple forms** of maltreatment is also problematic. Many child welfare information systems have the capacity to classify cases only in terms of a single form of maltreatment. Systems that count only one form of maltreatment tend to under-count neglect and emotional maltreatment because these often appear in conjunction with abuse, but are generally considered less severe.

**Table 1-2**  
**Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: Definitional Framework in 1998**

|  | <b>Definitional Problem</b>  | <b>Measures Taken by CIS</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Source of data</b>                          | Statistics are rarely presented with sufficient detail to allow one to consider all the data collection issues.  | CIS data were collected from child protection workers upon completion of their initial investigation (time depends on provincial, regional, and site practices).   |
| <b>Forms of maltreatment</b>                   | Maltreatment statistics vary considerably with respect to the forms of maltreatment included.  | The CIS includes 22 defined forms of maltreatment under four main categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment.   |
| <b>Multiple forms of maltreatment</b>          | Failure to document multiple forms of maltreatment can lead to underestimating some forms of maltreatment.   | The CIS documents up to three forms of maltreatment.   |
| <b>Level of harm</b>                           | Some statistics include only cases in which children have been harmed; others include cases of harm and substantial risk of harm.  | The CIS includes cases in which children were harmed as well as cases in which children were at risk of harm. Physical and emotional harm were also documented.  |
| <b>Timeframe</b>                               | Research on child maltreatment can focus on the annual incidence, which is the number of cases in a single year; or it can focus on childhood prevalence, which is the number of children maltreated during childhood.   | The CIS measures the annual incidence of investigated maltreatment.  |
| <b>Reporting year</b>                          | Rates of reported maltreatment have been increasing steadily as public awareness of child abuse increases. Rates from two different years must be compared accordingly.  | The reporting year for the CIS was January to December 1998.   |
| <b>Unit of analysis</b>                        | Child welfare investigations can use either a child-based or family-based method for tracking cases. For child-based, each investigated child is counted as a separate investigation, while for family-based investigations, the unit of analysis is the investigated family, regardless of the number of children investigated. | The CIS counts cases on the basis of child investigations.   |
| <b>Duplication</b>                             | Children investigated several times in a year are often counted as separate investigations. Approximately 20% of investigations in a given year involve children investigated more than once.  | Children who are investigated twice during a year are counted by the CIS as two separate child investigations.   |
| <b>Age group</b>                               | The age group of children investigated by child welfare services varies by province or territory.  | CIS estimates are presented for children under 16 (0 to 15 inclusive).   |
| <b>Levels of identification/substantiation</b> | The point at which cases are being identified significantly affects child maltreatment estimates, given that many identified cases are not reported, many reported cases are not investigated, and many investigated cases are not substantiated.  | The CIS reports on cases investigated by child welfare authorities. A three-tiered definition of substantiation is used: (1) substantiated, (2) suspected, and (3) unsubstantiated. Screened-out or uninvestigated reports are not included. |

### **Level of Harm**

There is some debate in the child maltreatment literature about defining maltreatment in terms of caregiver maltreating behaviours versus **actual harm**

done to children as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>11</sup> Cases of maltreatment that draw public attention usually involve children who have been severely injured or, in the most tragic cases, have died as a result of maltreatment. In practice, child welfare agencies investigate

<sup>11</sup> Zuravin SJ. *Suggestions for operationally defining child physical abuse and physical neglect*. Paper presented for meeting on Issues in the Longitudinal Study of Child Maltreatment, 1989.

and intervene in many situations in which children have not yet been physically harmed, but are **at risk of harm**. Many of these children display cognitive and emotional difficulties that are associated with maltreatment, but not necessarily a specific injury that has led to a report. Provincial and territorial statutes cover both children who have suffered from a specific harm due to abuse or neglect, and children at risk of harm. The level of harm or risk of harm required before an act is considered abusive varies on the basis of the severity of the act. In cases of sexual abuse, for instance, evidence of harm to the child is not considered to be relevant, whereas in cases of physical abuse, especially in cases involving corporal punishment, physical injury is more closely tied to the determination of abuse. The U.S. *National Incidence Study* (1996) includes two standards in calculating estimates of maltreatment: a narrow standard based on evidence of harm to the child, and a broader standard that includes cases of children at risk of harm.<sup>12</sup> The CIS documents both physical and emotional harm; however, definitions of maltreatment used for the study do not require the occurrence of harm.

### *Timeframe*

Maltreatment statistics can also be misinterpreted because of confusion about the *timeframe* to which statistics refer. The most serious source of misunderstanding is the difference between annual incidence and childhood prevalence. For a given population, *childhood prevalence* refers to the number of people maltreated at any point during their childhood, whereas *annual incidence* refers to the number of substantiated child maltreatment investigations per 1,000 children in a given year. The relation between the two is complicated and is determined by the duration of maltreatment, the number of separate incidents, and the age at

onset. Although this use of the term “incidence” is common in child welfare, it is different from the way in which the term is used by epidemiologists, where incidence refers to the number of new events (e.g. new cases of a disease or disorder in a given population and time period).<sup>13</sup> The CIS did not track new incidents of maltreatment on already open cases.

The *reporting year* can significantly affect documented rates of maltreatment, since reporting rates change over time. In Ontario, for example, the number of cases of reported maltreatment has steadily increased by a rate of between 2% and 5% per year between 1971 and 1999.<sup>14</sup> The reporting year can also lead to confusion because some jurisdictions use the calendar year, whereas others refer to the fiscal year. CIS estimates were calculated for the calendar year from January 1 to December 31, 1998.

### *Unit of Analysis*

The *unit of analysis* determines the denominator used in calculating maltreatment rates. Some statistics refer to the number of child investigations, whereas others refer to the number of family investigations. The relation between the two is unclear in some instances, because in *family-based* statistics it is difficult to determine how many children have been maltreated, particularly in cases of neglect. The CIS uses *child-based* statistics to be consistent with the way most child service statistics are kept (e.g. health, corrections, education, and foster care).

Some jurisdictions provide child welfare services to families when there is no alleged maltreatment. This is particularly true in Quebec, where the mandate of child welfare services explicitly extends to non-maltreatment situations in which children’s emotional or behavioural

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<sup>12</sup> Sedlak AJ, Broadhurst DD. *Executive summary of the third national incidence study of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

<sup>13</sup> Last JM. *A dictionary of epidemiology*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

<sup>14</sup> Trocmé N, Fallon B, et al. *Outcomes for child welfare services in Ontario*. Toronto: Ministry of Community and Social Services, Children’s Services Branch, 1999.

problems are considered to require intervention. These are referred to as *non-maltreatment* cases in the CIS (e.g. services for prenatal counseling and child behaviour problems) and are tracked separately as non-maltreatment case openings.

Consideration should also be given to the *age group* included in the child welfare statistics. As noted earlier, the scope of child welfare investigations varies considerably across Canada because of the differing ages at which children are considered to need protection (see Table 1-1). To ensure consistency in the application of definitions across Canada, CIS data are generally reported for children aged 0 to 15 years. Data on older youth investigated in jurisdictions that include a higher age range were also collected and are presented in Chapter 6, Table 6-2.

### **Case Duplication**

Most annual child welfare statistics are reported on the basis of the number of investigations, as opposed to the number of investigated children. Some investigations involve children who were previously investigated in the same year. Therefore, statistics based on the number of investigations double count children who are investigated twice in one year. Although each investigation represents a new alleged incident of maltreatment, confusion arises if these investigations are taken to represent an unduplicated count of children. To avoid such confusion, the CIS uses the term “child investigations” rather than “investigated children”, since the unit of analysis is the child investigation, as opposed to a family investigation.

Currently, most North American child welfare data systems report numbers of investigations as opposed to investigated children. The distinction, however, is not always explicitly stated. The U.S. *National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System* (1997) report,<sup>15</sup> for instance, states: “In the data presented in this report, a child is counted every time he or she is the subject of a substantiated or indicated report” (emphasis added). In their study of repeated referrals English and colleagues found that 16% of cases had been re-referred for an investigation within 6 months of the first investigation.<sup>16</sup> All duplicate reports were removed from the CIS sample,<sup>17</sup> but it was not possible to develop unduplicated child estimates because the annual investigation statistics used to derive the CIS annualization weights were investigation-based counts, not unduplicated child-based counts.

Duplication estimates can be derived from those jurisdictions that maintain separate incident records and child-based counts. In the 12 states reporting duplicated and unduplicated data for the U.S. *National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System* (1996),<sup>18</sup> unduplicated child-based counts were 22% lower than the incident-based counts. Comparison of child- versus investigation-based statistics in the eight Australian states and territories yields a similar rate: unduplicated child-based counts in 1997-98 were 21% lower than the equivalent investigation-based count.<sup>19</sup>

### **Level of Case Identification**

A major source of variation in maltreatment statistics occurs with the *level of identification and substantiation* used. Figure 1-2 provides an illustration of four key stages in the case identification process: detection,

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<sup>15</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration of Children, Youth and Families. *Child maltreatment 1997: reports from the states to the national child abuse and neglect data system*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999.

<sup>16</sup> English DJ, Marshall DB, Brummel S, Orme M. Characteristics of repeated referrals to child protective services in Washington State. *Child Maltreatment* 1999;4(4):297-307.

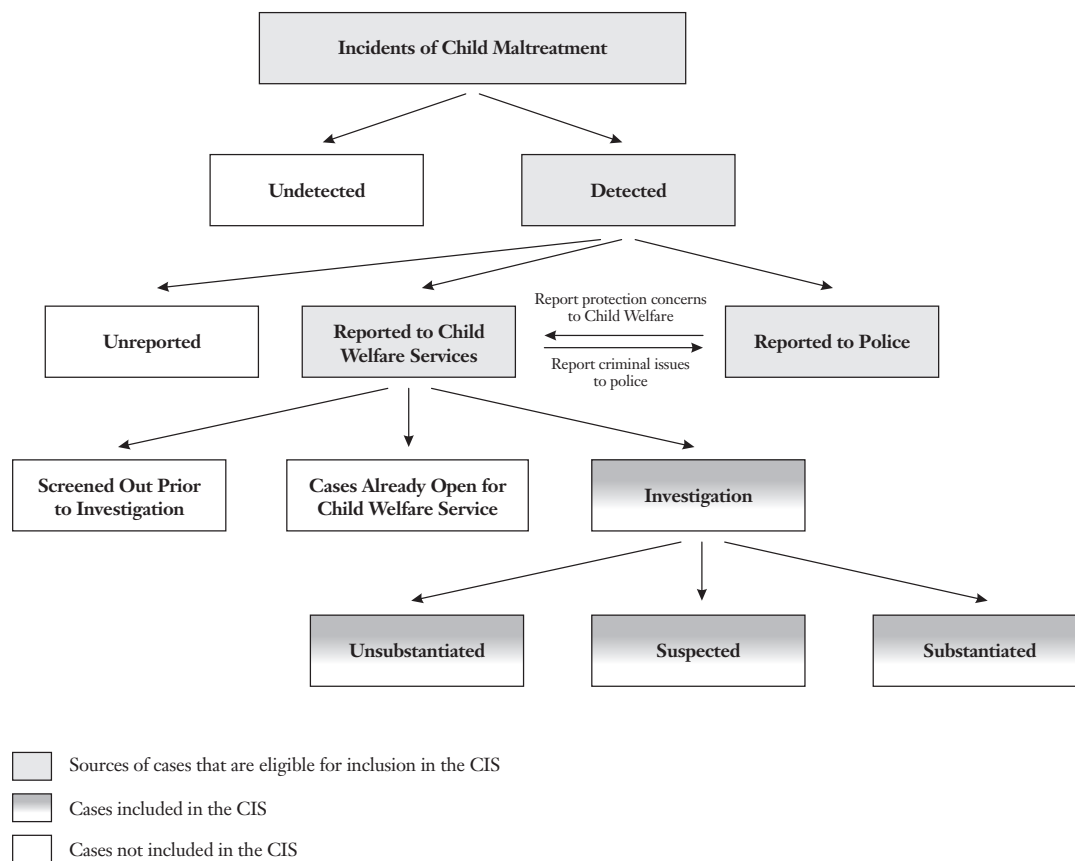
<sup>17</sup> Duplicate cases were screened for and deleted on the basis of CIS identification numbers, family initials, and date of referral.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau. *Child maltreatment 1996: reports from the states to the national child abuse and neglect data system*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998.

<sup>19</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Child protection Australia: 1997-1998*. Canberra: AIHW (Child Welfare Series), 1999.



**Figure 1-2**  
**Stages of Identification of Incidents of Child Maltreatment**



reporting, investigation, and substantiation. There is considerable variation in child maltreatment statistics depending on the level of case identification. For example, several jurisdictions screen out a significant number of reports before conducting investigations. In Quebec, nearly half of all reports are screened out; thus the number of reports to child welfare is twice as high as the number of investigations of maltreatment.

**Detection** is the first stage in the case identification process. Little is known about the relation between detected and undetected cases. Surveys of

adult survivors indicate that some have never disclosed their childhood experiences of abuse.<sup>20</sup>

**Reporting** suspected maltreatment is required by law in all provinces and territories in Canada, as well as in all states in the United States. A number of studies of reporting practices have been conducted in the United States and show that as many as half of the cases of suspected maltreatment detected by professionals working with children are not reported to child welfare services.<sup>21</sup> The CIS does not document unreported cases.

<sup>20</sup> Finkelhor D, Hotaling G, et al. Sexual abuse in a national survey of adult men and women: prevalence, characteristics, and risk factors. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 1990; 14(1):19-28.

<sup>21</sup> Zellman G. Report decision-making patterns among mandated child abuse reporters. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 1990;14(3):325-336.

It is also important to distinguish between cases reported to child welfare services and cases reported to the police. Although there is some overlap between these two groups (22% of CIS cases were jointly investigated by child welfare services and the police), many cases involving alleged perpetrators outside the family — for example, a stranger exposing himself to a child — may involve only a police investigation and therefore may not be counted in child welfare investigation statistics. The CIS documents only cases reported to child welfare services.

**Investigation** is a third stage in the case identification process and can lead to confusion when child maltreatment statistics are compared. As noted earlier, not necessarily all reports are investigated. Some may be screened out because there is not enough information about the whereabouts of a child to launch an investigation; others may be screened out because they are not considered to be within the defined mandate of the child welfare services. **Screening practices** in Canada can vary from an informal and undocumented process to a structured, formal telephone investigation. In some jurisdictions, there are no formal procedures for screening out inappropriate referrals and no systematic documentation of screened-out cases. By contrast, in Quebec, all calls are formally screened during an initial telephone interview, and only cases that meet set investigation standards are retained for further investigation. The oversampling study in Quebec — *Étude sur l'incidence et les caractéristiques des situations d'abus, de négligence, d'abandon et de troubles de comportement sérieux signalées à la Direction de la protection de la jeunesse (DPJ) au Québec (EIQ)* — includes an analysis of the screened-out cases. Because of the considerable variation in screening procedures across Canada, the CIS could not track screened-out cases.

In addition to reports being screened out, reports received about cases already open for child welfare services are usually investigated by the ongoing worker and are not normally tracked as new investigations. The CIS did not track new incidents of maltreatment on already open cases.

**Substantiation** distinguishes cases in which maltreatment is confirmed following an investigation from cases in which it is not. Some jurisdictions use a two-tiered substantiation classification system that distinguishes between substantiated and unsubstantiated cases, or verified and not verified cases. The CIS uses a three-tiered classification system, in which a “suspected” level provides an important clinical distinction in certain cases: those in which there is not enough evidence to substantiate maltreatment, but maltreatment cannot be ruled out. In comparison to a two-tiered classification, the use of the middle “suspected” level will lead to fewer cases being classified as substantiated or unsubstantiated.<sup>22</sup>

## Summary of CIS Definitional Framework

The CIS provides an estimate of the number of cases (child-based, age under 16) of alleged child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment) reported to and investigated by Canadian child welfare services in 1998 (screened-out reports not included). The estimates are broken down into three levels of substantiation: substantiated, suspected, and unsubstantiated. Cases opened more than once during the year are counted as separate investigations (see Table 1-2).

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<sup>22</sup> Because a two-tiered system forces classification of suspected cases into unsubstantiated or substantiated categories, cases involving very strong suspicions may end up being classified as substantiated, thereby artificially inflating substantiation rates.

## Organization of Report

The CIS Final Report presents the major descriptive findings from the CIS. These statistics are national estimates based on a representative sample of child maltreatment investigations opened by child welfare services in 1998 (see Chapter 2 for details of sampling and estimation methods used). The descriptive findings do not include statistical analyses of differences between subgroups.

The main body of the **Final Report** is divided into nine chapters and nine appendices. Chapter 2 describes the study's methodology. Chapter 3 presents the estimates of the incidence of reported child maltreatment by category of maltreatment and level of substantiation. Chapter 4 examines the characteristics of these different categories of maltreatment in terms of the nature, severity, and duration of injury, and the identity of the alleged perpetrators. Investigation outcomes, provision of services, placement, police involvement, and applications to court are presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 describes child characteristics,

including categories of maltreatment by age and sex, and by child functioning. Chapter 7 describes caregiver characteristics, including age and sex, income and income source, housing accommodations, and other selected determinants of health (e.g. caregiver functioning, risk factors, and coping practices). Referral and agency characteristics are described in Chapter 8. The final chapter summarizes the report's key findings and outlines directions for further research.

The **Appendices** include the following sections: (1) list of CIS site directors/research associates (Appendix A), Health Canada staff involved in the study and members of the National Advisory Committee (Appendix B), and Glossary of Terms (Appendix C); (2) copies of CIS research forms, including the Maltreatment Assessment Form (Appendix D), the CIS Study Guide Book (Appendix E), case vignettes used during training (Appendix F), and worker information forms (Appendix G); (3) variance estimates and confidence intervals for all the study analysis (Appendix H); and (4) supporting data for additional report findings (Appendix I).

## ■ 2. METHODOLOGY

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The CIS is the first national study examining the incidence of reported child abuse and neglect in Canada. The CIS captured information about children and their families as they came into contact with child welfare services over a 3-month sampling period. Maltreated children who were not reported to child welfare services, screened-out uninvestigated reports, or new allegations on cases currently open at the time of case selection were not included in the CIS (see Chapter 1 for definitions of reported, non-reported, and screened-out cases). A multi-stage sampling design was used, first to select a representative sample of child welfare offices across Canada, and then to sample cases within these offices. Information was collected directly from the investigating child welfare workers. The final sample of 7,672 child investigations was used to derive national estimates of the annual rates and characteristics of investigated child maltreatment in Canada.

As with any sample survey, estimates must be understood within the constraints of the survey instruments, the sampling design, and the estimation procedures used. This chapter presents the CIS methodology and discusses its strengths, limitations, and impact on interpreting the CIS estimates. The chapter describes the CIS research network; its survey instruments; the sample selection and enlistment strategies; the case selection, entry, and verification procedures; and the statistical methods used for calculating national estimates.

### Study Organization

Because of the challenges inherent in trying to gather national information within a provincially/

territorially organized child welfare service delivery system, a complex study structure was required to ensure that the needs of key stakeholders were adequately met. This included the collaborative use of funds from federal and provincial sources as well as in-kind support from the participating child welfare agencies and offices, a nationally coordinated study consultation process, and a decentralized project management structure.

### *Funding*

The CIS combines the core study, funded by Health Canada, with four provincially funded studies in Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia. Funding from Health Canada was provided to gather information from a nationally representative sample of child welfare service areas (CWSAs). A child welfare service area is a geographic area served by a distinct child welfare office. In decentralized provinces and territories, a child welfare service area refers to a child welfare agency, and in centralized provinces and territories it corresponds to a district or regional office.<sup>23</sup>

Newfoundland, Ontario, and British Columbia provided additional funds to allow for enriched samples so that provincial incidence estimates could be calculated. These studies applied the CIS survey instrument and case selection procedures to additional sites in each province.

In Quebec, the CIS was harmonized with the parallel EIQ study.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the oversampling studies in other provinces, the EIQ modified the study design and survey instruments to address a broader set of research

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<sup>23</sup> In some cases several agencies serve the same geographic area on the basis of children's religious or aboriginal status. In such instances, all child welfare agencies sharing the same geographic boundaries are counted as a single child welfare service area.

<sup>24</sup> Étude sur l'incidence et les caractéristiques des situations d'abus, de négligence, d'abandon et de troubles de comportement sérieux signalées à la Direction de la protection de la jeunesse (DPJ) au Québec (EIQ).

questions.<sup>25</sup> In addition to information on investigated maltreatment, the EIQ collected information on uninvestigated screened-out cases as well as information on children and youth assessed because of suspected behavioural difficulties. To allow for regional analyses within Quebec, the EIQ also included all child welfare service areas in the province. Seven of the total 15 child welfare regions in Quebec were randomly selected to be included in the CIS sample.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to direct funds received from federal and provincial/territorial sources, all participating agencies and offices contributed significant in-kind support, which included not only the time required for child welfare workers to attend training sessions, complete forms, and respond to additional information requests, but also coordinating support from team secretaries, supervisors, and managers. Supplementary infrastructure support was also provided by the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit.

### *National Consultation*

Health Canada conducted extensive consultation across Canada before funding the study as well as at all critical stages of it, from instrument design to preparation of the Final Report. There was consultation with provincial and territorial representatives to determine the feasibility and benefits of conducting a national study on the incidence of child abuse and neglect. Members of the National Advisory Committee participated in several subcommittees (Site Recruitment/

Enrolment, Instrument Definition, Sampling, and Youth Involvement; see Appendix B for a list of National Advisory Committee members and Health Canada Staff).

At the data analysis and report preparation stage, Health Canada staff provided feedback on draft reports and coordinated report translation and printing.

### *Study Timeframe*

The CIS was funded to begin in October 1997. The study was conducted in three phases. During the preparation phase (October 1997 to August 1998), the study instruments were designed and tested, and the study sites were selected and enlisted. During the case selection phase (September 1998 to May 1999), participating child welfare workers were trained, and survey instruments were completed, collected, and verified. The final phase of the study (June 1999 to September 2000) involved entering the survey information into the CIS database, checking for inconsistent and missing information, conducting descriptive analysis, calculating the weighted estimates, and preparing reports.

### *Project Management Structure*

The CIS was directed by a team of researchers from the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Social Work, including Nico Trocmé, Principal Investigator, and Barbara Fallon and Bruce MacLaurin, Project

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<sup>25</sup> The design of the EIQ differed from that of the CIS as a result of three major differences in the structure and mandates of child welfare services in Quebec. First, reports received by child welfare services in Quebec are systematically screened, with only half of all reports proceeding to a full investigation. Unlike the CIS, which only tracked investigated cases, the EIQ included a second component that examined screened-out cases. Second, cases in Quebec are opened and investigated on a child-specific basis, while cases in the rest of Canada are opened and investigated on a family-specific basis. As a result, the Household Information Sheet from the Maltreatment Assessment Form had to be modified accordingly. Third, the *Youth Protection Act* in Quebec extends beyond maltreated children to address the protection of children and youth displaying behavioural problems. While the EIQ used the same definitions of maltreatment, behaviour problem codes were added to the list of reasons for investigation. In most instances differences between the EIQ forms and the CIS forms can be attributed to additional information included on the EIQ forms. Over 90% of the questions on the CIS Maltreatment Assessment Form have a corresponding question on the equivalent EIQ form.

<sup>26</sup> Although data were collected in all 15 child welfare regions in Quebec, a subsample of seven was selected for the CIS to parallel the sample design used in Newfoundland, Ontario, and British Columbia, as well as to account for the funding provided by Health Canada for the Quebec proportion of the study.

Co-managers (see Appendix A for a list of all research associates). The Toronto research team designed the research instruments, selected the study sites, coordinated the national case selection, entered and verified data for all sites outside of Quebec, and prepared the data set, weights, and the Final Report.

To ensure active participation across Canada, case selection was conducted by a network of five regionally based research offices. Case selection in British Columbia was conducted by a team at the University of British Columbia, under the direction of Richard Sullivan. In Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, case selection was conducted by a team of researchers affiliated with the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family, University of Calgary, under the direction of Joe Hornick. In Ontario, under the direction of Nico Trocmé, case selection was conducted by a team at the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit, University of Toronto. Case selection in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island was directed by Gale Burford and Ken Barter, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

In Quebec, CIS case selection was overseen by three Montreal-based researchers: John Wright, Université de Montréal; Micheline Mayer, Institut de recherche pour le développement social des jeunes, Centres jeunesse de Montréal; and Marc Tourigny, Université du Québec à Hull. The Montreal office was managed by Sonia Hélie, Institut de recherche pour le développement social des jeunes. The Montreal office also served as the central EIQ office through a sub-network of five regional EIQ coordinators. Data entry

and verification for Quebec were done at the Montreal office.

## Instruments

The CIS survey instruments were designed to capture standardized information from child welfare workers conducting investigations. Because investigation procedures vary considerably across Canada (see Chapter 1), a key challenge in designing the CIS survey instruments was to identify the common elements across jurisdictions that could provide data in a standardized manner. Given the time constraints faced by child welfare workers, the instruments also had to be kept as short and simple as possible.

The CIS instruments were developed through extensive consultation and pre-testing (January to July 1998). The core instrument was based on instruments used in the *Ontario Incidence Study (1994)*<sup>27</sup> and the U.S. *National Incidence Study (1996)*<sup>28</sup> in order to maximize the potential for comparing CIS findings with findings from these studies. An initial draft of the main survey instrument was prepared in consultation with the CIS design team,<sup>29</sup> the Child Maltreatment Division staff and the National Advisory Committee. The Child Maltreatment Division conducted consultations with additional stakeholders, including other federal departments and agencies, on early versions of the CIS instrument.

A draft of the Maltreatment Assessment Form was circulated to the offices of all provincial and territorial directors of child welfare, and pilot tested by the five CIS regional site offices. Modifications were made on the basis of the pilot test data and feedback from the

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<sup>27</sup> Trocmé N, McPhee D, et al. *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect*. Toronto: Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1994.

<sup>28</sup> Sedlak AJ, Broadhurst, DD. *Executive summary of the third national incidence study of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

<sup>29</sup> The CIS design team included Nico Trocmé, Bruce MacLaurin, Joanne Daciuk and Barbara Fallon (University of Toronto), Mike Boyle (McMaster University), Brad McKenzie (University of Manitoba), and Marc Tourigny (Université du Québec à Hull).

provincial and territorial directors (see Pilot Testing, further in this chapter). Additional modifications were made to ensure comparability with the EIQ instruments (for information on the EIQ instruments, please refer to the EIQ final report).

### ***Maltreatment Assessment Form***

The main case selection instrument used for the study was the Maltreatment Assessment Form, which was completed by the primary investigating child welfare worker upon completion of a child welfare investigation (see Appendix D). The Maltreatment Assessment Form consisted of an Intake Face Sheet, a Household Information Sheet, and a Child Information Sheet.

Workers completed the Intake Face Sheet for all cases opened during the study period, whether or not a specific allegation of maltreatment had been made. This initial review of all child welfare case openings provided a consistent mechanism for differentiating between cases of suspected maltreatment and other types of child welfare services (e.g. preventive services).

Basic information about the report or referral as well as partially identifying information about the child(ren) involved was collected on the Intake Face Sheet. The form requested information on the date of referral, referral source, number of children in the home under the age of 19, age and sex of children, whether there was suspected or alleged maltreatment, whether the case was screened out, the family's postal code, and the reason for the referral or screening out. No directly identifying information was collected. If abuse or neglect was suspected, either by the person(s)

making the report or by the investigating worker at any point in the investigation, then the remainder of the form was completed.<sup>30</sup>

The Household Information Sheet was completed only when at least one child in the family was investigated for maltreatment. The household was defined as all the adults living at the address of the investigation. The Household Information Sheet collected detailed information on up to two caregivers, including their relationship to the child, sex, age, income source and level, educational level, ethno-cultural origin, and selected determinants of health. Descriptive information was requested on the contact with the caregiver, caregiver's own history of abuse, other adults in the home, housing accommodations, caregiver functioning, case status, and referral(s) to other services.

The third page of the instrument, the Child Information Sheet, was completed for each child who was investigated for maltreatment.<sup>31</sup> The Child Information Sheet documented up to three different forms of maltreatment, and included levels of substantiation, alleged perpetrator(s), and duration of maltreatment. In addition, it collected information on child functioning, physical and emotional harm to the child attributable to the alleged maltreatment, child welfare court activity, out-of-home placement, police involvement, and the caregiver's response to sexual abuse.

The Maltreatment Assessment Form also included an open comment section for situations in which the categories provided did not adequately describe a case, or when additional detail was of benefit.

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<sup>30</sup> The CIS Study Guide Book (see Appendix E) and training sessions emphasized that workers should base their responses to these questions on their clinical expertise rather than simply transposing information collected on the basis of provincial or local investigation standards. The CIS Study Guide Book specifies the following: "Indicate those children who were a subject of a child welfare investigation. Given the variety in definition and practice across Canada, rely on your clinical judgement to identify cases where maltreatment was actually suspected."

<sup>31</sup> One Child Information Sheet was attached to the main Maltreatment Assessment Form, and pads of additional Child Information Sheets were available in every office.

A significant challenge for the study was to overcome the variations in the definitions of maltreatment used by different jurisdictions. Rather than anchor the definitions in specific legal or administrative definitions, a single set of definitions corresponding to standard research classification schemes was used. All items on the case selection forms were defined in an accompanying CIS Study Guide Book (see Appendix E).

### ***Worker Information Form***

A Worker Information Form was used to collect information about the worker(s) completing the investigation. Workers in 44 out of the 51 CIS sites<sup>32</sup> were asked to complete the forms. Responses were received from 490 workers, 85% of CIS workers who had been contacted. The one-page form included information about the worker's role and position, training, education, and experience (see Appendix G).

### ***Pilot Testing***

The Maltreatment Assessment Form was pilot tested by all five regional offices: Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. The purpose of the pilot test was twofold: (1) to gain feedback on the instrument, in particular the level of clarity of the items, completion rates, and the relevance of the information requested; and (2) to examine case selection procedures. Site directors negotiated with their identified provincial/territorial child welfare contacts and selected the child welfare pilot sites based on convenience of location and availability.

A total of 97 complete Maltreatment Assessment Forms and 33 additional Child Information Sheets were compiled from the pilot test sites in British

Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Newfoundland. Quebec pilot test results were analyzed separately. Workers reported that completion time for the instrument was generally under 10 minutes. Pilot test feedback confirmed that the Maltreatment Assessment Form was compatible with provincial and territorial child welfare statutes and that the case selection procedures were compatible with the different investigation procedures. Modifications included changes to the structure of the Household Information Sheet, clearer descriptions of the child functioning section on the Child Information Sheet, and a change in the family income estimate to reflect present economic levels in Canada.

### **Sampling**

A stratified cluster design was used to select maltreatment investigations for the CIS. Because of variations in the organization of child welfare service systems across Canada (see Chapter 1), a four-stage sampling process was required to select a nationally representative sample of children investigated because of suspected maltreatment (see Figure 2-1).

In the first stage, CIS sites were selected from each province and territory. A single site was randomly<sup>33</sup> selected from each province or territory with a child population under 275,000.<sup>34</sup> In larger provinces, additional stratification by region and agency size was used. To ensure adequate representation, aboriginally operated agencies were not included in the provincial/territorial strata, but were sampled from a separate stratum.

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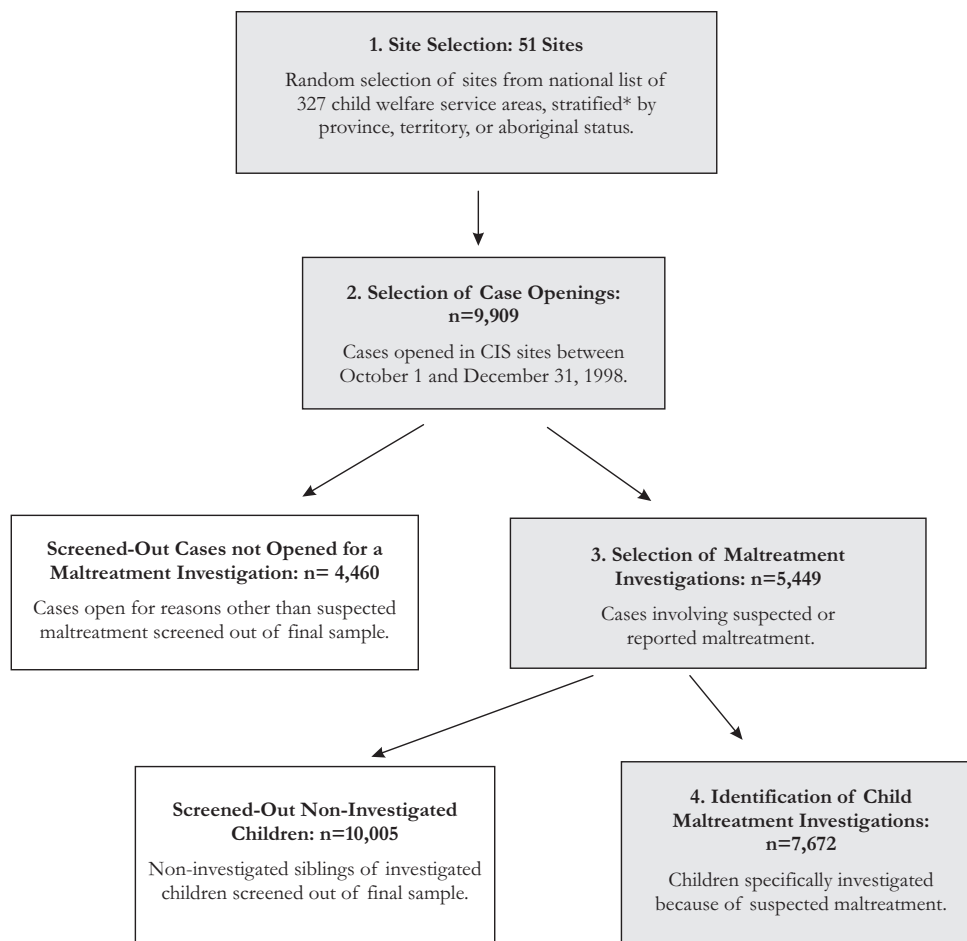
<sup>32</sup> Seven sites did not participate in the worker background survey because of concerns about the time required to complete the worker forms (see Appendix C, Glossary of Terms).

<sup>33</sup> The sites in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories were not randomly selected because of prohibitive travel costs.

<sup>34</sup> The decision to select at least one site per province or territory reflects an effort to build a national commitment to child maltreatment data collection.



**Figure 2-1**  
**Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: Sampling Stages in 1998**



\* Child welfare service areas were further stratified by region and/or size in Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia.

Fifty-one sites were selected from a pool of 327 child welfare service areas in Canada (Figure 2-2).<sup>35</sup> Five sites declined to be involved because of their particular circumstances, and five replacement sites were

randomly selected from the remaining pool. All but four sites were randomly selected from their respective strata. One of the aboriginal sites joined the study after the initial sample had been drawn. The three sites from

<sup>35</sup> A child welfare service area is a geographic area served by a distinct child welfare office. In decentralized provinces and territories, a child welfare service area refers to a child welfare agency, while in centralized provinces and territories, it corresponds to a district or regional office. In some cases several agencies serve the same geographic area on the basis of children's religious or aboriginal status. In such instances, all child welfare agencies sharing the same geographic boundaries are counted as a single child welfare service area (see Appendix C, Glossary of Terms).

A list of 285 provincial and territorial child welfare service areas (CWSAs) was drawn up on the basis of information received from each province and territory. Health Canada compiled a further list of 42 identified aboriginal agencies. From this list, a smaller pool of nine aboriginal agencies expressed an interest in participating in the study and was included in the aboriginal sampling frame. Two aboriginal sites were randomly selected, and a third later volunteered to join the study. CWSAs varied greatly in size. For example, three agencies made up one CWSA for the City of Toronto, with a total of 11 offices. In Quebec, 15 CWSAs were identified for the 16 provincial regions (each with multiple offices).

**Table 2-1**  
**Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: Sample Size by Region in Canada in 1998**

| Region               | Child Population (0-15)* | Total Child Welfare Service Areas | Number of Selected Sites | Site Child Population (0-15)** | Annual Site Case Openings | Case Openings Sampled for CIS |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Atlantic Provinces   | 497,370                  | 98                                | 13                       | 140,300                        | 2,887                     | 696                           |
| Quebec***            | 1,471,665                | 25                                | 7                        | 917,250                        | 15,680                    | 3,221                         |
| Ontario              | 2,357,265                | 53                                | 13                       | 904,245                        | 24,377                    | 3,647                         |
| Prairie Provinces    | 1,159,630                | 90                                | 5                        | 65,518                         | 1,515                     | 438                           |
| British Columbia     | 785,455                  | 57                                | 10                       | 218,000                        | 5,311                     | 1,573                         |
| Northern Territories | 29,910                   | 4                                 | 3                        | 11,795                         | 1,550                     | 334                           |
| Canada               | 6,301,295                | 327                               | 51                       | 2,257,108                      | 51,320                    | 9,909                         |

\* Statistics Canada. Population by single years of age, showing sex, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions. Catalogue No. 95F0186XDB96001. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

\*\* Statistics Canada. Custom data retrieval. 1996 Census of Canada.

\*\*\* The total in Quebec represents the total CWSAs for the 16 regions and an additional nine aboriginal child welfare service areas that operate within them.

the northern territories were selected on the basis of accessibility, expected case volume, and regional representation.<sup>36</sup> In total, 986 child welfare workers participated in the case selection.

The second sampling stage involved selecting cases opened<sup>37</sup> in each site over a 3-month period between October and December 1998.<sup>38</sup> Three months was considered to be the optimum period to ensure high participation rates and good compliance with study procedures. Consultation with service providers indicated that case activity from October to December is considered to be typical of the whole year. However, follow-up studies are needed to more systematically explore the extent to which seasonal variation in the types of cases referred to child welfare services may affect estimates that are based on a 3-month sampling period.<sup>39</sup>

The third sampling stage involved screening opened cases to identify those cases that met CIS definitions of suspected maltreatment (see Figure 2-1, Stage 3). Although investigating suspected maltreatment is the core mandate for most child welfare services, situations that are considered to involve children at risk of maltreatment are also given service. These can include children with difficult behaviour problems, adolescent pregnant women seeking support counseling, or other service requests that do not involve a specific allegation of maltreatment. In order to maximize uniformity in case selection, the Intake Face Sheet of the Maltreatment Assessment Form was completed on all open cases. Investigating workers then evaluated each case to determine whether maltreatment was alleged by the referral source or suspected at any point in the investigation process. Workers were asked to use the CIS definitions of maltreatment, which were generally more

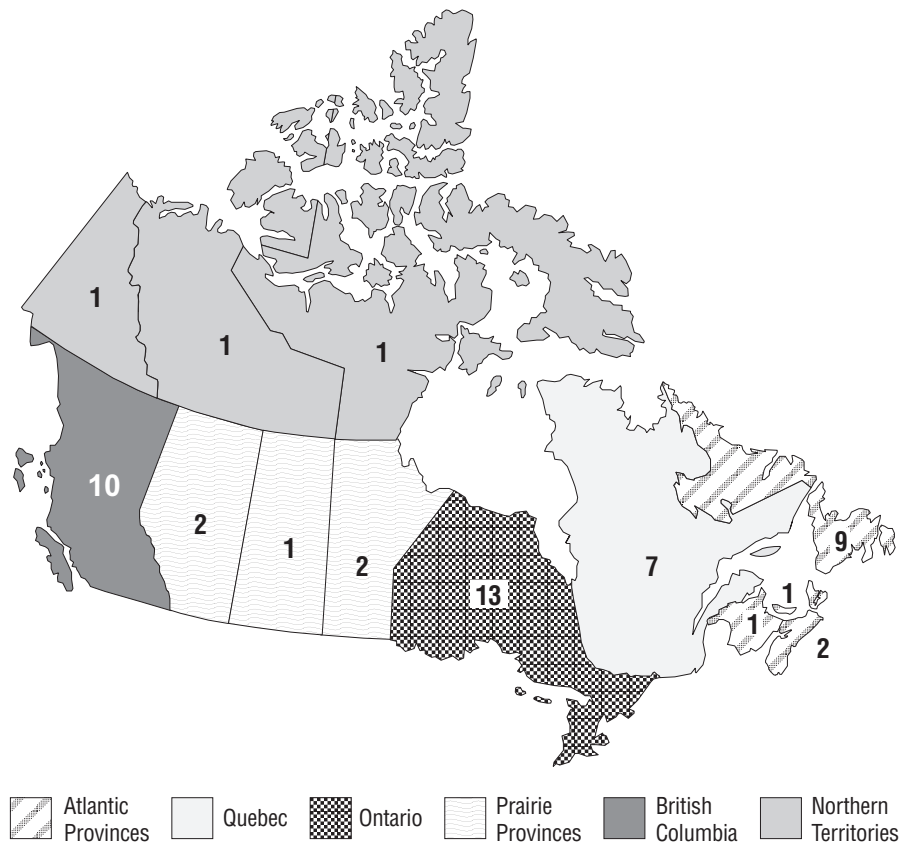
<sup>36</sup> One site was intentionally located in the region of the Northwest Territories that would eventually become Nunavut.

<sup>37</sup> In most sites all open cases were included; in Toronto, however, a subsample of cases was selected sequentially from each branch office. This strategy was used to focus case selection on a smaller period of time in each branch office in order to ensure high participation rates.

<sup>38</sup> Alberta collected data from September 15 to December 15, 1998, because of a major change in the administrative structure of child welfare services scheduled for January 1, 1999.

<sup>39</sup> Seasonal variations would not affect the overall estimates of the number of maltreatment investigations because such variants are adjusted for in the weighting, but they could affect the proportion of cases referred from some sources, such as schools.

**Figure 2-2**  
**Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: Number of CWSA Sites by CIS Region in Canada in 1998**



inclusive than definitions in many jurisdictions. In 56% (n=5,449) of cases the investigating worker identified specific concerns about suspected maltreatment; the remaining cases (n=4,460) involved situations with no specific allegations of maltreatment and were excluded from the main CIS sample.

The final case selection stage involved identification of the specific children who had been investigated. In many jurisdictions, cases are classified on the basis of family units, while in others each investigated child is counted as a case. In jurisdictions using family-based case counts, children who had been specifically investigated because of suspected maltreatment were identified, yielding a final sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations.

## Case Selection and Processing

Research associates in each of the CIS regions were assigned to coordinate site training and case selection at each CIS site (see Appendix A for a list of all CIS research associates). The case selection phase began with a training session to introduce participating child welfare workers to the CIS instruments and case selection procedures. After a review of the forms and procedures, trainees completed the Maltreatment Assessment Form for selected case vignettes (see Appendix F for the case vignettes). The completed forms were then discussed and discrepancies in responses reviewed to ensure that items were being properly interpreted. Each worker was given a CIS Study Guide Book, which includes definitions for all the items and a one-page summary sheet with key definitions and study procedures (see Appendix E).

Completion of the Maltreatment Assessment Form was anchored to the written assessments that workers recorded upon the completion of intake investigations. The length of time between the receipt of the referral and the completion of the written assessment differs according to provincial, regional, and site variations. Given that some investigations can take many months to be completed, workers were asked to complete the Maltreatment Assessment Form at the same time as their first assessment report, regardless of whether the entire investigation was yet completed.

Research associates visited the CIS sites on a regular basis to collect forms, respond to questions, and monitor study progress. In most instances four to six visits were required. However, additional support was provided depending on the individual needs of workers at each site. Research associates collected the completed Maltreatment Assessment Forms during each site visit and reviewed them for completeness and consistency. Every effort was made to contact workers if there was incomplete information on key variables (e.g. child age or category of maltreatment) or major inconsistencies. Identifying information (located on the bottom section of the Intake Face Sheet, see Appendix D) was stored on site, and non-identifying information was sent to the central data entry locations: the EIQ office in Montreal for all Quebec sites, and the CIS office in Toronto for the rest of Canada.

### ***Data Verification and Data Entry***

Forms were verified twice for completeness and inconsistent responses: first on site by the site research associates, and then a second time at the data entry locations. Consistency in form completion was examined by comparing the selected maltreatment codes to the brief case narratives provided by the investigating workers.

Reliability of the verification procedure was checked by comparing the project staff's ratings of case narratives on a sample of 220 cases (20 cases randomly selected from cases collected by each of the 11 site-based researchers). Percentage of agreement varied from a low of 82% (Cohen's kappa = 0.58) between site-based research associates and central office researchers, to a high of 94% agreement (Cohen's kappa = 0.87) between central office researchers.<sup>40</sup> The lower agreement between site-based researchers and central office researchers may be explained in part by the fact that the site-based researchers had direct contact with the child welfare workers and may have had access to additional case information.

Data from Maltreatment Assessment Forms sent to the CIS office in Toronto were entered by scanner using Teleform scanning software, 1998, V.5.4.1. Face Sheet information was entered manually using Microsoft Access, Version 97. The EIQ forms were entered manually in Montreal using Microsoft Access, Version 97. The databases were combined by the Toronto team in an SPSS Version 8.0 database. Inconsistent responses, missing responses, and miscodes were systematically identified. Duplicate cases were screened for and deleted on the basis of CIS identification numbers, family initials, and date of referral.

Data entry error rates were examined by re-entering a random sample of forms. Five hundred Maltreatment Assessment Forms were re-scanned by Teleform, and 100 Face Sheets were re-entered manually to determine entry error. Error rates were 3% for Teleform entry and 2% for manual data entry. The higher Teleform error rate was due to scanning errors in data fields that required a written number rather than a check box. Written fields in all forms were subsequently verified to correct for the scanning errors. The data entry error rate for the EIQ data was 0.7%, verified on a 5% sample.

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<sup>40</sup> Cohen's kappa is a modified measure of percentage of agreement that factors in chance agreement.

### ***Participation and Item Completion Rates***

The case selection form was kept as short and simple as possible to minimize the response burden and ensure a high completion rate. During pilot testing, workers estimated that the form took less than 10 minutes to complete. Item completion rates were over 95% on all items.<sup>41</sup>

The participation rate was estimated by comparing actual cases opened during the case selection period (October 1 to December 31, 1998) with the number of cases for which Maltreatment Assessment Forms were completed.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, in some sites differences in the way cases were tracked made it impossible to arrive at a count of case openings from October to December 1998 that corresponded to the cases tracked by the CIS. The overall participation rate in sites where a participation rate could be estimated was 90%, ranging from a low of 75% to a high of 100%. Participation rates below 95% were discussed with the CIS liaisons for each agency to examine the possibility of skewed sampling. In all cases, low participation could be attributed to external events (e.g. staff holidays, staff turnover), and no evidence of systematic bias was found.

### ***Weighting***

The data collected for the CIS were weighted in order to derive national annual incidence estimates. Two sets of weights were applied. First, results were annualized to estimate the annual volume of cases investigated by each study site. The annualization weights were derived by taking the ratio of cases sampled for the CIS to the total number of cases opened by each site in 1998. For example, if 225 cases were sampled over 3 months in a site that opened

1,000 cases over the year, a weight of  $1,000/225 (=4.44)$  was applied to all cases in the site. The average annualization weight was 4.76,<sup>43</sup> reflecting the fact that cases had been collected over 3 months out of 12. While this annualization method provides an accurate estimate of overall volume, it cannot account for qualitative differences in the types of cases referred at different times of the year (see Chapter 1).

To account for the non-proportional sampling design, regional weights were applied to reflect the relative sizes of the selected sites. Each study site was assigned a weight reflecting the proportion of the child population of the site relative to the child population in the stratum or region that the site represented. For instance if a site with a child population of 25,000 was randomly sampled to represent a region or province/territory with a child population of 500,000, a regionalization weight of 20 ( $500,000/25,000$ ) would be applied to cases sampled from that site. Regionalization and annualization weights were combined so that each case was multiplied first by an annualization weight and then by a regionalization weight.

National incidence estimates were calculated by dividing the weighted estimates by the child population (0 to 15 year olds). The child population figures for CIS sites are based on 1996 census data drawn from customized tabulations developed by Statistics Canada. The customized tabulations were required because the catchment areas of some child welfare jurisdictions do not conform to standard geographic areas, thus making it necessary to create customized areas. This was done by aggregating standard areas into a custom area file

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<sup>41</sup> The high item completion rate can be attributed both to the design of the case selection instrument and to the verification procedures. In designing the form, careful attention was given to maintaining a logical and efficient ordering to the questions. The use of check boxes minimized completion time. An "unknown" category was included for many questions to help distinguish between missed responses and unknown responses.

<sup>42</sup> Participation rate is the proportion of cases open between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 1998, for which the Maltreatment Assessment Form was completed.

<sup>43</sup> This average excludes three larger sites where case sampling during the 3 months generated a higher annualization weight of 9.58.

that was then used in the custom data run.<sup>44</sup> In most cases, this involved aggregating census subdivisions only, while a few cases required aggregating enumeration areas for separate census subdivisions.<sup>45</sup>

### **Duplication**

The CIS estimates are reported on the basis of the number of child investigations conducted during 1998, as opposed to the number of investigated children. Some investigations involve children who were previously investigated in the same year. Although each investigation represents a new alleged incident of maltreatment, confusion arises if these investigations are taken to represent an unduplicated count of children. The CIS estimates cannot be unduplicated because the annualization weights are based on unduplicated service statistics provided by the study sites. To avoid confusion, the CIS uses the term “child investigations” rather than “investigated children”, since the unit of analysis is the child investigation (see Chapter 1, Case Duplication).

The CIS had no precise method for identifying children who were investigated more than once during 1998. An outside estimate of this number can be derived by examining instances in which children had been previously investigated. Twenty-two percent of children had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment, and their case had been closed within 6 months of the current investigation. Because the CIS did not document when re-opened cases had been previously opened, it was not possible to determine how many of these cases had been opened for an investigation twice within the same calendar year. The 22%

re-opening rate should therefore be treated as an outside estimate, with the true rate being under 22%.

### **Sampling Error Estimation<sup>46</sup>**

Although the CIS estimates are based on a relatively large sample of 7,672 investigations, sampling error is primarily driven by variability between the 51 sites. Sampling errors were calculated with reference to the fact that the survey population had been stratified and that primary sampling units (or sites) had been selected randomly from each stratum. To calculate the variance, the stratified design allowed the research team to assume that the variability between strata was zero and that the total variance at the national level was the sum of the variance for each stratum. Calculating the variance for each stratum was problematic because only one site had been chosen in most strata. To overcome this problem the team used the approach recommended by Rust and Kalton<sup>47</sup> of collapsing strata into groups (collapsed strata); subsequently the variability among the primary sampling units within the group was used to derive a variance estimate. Collapsing of strata was done to maintain homogeneity as much as possible. However, because of differences between collapsed strata, this method yields relatively high estimates of standard errors, which should therefore be viewed as conservative estimates.

Standard errors were calculated at the  $p < 0.05$  level.<sup>48</sup> For most estimates standard errors were within an acceptable range, with coefficients of variation ranging between 8% and 16%.<sup>49</sup> Coefficients of variation

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<sup>44</sup> Ontario is the only exception: all the province’s child welfare service area boundaries reflect census divisions.

<sup>45</sup> Census subdivisions are the equivalent of municipalities (e.g. cities, towns, townships, villages, etc.)

<sup>46</sup> Statistical consultation and sampling error estimation were provided by Statistics Canada, Social Survey Methods Division, Senior Methodologist.

<sup>47</sup> Rust K, Kalton G. Strategies for collapsing strata for variance estimation. *Journal of Official Statistics* 1987;3(1):69-81.

<sup>48</sup> This means that 95% of random samples will yield estimates that will lie within one standard error above or below the estimate. In other words, if the study were repeated 100 times, in 95 times the estimates would fall within one standard error of the estimate. For example, 95 out of 100 times the estimate for the number of children admitted to care would be between 8,548 and 13,562 (see Table 2-3).

<sup>49</sup> The coefficient of variation (CV) is the ratio of the standard error to its estimate. Statistics Canada considers CVs under 16 to be reliable, warns that CVs between 16 and 33.3 should be treated with caution, and recommends that CVs above 33.3 not be used.

**Table 2-2**  
**Standard Errors and Coefficients of Variation for Selected Variables ( $p < 0.05$ ) in 1998**

| Variable  | Sample Size | Estimated Count or Incidence Rate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Incidence of Investigated Physical Abuse (Table 3-5)                                      | 2,665       | 7.42 per 1,000 children           | 0.66           | 8.8%                     |
| Count of Investigated Physical Abuse (Table 3-5)  | 2,665       | 46,735                            | 4,134          | 8.8%                     |
| Exposure to Family Violence (Table 3-8)   | 1,126       | 21,139                            | 3,984          | 18.8%                    |
| Minor Physical Harm (no treatment required) (Table 4-1(a))                                | 658         | 12,297                            | 905            | 7.4%                     |
| Placement in Foster Care (Table 5-3)  | 918         | 11,055                            | 1,279          | 11.6%                    |
| Investigated child is a male 8-11 (Table 6-1)   | 995         | 17,169                            | 1,791          | 10.4%                    |
| Investigated child has 4 or more siblings under 16 (Table 7-3)                            | 349         | 5,799                             | 1,372          | 23.7%                    |
| Investigated child lives with family in a shelter, hostel or hotel (Table 7-6)            | 105         | 1,903                             | 423            | 22.2%                    |
| Alleged perpetrator is an adoptive parent, foster parent or foster sibling (Table 4-4(a)) | 62          | 1,083                             | 366            | 33.8%                    |

(see Appendix H, Table 3-8) were above 16% in instances involving low frequency events (e.g. where the number of sampled cases was under 100) or in instances involving variables with unusually large variability (e.g. the classification of exposure to family violence as a form of emotional maltreatment). Estimates based on events that occurred in fewer than five cases are not included in this report and are marked as blanks in the accompanying tables.

The error estimates do not account for any errors in determining the annual and regional weights. Nor do they account for any other non-sampling errors that may occur, such as inconsistency or inadequacies in administrative procedures from site to site. The error estimates also cannot account for any variations due to seasonal effects. The accuracy of these annual estimates depends on the extent to which the sampling period is representative of the whole year.

## Data Presentation Format

Definitions of the **study variables** are described in the corresponding chapters. For forms of maltreatment and substantiation rates please read the introduction to Chapter 3. In reading the data tables in Chapters 3 to 8, note the following points:

- Data tables in Chapter 3 present estimate counts and incidence rates by level of substantiation for **all forms** of investigated maltreatment.
- Tables in Chapters 4 through 8 primarily present estimate counts for the four **primary categories** of investigated maltreatment by the level of substantiation.
- Estimates are not presented when there were insufficient cases sampled to provide a reliable estimate. In such instances two dashes (–) appear in the cell.
- Most data tables present **weighted estimates** for Canada in 1998. In some tables, however, **full Canadian estimates** could not be calculated because comparable data were **not available** across

a sufficient number of CIS sites. These tables are marked accordingly.

- The overall sample used to derive data for each table is noted at the bottom of the table along with the number of missing cases. Because of **missing cases** the case count totals at the bottom of each

table will vary from one table to the next. Chapter 3 tables provide the full count of estimated child maltreatment investigations.

- Column percentages total 100% for all tables, except when multiple responses were possible (e.g. referral source, child functioning).



### ■ 3. INCIDENCE OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

This chapter presents estimates of the number of child maltreatment investigations conducted in Canada during 1998. All data are presented in terms of the estimated total number of child investigations, as well as the estimated annual incidence rate of investigations per 1,000 children aged 0 to 15.<sup>50</sup> These figures refer to child investigations and not to the number of investigated families. Thus, if several children in a family had each been reported as abused or neglected, each investigated child counted as a separate child investigation. For children investigated more than once in a year, each investigation is included in the estimates (see Chapter 1, Definitional Framework).<sup>51</sup>

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

#### Definition of Classifications of Maltreatment

The CIS definition of child maltreatment includes 22 forms of maltreatment subsumed under four categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emo-

tional maltreatment (see Section 14, “Forms of Maltreatment,” in CIS Study Guide Book in Appendix E). The 22 forms of maltreatment tracked by the CIS are defined in the detailed sections on the four categories of maltreatment in this chapter.

Each investigation had a minimum of one and a maximum of three identified forms of maltreatment. In cases involving more than three forms of maltreatment, investigating workers were asked to select the three forms that best described the reason for investigation. More than one form of maltreatment was identified for 24% of child investigations (see Table 3-4).

The classification of maltreatment that was determined by the investigating worker as best characterizing the investigated maltreatment was identified as the **primary classification level**. The second or third classifications of investigated maltreatment were categorized as the **secondary classification level**.

The ranking of primary and secondary classifications may be artificial for some cases. This can be illustrated by a case involving a physical abuse incident and chronic emotional maltreatment. The investigating worker might classify the primary maltreatment as physical abuse and the secondary one as emotional maltreatment, because the physical abuse incident best characterizes the primary investigation focus on the child’s immediate safety – even though emotional maltreatment may be a more critical long-term concern. The classification of cases by the primary form of maltreatment tends, consequently, to put greater emphasis on physical and sexual abuse. Many Canadian

<sup>50</sup> The cut-off age of 15 (children under the age of 16) was selected because the mandate to investigate varies among provinces and territories in Canada. All calculations were based on the child population estimates from the 1996 census provided by Custom Services Section, Advisory Services, Statistics Canada Ontario Regional Office.

<sup>51</sup> Children investigated more than once during the case selection period (October to December 1998) were only counted as one investigation; however, children investigated more than once over the whole year (1998) were counted as separate cases because the child welfare service statistics used to annualize the CIS estimates had not had duplicates removed (see Chapter 1, Definitional Framework).

jurisdictions have special investigation protocols and specific procedures in cases of abuse, even though problems arising from neglect or emotional maltreatment may have equal or more detrimental effects on children.

For the purpose of this report, the primary classification of maltreatment will generally be presented in order to allow summary comparisons of the four categories of maltreatment tracked by the CIS (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment). In this chapter, however, Tables 3-3, 3-5, 3-6, 3-7, and 3-8 will present the **primary and secondary forms** of identified maltreatment in order to provide an exact estimate of the occurrence of the four categories and the 22 individual forms of maltreatment.

## Definition of Levels of Substantiation

The data in this chapter are all presented in terms of the three levels of substantiation specified by workers: unsubstantiated, suspected, and substantiated. The following definition of substantiation was used:

A case is considered **substantiated** if the balance of evidence indicates that abuse or neglect has occurred. The term is synonymous with the terms “verified” or “confirmed”, which are used in some jurisdictions.

A case is **suspected** if there is not enough evidence to substantiate maltreatment, but there nevertheless remains a suspicion that maltreatment has occurred.

A case is **unsubstantiated** if there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the child has not been maltreated.

Unsubstantiated does not mean that a referral was inappropriate or malicious; it simply indicates that the investigating worker determined that the child had not been maltreated (see Malicious Referrals, Chapter 8).

Some jurisdictions<sup>52</sup> only make a distinction between a case that was substantiated and a case that was unsubstantiated, or verified and not verified.<sup>53</sup> The addition of a “suspected” level provides an important clinical distinction between cases in which there is enough conclusive evidence that a case can be deemed substantiated or unsubstantiated and cases in which maltreatment remains suspected at the conclusion of the investigation. It should be noted, however, that the use of the suspected category leads to fewer cases being classified as substantiated or unsubstantiated. Comparisons with other statistics that use only two levels of substantiation should therefore be made with caution (see Chapter 1).

## Calculation of Substantiation Rates in Cases Involving Several Forms of Maltreatment

The substantiation decision is specific to the form of maltreatment being investigated. Given that investigations can involve up to three forms of maltreatment, some investigations can result in substantiation of one form but not of another. For example, an investigation may conclude that a particular child was not sexually abused, yet a severe lack of supervision took place, and therefore concerns about neglect were substantiated. As a result confusion can easily arise in comparing figures from different tables, because **substantiation rates are affected by the level of aggregation in each table**. Substantiation rates are higher in tables referring to higher levels of aggregation because they refer to substantiation at a case level, meaning that at least one form of maltreatment was substantiated. Table 3-1, for example, focuses on overall maltreatment and has the highest substantiation rate. Subsequent tables aggregate by primary category of maltreatment

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<sup>52</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration of Children, Youth and Families. *Child maltreatment 1997: reports from the states to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999.

<sup>53</sup> For the purpose of CIS, all three levels of substantiation were used regardless of the jurisdiction.

**Table 3-1**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Level of Substantiation** |           |                 | Total          |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|
|  | Substantiated             | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |                |
| Maltreatment Investigations  |                           |           |                 |                |
| Child Investigations   | 61,201                    | 29,668    | 44,704          | <b>135,573</b> |
| Incidence per 1000 Children  | 9.71                      | 4.71      | 7.09            | <b>21.52</b>   |
| Row Percentage   | 45%                       | 22%       | 33%             | <b>100%</b>    |
| <i>Row Percentages</i>   |                           |           |                 |                |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-1. |                           |           |                 |                |
| ** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”   |                           |           |                 |                |

and report slightly lower rates, because the rates are category or form specific.

In presenting substantiation rates for cases involving multiple forms of maltreatment, the CIS adheres to the following procedure:

**Multiple Forms within a Category:** Tables 3-3 to 3-8 present all forms of maltreatment that were investigated as the primary or secondary forms. If the information presented is **maltreatment-form specific** (e.g. “medical neglect”), then the corresponding level of substantiation for that form is used. If the information is **category specific** such that forms fall under one category (e.g. “medical neglect” and “failure to supervise”, both of which fall under the neglect category), then the form with the highest level of substantiation determined the level for that overall category. Investigations are counted as substantiated if there is a minimum of one form substantiated. Investigations are counted as suspected if there are no substantiated forms, but at least one suspected form. Investigations are counted as unsubstantiated only if all forms are unsubstantiated.

**Primary Category:** Tables presenting data on the primary category of investigated maltreatment use the level of substantiation specific to the primary category of maltreatment (all tables in Chapters 4 to 8 with the exception of Tables 6-1 and 6-2 are based on primary categories).

**Multiple Categories:** Tables in Chapters 4 to 8, with the exception of Tables 6-1 and 6-2, include a multiple categories column. In cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment (either two or three categories of maltreatment) the highest level of substantiation within the multiple categories determines the overall substantiation level.

**Family-Level Data:** In Table 3-2, which presents family-level data, the substantiation level is determined by the highest level of substantiation among all child investigations. For example, if the case involving one child was unsubstantiated and the case involving a second child was substantiated, then the family investigation was determined as substantiated (a minimum of one substantiated classification for the multiple investigated children within the family).

## Total Child Investigations and Overall Rates of Substantiation

Table 3-1 presents the estimated number of child investigations of reported maltreatment. The total number of child maltreatment investigations includes all child investigations, regardless of their substantiation level. An estimated 135,573 child investigations (21.52 investigations per 1,000 children in Canada) were conducted in 1998. Forty-five percent of the investigations (an estimated 61,201 child investigations) were substantiated by the investigating worker (9.71 investiga-

**Table 3-2**  
**Families Involved in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998 \***

|   | Level of Substantiation** |           |                 | Total         |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
|   | Substantiated             | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |               |
| Maltreatment Investigations   |                           |           |                 |               |
| Family Investigations*  | 43,072                    | 20,951    | 31,992          | <b>96,014</b> |
| Row Percentage  | 45%                       | 22%       | 33%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| <i>Row Percentages</i>  |                           |           |                 |               |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 5,449 family maltreatment investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-2. |                           |           |                 |               |
| ** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”  |                           |           |                 |               |

tions per 1,000 children).<sup>54</sup> In a further 22% (an estimated 29,668 child investigations, 4.71 investigations per 1,000 children) there was insufficient evidence to substantiate maltreatment; however, maltreatment remained suspected by the investigating worker. Thirty-three percent of investigations (an estimated 44,704 child investigations, 7.09 investigations per 1,000 children) were unsubstantiated.

## Total Family Investigations and Overall Rates of Substantiation

Table 3-2 presents the estimated number of family investigations (family-based). Although the estimates presented in this report are child-based, the family-based data are presented in this table to provide a basis for comparing CIS data with the family-based child maltreatment statistics routinely gathered in many jurisdictions. An estimated 96,014 family maltreatment reports were investigated because of alleged maltreatment. Of this number, 45% were substantiated, 22% remained suspected, and 33% were unsubstantiated.

Children living in an investigated family were not all considered to be suspected victims of maltreatment. In investigated families there was an average of 2.3 children under the age of 19, and an average of 1.43

children were investigated for each family (see Appendix I, Table 1). Children were investigated if they were reported for suspected maltreatment, or if concerns about possible maltreatment of that child arose during the investigation.

## Categories of Maltreatment

Table 3-3 presents the four categories of maltreatment at the primary and secondary (second and third) investigation classification levels. The final column (“primary or secondary”) indicates the total number of times that a maltreatment category was identified for any of the three investigation classifications. Note that the primary category column reflects the maltreatment classifications used in all tables in subsequent chapters of this report.

**Physical Abuse:** An estimated 41,551 child investigations (31%) had physical abuse as the primary reason for investigation. Of this number, 34% were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 43% were unsubstantiated. In an estimated 4,642 child investigations (10% of investigations involving a second category), physical abuse was identified at the second classification level; 30% of these cases were substantiated, 36% suspected, and 34% unsubstantiated. An estimated 1,438 child investigations (12%) were completed with physical abuse as the third classification. The substantiation

<sup>54</sup> At least one form of maltreatment was substantiated, see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates, Chapter 3”.

**Table 3-3**  
**Categories of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Investigation Classification Level and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

| Substantiation of investigation | Investigation Classification Level*** |                    |                    |                      |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                                 | Primary                               | Secondary          |                    | Primary or Secondary |
|                                 |                                       | (second)           | (third)            |                      |
| <b>Physical Abuse</b>           | <b>31% 41,551</b>                     | <b>10% 4,642</b>   | <b>12% 1,438</b>   | <b>34% 46,745</b>    |
| Substantiated                   | 34%                                   | 30%                | 18%                | 33%                  |
| Suspected                       | 23%                                   | 36%                | 49%                | 24%                  |
| Unsubstantiated                 | 43%                                   | 34%                | 33%                | 43%                  |
| <b>Sexual Abuse</b>             | <b>10% 14,406</b>                     | <b>6% 2,629</b>    | <b>6% 773</b>      | <b>12% 15,614</b>    |
| Substantiated                   | 38%                                   | 55%                | 57%                | 38%                  |
| Suspected                       | 22%                                   | 22%                | 22%                | 23%                  |
| Unsubstantiated                 | 40%                                   | 23%                | 21%                | 39%                  |
| <b>Neglect</b>                  | <b>40% 53,922</b>                     | <b>42% 18,743</b>  | <b>40% 4,764</b>   | <b>47% 63,954</b>    |
| Substantiated                   | 43%                                   | 43%                | 49%                | 44%                  |
| Suspected                       | 20%                                   | 23%                | 30%                | 20%                  |
| Unsubstantiated                 | 37%                                   | 34%                | 21%                | 36%                  |
| <b>Emotional Maltreatment</b>   | <b>19% 25,694</b>                     | <b>42% 19,052</b>  | <b>42% 5,011</b>   | <b>33% 44,465</b>    |
| Substantiated                   | 54%                                   | 42%                | 60%                | 51%                  |
| Suspected                       | 29%                                   | 39%                | 27%                | 32%                  |
| Unsubstantiated                 | 17%                                   | 19%                | 13%                | 17%                  |
| <b>Total**</b>                  | <b>100% 135,573</b>                   | <b>100% 45,066</b> | <b>100% 11,986</b> |                      |
| Substantiated                   | 42%                                   | 42%                | 51%                |                      |
| Suspected                       | 23%                                   | 31%                | 30%                |                      |
| Unsubstantiated                 | 35%                                   | 27%                | 19%                |                      |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-3.

\*\* The rows and columns in this table are not additive: child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to add the rows or columns will double count some child investigations.

\*\*\* Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”

rate was 18%, 49% of investigations remained suspected, and 33% were unsubstantiated. In total, an estimated 46,745 child investigations involved physical abuse as the primary or secondary reason for the investigation.

**Sexual Abuse:** An estimated 14,406 child investigations (10%) had sexual abuse as the primary investigation classification. Thirty-eight percent were substantiated, maltreatment remained suspected in a further 22%, and 40% were unsubstantiated. Sexual abuse was the second maltreatment category for 2,629 child investigations (6% of investigations involving a second category). For this category, the substantiation rate was 55%, 22% remained suspected, and 23% were

unsubstantiated. Sexual abuse was the third classification for an estimated 773 child investigations. Of this number, 57% were substantiated, 22% were suspected, and 21% unsubstantiated. In total, an estimated 15,614 child investigations involved sexual abuse as the primary or secondary reason for the investigation.

**Neglect:** Neglect was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment. An estimated 53,922 child investigations (40% of investigations) involved allegations of neglect as the primary reason for investigation. Forty-three percent of these cases were substantiated, 20% remained suspected, and 37% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 18,743 child

investigations involved neglect as the second reason for investigation. Of this group, 43% were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 34% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 4,764 child investigations identified neglect as the third classification. The substantiation rate was 49%, while the suspected rate was 30%, and the unsubstantiated rate was 21%. In total, an estimated 63,954 child investigations involved neglect as the primary or secondary reason for investigation.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Emotional maltreatment was the primary reason for investigation in an estimated 25,694 child investigations (19%), the second reason for an estimated 19,052 child investigations (42%), and the third reason for 5,011 child investigations (42%). The substantiation rate for emotional maltreatment identified as the primary reason for investigation was 54%, the highest of all categories of maltreatment; 29% of these cases remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated. Forty-two percent of cases involving emotional maltreatment investigated as a second category were substantiated, 39% remained suspected, and 19% were unsubstantiated. Sixty percent of cases involving emotional maltreatment investigated as a second category were substantiated, 27% remained suspected, and 13% were unsubstantiated. In total, an estimated 44,465 child investigations involved emotional maltreatment as the primary or secondary reason for investigation.

## Single and Multiple Categories of Maltreatment

Table 3-4 presents the number and substantiation level of cases involving single and multiple forms of maltreatment. Because most provincial and territorial case classification systems currently track single forms of maltreatment, it is likely that the investigating workers who completed CIS forms were unaccustomed to classifying cases under more than one form, and that the CIS may therefore underestimate the actual incidence of multiple maltreatment.

**Single Categories of Maltreatment:** A single category of maltreatment was identified in over three-quarters of investigations (76%), involving an estimated 103,568 child investigations. Physical abuse was identified as the single category of

maltreatment in 22% of investigations; 8% of investigations involved sexual abuse only, 31% neglect only, and 15% emotional maltreatment cases.

Forty percent of single category maltreatment investigations were substantiated, 22% remained suspected, and 38% were unsubstantiated. Single category physical abuse investigations had a substantiation rate of 32%, sexual abuse and neglect 39%, and emotional maltreatment 53%.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** An estimated 32,005 child investigations involved more than one category of maltreatment (24% of investigations). The most frequently identified combinations were neglect and emotional maltreatment (8%), physical abuse and emotional maltreatment (7%), and physical abuse and neglect (4%). A combination of physical abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment was reported in 2% of investigations, as was the combination of sexual abuse and neglect.

Fifty-eight percent of investigations with multiple categories were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 19% were unsubstantiated. Substantiation rates for specific combinations of maltreatment ranged from 65% for neglect and emotional maltreatment to 62% for sexual abuse and neglect, 54% for physical abuse and emotional maltreatment, 49% for physical abuse and neglect, and 29% for physical and sexual abuse. Over three-quarters of multiple maltreatment cases involved emotional maltreatment.

## Physical Abuse

For the purposes of the CIS, cases of investigated maltreatment were classified as physical abuse if the investigated child was suspected to have suffered or to be at substantial risk of suffering physical harm at the hands of his or her alleged perpetrator. The physical abuse category includes three subtypes or forms of abuse:

**Shaken Baby Syndrome:** Brain or neck injuries have resulted from the infant being shaken.

**Inappropriate Punishment:** Child abuse has occurred as a result of inappropriate punishment (e.g. hitting with hand or object) that has led to physical

**Table 3-4**  
**Single and Multiple Categories of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Number         |             | Level of Substantiation** |            |                 | Row Total   |
|---|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
|   |                |             | Substantiated             | Suspected  | Unsubstantiated |             |
| <b>Single Categories</b>  |                |             |                           |            |                 |             |
| Physical Abuse Only   | 29,114         | 22%         | 32%                       | 21%        | 47%             | 100%        |
| Sexual Abuse Only   | 11,393         | 8%          | 39%                       | 20%        | 41%             | 100%        |
| Neglect Only  | 42,680         | 31%         | 39%                       | 21%        | 40%             | 100%        |
| Emotional Maltreatment Only   | 20,381         | 15%         | 53%                       | 28%        | 19%             | 100%        |
| <b>Subtotal: Single Category</b>  | <b>103,568</b> | <b>76%</b>  | <b>40%</b>                | <b>22%</b> | <b>38%</b>      | <b>100%</b> |
| <b>Multiple Categories</b>  |                |             |                           |            |                 |             |
| Physical and Sexual   | 480            | 0%          | 29%                       | 35%        | 36%             | 100%        |
| Physical and Neglect  | 5,017          | 4%          | 49%                       | 16%        | 35%             | 100%        |
| Physical and Emotional  | 9,067          | 7%          | 54%                       | 31%        | 15%             | 100%        |
| Sexual and Neglect  | 2,323          | 2%          | 62%                       | 12%        | 26%             | 100%        |
| Sexual and Emotional  | 924            | 1%          | 51%                       | 36%        | 13%             | 100%        |
| Neglect and Emotional   | 10,973         | 8%          | 65%                       | 22%        | 13%             | 100%        |
| Physical, Sexual and Neglect  | —              | 0%          | —                         | —          | —               | —           |
| Physical, Sexual and Emotional  | 259            | 0%          | —                         | —          | —               | —           |
| Physical, Neglect, Emotional  | 2,723          | 2%          | 64%                       | 23%        | 13%             | 100%        |
| Sexual, Neglect and Emotional   | 162            | 0%          | —                         | —          | —               | —           |
| <b>Subtotal: Multiple Categories</b>  | <b>32,005</b>  | <b>24%</b>  | <b>58%</b>                | <b>23%</b> | <b>19%</b>      | <b>100%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>135,573</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>45%</b>                | <b>22%</b> | <b>33%</b>      | <b>100%</b> |
| <i>Row Percentage</i>   |                |             |                           |            |                 |             |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about single and multiple categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-4. |                |             |                           |            |                 |             |
| ** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”  |                |             |                           |            |                 |             |

harm, or put the child at substantial risk of harm. The judgement of appropriateness is based on many factors, including the severity of harm or potential harm, the amount of force used, the type of punishment relative to the age of the child, and the frequency of punishment. The distinction between this category and “other physical abuse” is that in the former, the abusive act is performed within a context of punishment, whereas in the latter there is no clear punitive or corrective context.

**Other Physical Abuse:** Any other form of physical assault that is inflicted on a child, such as intentionally burning a child or hitting the child in a manner that does not appear to be intended as punishment.

The incidence of investigated physical abuse is presented in Table 3-5. An estimated 46,745 child investigations (7.42 investigations per 1,000 children)

**Table 3-5**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Physical Abuse in Child Maltreatment Investigations**  
**by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

|  | Level of Substantiation*** |           |                 | Total         |
|--|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
|  | Substantiated              | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |               |
| <b>Primary or Secondary Forms of Physical Abuse</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Shaken Baby Syndrome   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 189                        | 165       | 244             | <b>598</b>    |
| Row Percentage   | 32%                        | 27%       | 41%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.03                       | 0.03      | 0.04            | <b>0.09</b>   |
| Inappropriate Punishment   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 10,734                     | 6,582     | 11,365          | <b>28,643</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 37%                        | 23%       | 40%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 1.70                       | 1.04      | 1.80            | <b>4.55</b>   |
| Other Physical Abuse   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 4,872                      | 5,066     | 8,398           | <b>18,336</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 26%                        | 28%       | 46%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.77                       | 0.80      | 1.33            | <b>2.91</b>   |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Physical Abuse</b><br><b>as Primary or Secondary Category for</b><br><b>Investigation**</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 15,553                     | 11,391    | 19,801          | <b>46,745</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 33%                        | 25%       | 42%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 2.47                       | 1.81      | 3.14            | <b>7.42</b>   |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Physical Abuse</b><br><b>as Primary Category for Investigation</b>   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 14,153                     | 9,446     | 17,952          | <b>41,551</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 34%                        | 23%       | 43%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 2.25                       | 1.50      | 2.85            | <b>6.59</b>   |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 2,665 child investigations with information about physical abuse investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-5.                 |                            |           |                 |               |
| ** The total number of investigations involving primary or secondary physical abuse is not equal to the sum of the specific forms of physical abuse because some cases involve multiple forms of physical abuse (see Table 3.3). |                            |           |                 |               |
| *** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”  |                            |           |                 |               |

involved physical abuse as the primary or secondary (including both second and third) reason for investigation, and an estimated 41,551 child investigations involved physical abuse as the primary reason for investigation, with an incidence rate of 6.59 investigations per 1,000 children.

An estimated 28,643 child investigations (4.55 investigations per 1,000 children) involved concerns about inappropriate punishment. Thirty-seven percent of these were substantiated (1.70 investigations per 1,000 children), 23% suspected, and 40% unsubstantiated. For the estimated 18,336 child investigations



(2.91 investigations per 1,000 children) reported for other forms of physical abuse, 26% were substantiated, 28% suspected, and 46% unsubstantiated. Shaken Baby Syndrome was identified as a reason for investigation in an estimated 598 child investigations (0.09 investigations per 1,000 children). Of that number, 32% were substantiated, 27% suspected, and 41% unsubstantiated.

## Sexual Abuse

The CIS tracked seven forms or subtypes of sexual abuse, ranging from sexual activity to sexual harassment. If several forms of sexual activity were involved, investigating workers were instructed to identify the most intrusive form.<sup>55</sup> It should be noted that the CIS identified only cases reported to child welfare services; many cases of child sexual abuse that do not involve parents or relatives in the home are investigated only by the police. Child welfare services become involved in extra-familial sexual abuse cases only if there are concerns about the parents' ability to protect the child.

The CIS used seven forms to classify cases of sexual abuse:

**Sexual Activity Completed:** Included oral, vaginal, or anal sexual activities.

**Sexual Activity Attempted:** Included attempts to have oral, vaginal, or anal sex.

**Touching/Fondling Genitals:** Sexual activity involved touching/fondling genitals.

**Adult Exposing Genitals to Child:** Sexual activity consisted of exposure of genitals.

**Sexual Exploitation: Involved in Prostitution or Pornography:** Included situations in which an adult sexually exploited a child for purposes of financial gain or other profit.

**Sexual Harassment:** Included proposition, encouragement, or suggestion of a sexual nature.

**Voyeurism:** Included activities in which a child was encouraged to exhibit himself/herself for the sexual gratification of the alleged perpetrator. The "Sexual Exploitation/Pornography" code was used if voyeurism included pornographic activities.

As shown in Table 3-6, an estimated 15,614 child investigations (2.48 investigations per 1,000 children) involved allegations of sexual abuse as either the primary or secondary category of maltreatment. Of this number 38% were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 39% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 14,406 child investigations (2.29 investigations per 1,000 children) involved sexual abuse as the primary reason for investigation.

An estimated 2,742 child investigations (0.44 investigations per 1,000 children) involved allegations of completed sexual activity (oral, vaginal, or anal sexual activities); 44% of these investigations were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 33% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 3,994 child investigations (0.63 investigations per 1,000 children) were for attempted sexual activity. Twenty percent were substantiated, 26% suspected, and 54% unsubstantiated. An estimated 7,728 child investigations (1.23 investigations per 1,000 children) of touching or fondling of genitals were investigated. Fifty-two percent of these investigations were substantiated, 15% remained suspected, and 33% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 1,654 child investigations involved reported exposure of genitals (0.26 investigations per 1,000 children). Forty-one percent of these cases were substantiated, 37% remained suspected, and 22% were unsubstantiated. It should be noted that acts of exposure involving non-family members are usually directly reported to the police and do not involve child welfare services.

<sup>55</sup> Workers were asked to identify the most severe form of sexual abuse for the investigation rather than reporting multiple forms for the same incident. For instance, if a child had been a victim of fondling and sexual activity by the same perpetrator, this was counted as a single case of sexual activity. When multiple forms were identified, CIS research associates would consult with workers and would recode when appropriate. If this consultation was not possible, the original response was maintained.

**Table 3-6**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Sexual Abuse in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

|  | Level of Substantiation*** |           |                 | Total         |
|--|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
|  | Substantiated              | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |               |
| <b>Primary or Secondary Forms of Sexual Abuse</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Sexual Activity Completed  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 1,205                      | 628       | 909             | <b>2,742</b>  |
| Row Percentage   | 44%                        | 23%       | 33%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.19                       | 0.10      | 0.14            | <b>0.44</b>   |
| Sexual Activity Attempted  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 814                        | 1,034     | 2,146           | <b>3,994</b>  |
| Row Percentage   | 20%                        | 26%       | 54%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.13                       | 0.16      | 0.34            | <b>0.63</b>   |
| Touching/Fondling Genitals   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 3,985                      | 1,193     | 2,550           | <b>7,728</b>  |
| Row Percentage   | 52%                        | 15%       | 33%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.63                       | 0.19      | 0.40            | <b>1.23</b>   |
| Exposure of Genitals   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 678                        | 615       | 361             | <b>1,654</b>  |
| Row Percentage   | 41%                        | 37%       | 22%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.11                       | 0.10      | 0.06            | <b>0.26</b>   |
| Exploitation: Pornography/Prostitution   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 360                        | 280       | 454             | <b>1,094</b>  |
| Row Percentage   | 33%                        | 26%       | 41%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1000 children  | 0.06                       | 0.04      | 0.07            | <b>0.17</b>   |
| Sexual Harassment  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 245                        | 177       | 75              | <b>497</b>    |
| Row Percentage   | 49%                        | 36%       | 15%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.04                       | 0.03      | 0.01            | <b>0.08</b>   |
| Voyeurism  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations   | —                          | —         | —               | —             |
| Row Percentage   | —                          | —         | —               | —             |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | —                          | —         | —               | —             |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Sexual Abuse as Primary or Secondary Category for Investigation**</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 5,870                      | 3,604     | 6,140           | <b>15,614</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 38%                        | 23%       | 39%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.93                       | 0.57      | 0.97            | <b>2.48</b>   |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Sexual Abuse as Primary Category for Investigation</b>   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 5,449                      | 3,215     | 5,742           | <b>14,406</b> |
| Row Percentage   | 38%                        | 22%       | 40%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.86                       | 0.51      | 0.91            | <b>2.29</b>   |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 882 child investigations with information about sexual abuse investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-6.               |                            |           |                 |               |
| ** The total number of investigations involving primary or secondary sexual abuse is not equal to the sum of the specific forms of sexual abuse because some cases involve multiple forms of sexual abuse (see Table 3.3). |                            |           |                 |               |
| *** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see "Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3"  |                            |           |                 |               |

Exploitation, pornography, and prostitution were alleged for an estimated 1,094 child investigations (0.17 investigations per 1,000 children). Thirty-three percent of these were substantiated, 26% were suspected, and 41% unsubstantiated. Sexual harassment was the focus of 497 investigations (0.08 investigations per 1,000 children), of which 49% were substantiated, 36% remained suspected, and 15% were unsubstantiated. There were not enough cases of voyeurism in the CIS samples for the calculation of a reliable estimate of this particular form of investigated abuse.

## Neglect

Child neglect includes situations in which children have suffered harm, or their safety or development has been endangered as a result of the caregiver's failure to provide for or protect them. Unlike abuse, which is usually incident-specific, neglect often involves chronic situations that are not as easily identified as specific incidents. Nevertheless, all provincial and territorial statutes include neglect or some type of reference to acts of omission, such as failure to supervise or protect, as grounds for investigating maltreatment. The CIS includes eight subtypes or forms of neglect:

### **Failure to Supervise or Protect Leading to**

**Physical Harm:** The child suffered or was at substantial risk of suffering physical harm because of the caregiver's failure to supervise and protect the child adequately. Failure to protect included situations in which a child was harmed or endangered as a result of a caregiver's actions (e.g. drunk driving with a child, or engaging in dangerous criminal activities with a child).

### **Failure to Supervise or Protect Leading to Sexual**

**Abuse:** The child has been or was at substantial risk of being sexually molested or sexually exploited, and the caregiver knew or should have known of the possibility of sexual molestation and failed to protect the child adequately.

**Physical Neglect:** The child has suffered or was at substantial risk of suffering physical harm caused by the caregiver's failure to care and provide for the child adequately. This includes inadequate nutrition/

clothing, and unhygienic and/or dangerous living conditions. There must be evidence or suspicion that the caregiver is at least partially responsible for the situation.

**Medical Neglect:** The child required medical treatment to cure, prevent, or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child's caregiver did not provide, refused, or was unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment.

**Failure to Provide Treatment for Mental, Emotional or Developmental Problem:** The child was at substantial risk of suffering from emotional harm as demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or suffering from a mental, emotional, or developmental condition that could seriously impair the child's development. The child's caregiver did not provide, or refused, or was unavailable or unable to consent to treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm. This category includes failing to provide treatment for school-related problems such as learning and behaviour problems, as well as treatment for infant development problems such as non-organic failure to thrive. This form does not include failure to provide treatment for criminal behaviour (see Permitting Maladaptive/Criminal Behaviour).

**Permitting Maladaptive/Criminal Behaviour:** A child has committed a criminal offence with the encouragement of the child's caregiver, or because of the caregiver's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately. Alternatively, services or treatment were necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's caregiver did not provide, refused, or was unavailable or unable to consent to those services or treatment. There is some overlap between this form of neglect and both failure to supervise and failure to provide treatment. If a situation involved both criminal activity and some kind of harm or substantial risk of harm to the child, both forms of maltreatment were included.

**Abandonment/Refusal of Custody:** The child's caregiver has died or was unable to exercise custodial rights and did not make adequate provisions for care and custody, or the child was in a placement and the caregiver refused or was unable to take custody.

**Educational Neglect:** Caregivers knowingly allowed chronic truancy (5 or more days a month), failed to enroll the child, or repeatedly kept the child at home.

If the child had been experiencing mental, emotional, or developmental problems associated with school, and treatment had been offered but caregivers did not cooperate with treatment, the case was classified as failure to provide treatment.

Table 3-7 indicates that child neglect was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment. An estimated 63,954 child investigations (10.15 investigations per 1,000 children) involved neglect as either the primary or secondary reason for investigation (see Table 3-7). Forty-four percent of investigations were substantiated; in a further 20% of cases neglect remained suspected but could not be confirmed, and 36% of investigated neglect was not substantiated. Neglect was the primary category of investigation in an estimated 53,922 child maltreatment cases (8.56 investigations per 1,000 children).

Table 3-7 shows that the most common form of investigated neglect was failure to supervise. An estimated 34,366 child investigations (5.45 investigations per 1,000 children) involved supervision issues when children had been harmed or were at risk of physical harm. Of these cases 39% were substantiated, 25% were suspected, and 36% unsubstantiated. Concerns about failure to protect children from sexual abuse were identified in another estimated 4,176 child investigations (0.66 investigations per 1,000 children), with 34% of these substantiated, 21% remaining suspected, and 45% being unsubstantiated.

There were an estimated 15,978 child investigations (2.54 investigations per 1,000 children) involving concerns about parents' reported failure to adequately meet the physical needs of children (physical neglect). Thirty-three percent of these investigations were substantiated, 20% remained suspected, and 47% were unsubstantiated. Medical neglect was a reason for investigation in 4,950 cases (0.79 investigations per 1,000 children). Almost half of these investigations were substantiated (48%); an additional 14% remained suspected, and 38% were unsubstantiated. Permitting

maladaptive and criminal behaviour was a form of maltreatment for an estimated 6,421 child investigations (1.02 investigations per 1,000 children). This form had a substantiation rate of 63%; 21% were suspected, and 16% unsubstantiated.

An estimated 5,196 child investigations (0.82 investigations per 1,000 children) involved abandonment as a primary or secondary form of investigated maltreatment. Sixty-three percent were substantiated, 10% remained suspected, and 27% were unsubstantiated. Educational neglect was noted in an estimated 4,876 child investigations (0.77 investigations per 1,000 children). In 63% of these neglect was substantiated, in 21% it remained suspected, and in 16% it was unsubstantiated. Failure to provide treatment was the primary or secondary form of maltreatment for an estimated 1,312 cases (0.21 investigations per 1,000 children); 38% of these substantiated, 29% suspected, and 33% unsubstantiated.

## Emotional Maltreatment

Emotional maltreatment is a difficult category of maltreatment to document because often it does not involve a specific incident or visible injury. In addition, the effects of emotional maltreatment, although often severe, tend to become apparent over time (e.g. impaired cognitive, social, and emotional development). There is considerable variation in the extent to which emotional maltreatment is covered by provincial/territorial child welfare statutes. Four forms of emotional maltreatment were tracked by the CIS. For the purposes of the CIS, however, situations involving failure to provide treatment for children exhibiting emotional difficulties were not included as a category of emotional maltreatment, but as one of the forms of neglect.

**Emotional Abuse:** The child has suffered or was at substantial risk of suffering from mental, emotional, or developmental problems caused by overtly hostile,

**Table 3-7**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Neglect in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation**  
**in Canada in 1998**

|   | Level of Substantiation*** |           |                 | Total         |
|---|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
|   | Substantiated              | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |               |
| <b>Primary or Secondary Forms of Neglect</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Failure to Supervise/Protect (Physical)   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 13,466                     | 8,730     | 12,170          | <b>34,366</b> |
| Row Percentage  | 39%                        | 25%       | 36%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 2.14                       | 1.39      | 1.93            | <b>5.45</b>   |
| Failure to Supervise/Protect (Sexual)   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 1,432                      | 887       | 1,857           | <b>4,176</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 34%                        | 21%       | 45%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.23                       | 0.14      | 0.29            | <b>0.66</b>   |
| Physical Neglect  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 5,325                      | 3,141     | 7,512           | <b>15,978</b> |
| Row Percentage  | 33%                        | 20%       | 47%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.85                       | 0.50      | 1.19            | <b>2.54</b>   |
| Medical Neglect   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 2,399                      | 677       | 1,874           | <b>4,950</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 48%                        | 14%       | 38%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.38                       | 0.11      | 0.30            | <b>0.79</b>   |
| Failure to Provide Treatment  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 495                        | 379       | 438             | <b>1,312</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 38%                        | 29%       | 33%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.08                       | 0.06      | 0.07            | <b>0.21</b>   |
| Permitting Maladaptive/Criminal Behaviour   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 4,005                      | 1,366     | 1,050           | <b>6,421</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 63%                        | 21%       | 16%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.64                       | 0.22      | 0.17            | <b>1.02</b>   |
| Abandonment   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 3,286                      | 505       | 1,405           | <b>5,196</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 63%                        | 10%       | 27%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.52                       | 0.08      | 0.22            | <b>0.82</b>   |
| Educational Neglect   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations  | 3,063                      | 1,011     | 802             | <b>4,876</b>  |
| Row Percentage  | 63%                        | 21%       | 16%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 0.49                       | 0.16      | 0.13            | <b>0.77</b>   |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Neglect as</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| <b>Primary or Secondary Category for Investigation**</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*   | 28,198                     | 12,981    | 22,775          | <b>63,954</b> |
| Row Percentage  | 44%                        | 20%       | 36%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 4.47                       | 2.06      | 3.61            | <b>10.15</b>  |
| <b>Total Investigations Involving Neglect as</b>  |                            |           |                 |               |
| <b>Primary Category for Investigation</b>   |                            |           |                 |               |
| Number of Child Investigations*   | 23,059                     | 11,051    | 19,812          | <b>53,922</b> |
| Row Percentage  | 43%                        | 20%       | 37%             | <b>100%</b>   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children  | 3.66                       | 1.75      | 3.14            | <b>8.56</b>   |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 3,889 child investigations with information about neglect investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-7.   |                            |           |                 |               |
| ** The total number of investigations involving primary or secondary neglect is not equal to the sum of the specific forms of neglect because some cases involve multiple forms of neglect (see Table 3.3). |                            |           |                 |               |
| *** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”   |                            |           |                 |               |

punitive treatment, or habitual or extreme verbal abuse (threatening, belittling, etc.).<sup>56</sup>

**Non-organic Failure to Thrive:** A child under 3 has suffered a marked retardation or cessation of growth for which no organic reason can be identified. Failure to thrive cases in which inadequate nutrition is the identified cause were classified as physical neglect. Non-organic failure to thrive is generally considered to be a form of emotional neglect; it has been classified as a separate form of emotional maltreatment because of its particular characteristics.

**Emotional Neglect:** The child has suffered or is at substantial risk of suffering from mental, emotional, or developmental problems caused by inadequate nurturance/affection.

**Exposed to Family Violence:** A child has been a witness to, or involved with family violence within his/her home environment. This includes situations in which the child indirectly witnessed the violence (e.g. saw the physical injuries on his/her caregiver the next day).

Table 3-8 illustrates that there were an estimated 44,465 child investigations (7.06 investigations per 1,000 children) in 1998 for alleged emotional maltreatment as the primary or secondary maltreatment classification. Fifty-one percent of all investigations were substantiated, 32% were suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated. Emotional maltreatment was the

primary reason for investigation in an estimated 25,694 cases (4.08 investigations per 1,000 children), or 58% of the total for primary or secondary form of maltreatment.

As can be seen in Table 3-8, nearly half of the investigated emotional maltreatment cases involved exposure to family violence — an estimated 21,132 child investigations (3.35 investigations per 1,000 children). Sixty-three percent of these cases were substantiated, 26% remained suspected, and 11% were unsubstantiated. An estimated 20,225 child investigations (3.21 investigations per 1,000 children) involved emotional abuse. This form had 39% of investigations substantiated, 37% suspected, and 24% unsubstantiated.

Emotional neglect was the primary or secondary form of maltreatment in an estimated 8,084 child investigations (1.28 investigations per 1,000 children). Of this total, 45% of investigations were substantiated, 37% remained suspected, and 18% were unsubstantiated. Too few cases of non-organic failure to thrive were identified by the CIS to provide a basis for estimating the annual national rate of investigation.

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<sup>56</sup> Instances in which children were displaying severe emotional problems requiring treatment and parents refused or did not cooperate with offered treatment were classified as neglect cases under failure to provide treatment.

**Table 3-8**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Emotional Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations**  
**by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

|  | Level of Substantiation*** |           |                 | Total  |
|--|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------|
|  | Substantiated              | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |        |
| <b>Primary or Secondary Forms of Emotional Maltreatment</b>  |                            |           |                 |        |
| Emotional Abuse  |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 7,796                      | 7,522     | 4,907           | 20,225 |
| Row Percentage   | 39%                        | 37%       | 24%             | 100%   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 1.24                       | 1.19      | 0.78            | 3.21   |
| Non-organic Failure to Thrive  |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations   | —                          | —         | —               | —      |
| Row Percentage   | —                          | —         | —               | —      |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | —                          | —         | —               | —      |
| Emotional Neglect  |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 3,685                      | 2,966     | 1,433           | 8,084  |
| Row Percentage   | 45%                        | 37%       | 18%             | 100%   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 0.58                       | 0.47      | 0.23            | 1.28   |
| Exposed to Family Violence   |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations   | 13,232                     | 5,612     | 2,288           | 21,132 |
| Row Percentage   | 63%                        | 26%       | 11%             | 100%   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 2.10                       | 0.9       | 0.36            | 3.35   |
| <b>Investigations Involving Emotional Maltreatment as Primary or Secondary Category for Investigation**</b>  |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 22,903                     | 14,050    | 7,512           | 44,465 |
| Row Percentage   | 51%                        | 32%       | 17%             | 100%   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 3.64                       | 2.23      | 1.19            | 7.06   |
| <b>Investigations Involving Emotional Maltreatment as Primary Category for Investigation</b>   |                            |           |                 |        |
| Number of Child Investigations*  | 13,887                     | 7,446     | 4,361           | 25,694 |
| Row Percentage   | 54%                        | 29%       | 17%             | 100%   |
| Incidence per 1,000 children   | 2.20                       | 1.18      | 0.69            | 4.08   |
| * Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 2,263 child investigations with information about emotional maltreatment investigations. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 3-8.                                 |                            |           |                 |        |
| ** The total number of investigations involving primary or secondary emotional maltreatment is not equal to the sum of the specific forms of emotional maltreatment because some cases involve multiple forms of emotional maltreatment (see Table 3.3). |                            |           |                 |        |
| *** Substantiation varies by level of aggregation – see “Calculation of Substantiation Rates – Chapter 3”  |                            |           |                 |        |

## ■ 4. CHARACTERISTICS OF MALTREATMENT

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Chapter 4 describes the characteristics of the major categories of maltreatment documented by the CIS. The characteristics of maltreatment documented include evidence of associated physical or emotional harm, the duration of the maltreatment, and children's relationships to the alleged perpetrators. The findings are presented in terms of the four major categories of primary maltreatment tracked by the CIS (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment)<sup>57</sup> and by level of substantiation. Each table also documents cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment.

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

### Physical Harm

The Maltreatment Assessment Form tracked physical harm suspected or known to be caused by the investigated maltreatment. This included suspicious injuries that were subsequently found not to be due to maltreatment as well as injuries received through maltreatment. The CIS also tracked instances in which physical harm had not yet occurred but a child was at

imminent risk of severe harm, particularly in cases of neglect (e.g. a young child found wandering unsupervised in the street) and cases of sexual abuse.

Information on physical injuries was collected using questions adapted from the nature and severity of injury scales developed for the U.S. *National Incidence Survey of Abuse and Neglect* (1996)<sup>58</sup> and used previously in the *Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect* (1994).<sup>59</sup> The CIS harm questions are non-standardized scales reflecting the investigating worker's assessment of the harm or potential harm to the child. These ratings are not necessarily equivalent to ratings that would be obtained following a comprehensive medical or psychological assessment.

Table 4-1(a) shows physical harm reported during child maltreatment investigations. Physical harm was identified in 13% of cases. In 10% of cases (an estimated 13,313 child investigations), harm was noted but no treatment was considered to be required. Sixty-two percent of these situations were substantiated, 19% were classified as suspected, and 19% were unsubstantiated. In a further 3% of cases (an estimated 4,197 child investigations), harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment. Sixty-three percent of the physical harm situations requiring treatment were substantiated, 12% were classified as suspected, and 25% were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Harm was indicated in 28% of physical abuse investigations (24% not requiring treatment and an additional 4% requiring treatment, see Table 4-1(a)). Sixty-two percent of physical abuse

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<sup>57</sup> Investigations can be classified under several forms of maltreatment, and characteristics are presented for all forms of maltreatment noted by investigating workers. The distinctions between the primary form, the secondary forms, and multiple forms are presented in Chapter 3.

<sup>58</sup> Sedlak AJ, Broadhurst DD. *Executive summary of the third national incidence study of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Trocmé N, McPhee D, et al. *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect*. Toronto: Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1994.



**Table 4-1(a)**  
**Physical Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                      | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                                      | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                                      | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total       |                |                     |
| No Physical Harm                     | 72% 29,759                | 94% 13,535         | 92% 49,672         | 98% 25,051             | <b>87%</b>  | <b>118,017</b> | 81% 25,958          |
| Substantiated                        | 30%                       | 41%                | 44%                | 57%                    | <b>43%</b>  |                | 54%                 |
| Suspected                            | 24%                       | 20%                | 20%                | 27%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 46%                       | 39%                | 36%                | 16%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 21%                 |
| Physical Harm, No Treatment Required | 24% 9,880                 | 5% 719             | 4% 2,195           | 2% 519                 | <b>10%</b>  | <b>13,313</b>  | 15% 4,846           |
| Substantiated                        | 62%                       | 52%                | 62%                | 69%                    | <b>62%</b>  |                | 77%                 |
| Suspected                            | 28%                       | 31%                | 23%                | 18%                    | <b>19%</b>  |                | 17%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 20%                       | 16%                | 15%                | 13%                    | <b>19%</b>  |                | 6%                  |
| Physical Harm, Treatment Required    | 4% 1,892                  | 1% 152             | 4% 2,030           | — —                    | <b>3%</b>   | <b>4,197</b>   | 4% 1,200            |
| Substantiated                        | 55%                       | —                  | 68%                | —                      | <b>63%</b>  |                | 74%                 |
| Suspected                            | 10%                       | —                  | 14%                | —                      | <b>12%</b>  |                | 15%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 35%                       | —                  | 18%                | —                      | <b>25%</b>  |                | 11%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100% 41,531</b>        | <b>100% 14,406</b> | <b>100% 53,897</b> | <b>100% 25,693</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>135,527</b> | <b>100% 32,004</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,667 child investigations with information about presence of physical harm. Because of missing information on 5 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-1(a).  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

investigations in which harm was noted but treatment was not considered to be required were substantiated. In situations involving more severe harm (i.e. harm requiring treatment), only 55% of investigations were substantiated. The large proportion of unsubstantiated cases involving serious injuries is not surprising given that unexplained or suspicious injuries should be reported to child welfare services, who are in the best position to fully investigate such situations.

**Sexual Abuse:** Physical harm was identified in 6% of sexual abuse cases. Treatment was not required in 5% and was required in 1% of child sexual abuse cases (Table 4-1(a)). Fifty-two percent of sexual abuse cases involving physical harm but requiring no treatment were substantiated, whereas only 41% of investigations identifying no physical harm were substantiated.

**Neglect:** Physical harm was indicated in 8% of neglect investigations. In four percent of investigations

harm was not considered to require treatment, and in 4% the reported harm required treatment. Sixty-two percent of cases involving physical harm but requiring no treatment were substantiated, and 68% of cases requiring treatment were substantiated.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Physical harm was identified in only 2% of emotional maltreatment investigations. There were not enough cases involving physical harm in the CIS sample for the calculation of reliable national estimates of substantiation.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Physical harm was identified in 19% of investigations involving more than one category of maltreatment. Maltreatment was substantiated in between 74% and 77% of cases in which harm was reported, and maltreatment remained suspected in nearly all other cases involving harm.

## Nature of Physical Harm

Investigating workers were asked to document the type of physical harm that was suspected to have been caused by the maltreatment. The nature of physical harm was recorded for up to six types of injury or health conditions:

**Bruises/Cuts/Scrapes:** The child suffered various physical hurts visible for at least 48 hours.

**Burns and Scalds:** The child suffered burns and scalds visible for at least 48 hours.

**Broken Bones:** The child suffered fractured bones.

**Head Trauma:** The child was a victim of head trauma and required medical attention (e.g. child pushed down a flight of stairs, causing broken teeth).

**Other Health Conditions:** The child suffered from other physical health conditions, such as complications from untreated asthma or a sexually transmitted disease.

**Death:** The child died and maltreatment as the cause of death was suspected during the investigation.

Table 4-1(b) presents six types of physical harm reported in the CIS. Physical harm primarily involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes (69% of harm situations) and other health conditions (24% of harm situations). Five percent of physical harm situations involved head trauma, 4% involved burns and scalds, and 3% involved broken bones. Head trauma, an injury of grave concern for shaken infants or infants who fall on their heads, occurred in 5% of cases involving children under age 1 (see Appendix I, Table 2). Because the CIS estimates are based on a very small number of cases involving burns and scalds, broken bones and head trauma, the estimates presented in Table 4-2 should be interpreted with caution.

Cases in which bruises, cuts, and scrapes were reported were substantiated in 58% of child investiga-

tions, remained suspected in 21%, and were unsubstantiated in 21%. Fifty-two percent of investigations noting burns and scalds were substantiated, 15% remained suspected, and 33% were unsubstantiated. In contrast, cases of maltreatment involving broken bones and head trauma were more frequently reported as unsubstantiated: in the case of broken bones the rates were 34% substantiated, 15% suspected and 51% unsubstantiated; in the case of head trauma they were 38% substantiated, 12% suspected, and 50% unsubstantiated. Investigations noting other health conditions as physical harm were substantiated in 65% of cases, 18% of these investigations remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated.

During the 3-month CIS case selection period there was one investigation of a child fatality in a study site. Child fatality was noted in three additional child investigations (involving two family investigations), although the fatalities did not involve any of the investigated children. On one occasion, a child death was not related to maltreatment, and two siblings who were living with another parent were investigated for alleged sexual abuse. On a second occasion, an unborn child died just before birth, and another child in the family was investigated for alleged physical abuse. Because these tragic events occur relatively rarely, it is not surprising that only one investigated child fatality was captured by the CIS. An average of about 100 child homicides are documented by the police each year across Canada according to the Homicide Survey, which provides information on police-reported characteristics of homicides.<sup>60</sup>

**Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse investigations in which harm was reported most often involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes (88% of harm situations). Fifty-eight percent of these cases were substantiated. Other health conditions were reported in 6% of physical abuse

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<sup>60</sup> Fitzgerald R. Assaults against children and youth in the family, 1996. *Canadian centre for justice statistics*. Catalogue No. 85-002-xpe, 17: 1-13. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

**Table 4-1(b)**  
**Nature of Physical Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |              |              |                        |            |               | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |              |              |                        |            | Total         |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse | Neglect      | Emotional Maltreatment |            |               |                     |
| Bruises, Cuts, and Scrapes                  | 88% 10,428                | 53% 458      | 19% 793      | 65% 421                | <b>69%</b> | <b>12,100</b> | 75% 4,539           |
| Substantiated                               | 58%                       | 50%          | 56%          | 66%                    | <b>58%</b> |               | 75%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 20%                       | 39%          | 25%          | 15%                    | <b>21%</b> |               | 18%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 22%                       | 11%          | 19%          | 19%                    | <b>21%</b> |               | 7%                  |
| Burns and Scalds                            | 2% 279                    | — —          | 11% 479      | — —                    | <b>4%</b>  | <b>758</b>    | 2% 127              |
| Substantiated                               | —                         | —            | 68%          | —                      | <b>52%</b> |               | —                   |
| Suspected                                   | —                         | —            | 23%          | —                      | <b>15%</b> |               | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated                             | —                         | —            | 9%           | —                      | <b>33%</b> |               | —                   |
| Broken Bones                                | 3% 357                    | — —          | 3% 146       | — —                    | <b>3%</b>  | <b>511</b>    | 3% 206              |
| Substantiated                               | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | <b>34%</b> |               | —                   |
| Suspected                                   | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | <b>15%</b> |               | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated                             | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | <b>51%</b> |               | —                   |
| Head Trauma                                 | 5% 584                    | — —          | 5% 192       | — —                    | <b>5%</b>  | <b>791</b>    | 7% 395              |
| Substantiated                               | 39%                       | —            | —            | —                      | <b>38%</b> |               | —                   |
| Suspected                                   | 9%                        | —            | —            | —                      | <b>12%</b> |               | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 52%                       | —            | —            | —                      | <b>50%</b> |               | —                   |
| Other Health Conditions                     | 6% 733                    | 53% 465      | 67% 2,831    | 35% 228                | <b>24%</b> | <b>4,257</b>  | 21% 1,277           |
| Substantiated                               | 69%                       | 65%          | 65%          | —                      | <b>65%</b> |               | 79%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 16%                       | 16%          | 17%          | —                      | <b>18%</b> |               | 16%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 15%                       | 19%          | 18%          | —                      | <b>17%</b> |               | 5%                  |
| Death                                       | — —                       | — —          | — —          | — —                    | — —        | — —           | — —                 |
| Substantiated                               | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | —          | —             | —                   |
| Suspected                                   | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | —          | —             | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated                             | —                         | —            | —            | —                      | —          | —             | —                   |
| <b>At Least One Type of Physical Harm**</b> | <b>11,791</b>             | <b>871</b>   | <b>4,250</b> | <b>644</b>             |            | <b>17,556</b> | <b>6,046</b>        |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 1,017 child investigations with a minimum of one type of physical harm reported. Therefore table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-1(b).

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

investigations involving harm, 69% of which were substantiated. Cases involving more severe injuries were indicated less often: broken bones were indicated in 3% of physical abuse investigations involving harm, burns and scalds in 2%, and head trauma in 5%. There were not enough cases involving these forms of

physical harm for the calculation of reliable estimates of levels of substantiation.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse cases in which harm was noted involved either bruises, cuts, and scrapes (53%) or other health conditions (53%).<sup>61</sup> Fifty per-

<sup>61</sup> Sexually transmitted diseases were the only specific type of health condition noted in the open-ended question that accompanied this category.

**Table 4-1(c)**  
**Medical Treatment Required in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Nature of Physical Harm in Canada in 1998\***

|                                | Types of Physical Harm           |                     |                 |                 |                            |            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|------------|
|                                | Bruises,<br>Cuts, and<br>Scrapes | Burns and<br>Scalds | Broken<br>Bones | Head Trauma     | Other Health<br>Conditions | Death      |
| Medical Treatment not Required | 87% 10,449                       | 51% 389             | — —             | 32% 252         | 57% 2,413                  | — —        |
| Medical Treatment Required     | 13% 1,618                        | 49% 369             | 93% 478         | 68% 537         | 43% 1,829                  | — —        |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>100% 12,067</b>               | <b>100% 758</b>     | <b>100% 512</b> | <b>100% 789</b> | <b>100% 4,242</b>          | <b>— —</b> |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 1,017 child investigations with a minimum of one type of physical harm reported. Therefore table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-1(b).  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

cent of cases involving bruises, cuts, and scrapes were substantiated. Sixty-five percent of cases involving other health conditions were substantiated.

**Neglect:** Identified harm in cases of neglect predominantly involved other health conditions (67% of harm situations). Over two-thirds of these situations were substantiated. Nineteen percent of neglect investigations in which harm was identified involved bruises cuts, and scrapes, and 56% of these cases were substantiated. Eleven percent of harm situations involved burns and scalds, 3% broken bones, and 5% head trauma.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Sixty-five percent of emotional maltreatment investigations in which harm was reported involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes, and 66% of these cases were substantiated.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Identified harm in multiple maltreatment cases primarily involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes (75%), with three-quarters of these cases being substantiated. Other health conditions were noted in 21% of harm cases and substantiated in 79% of these investigations. Burns and scalds were identified in 2% of multiple maltreatment cases involving harm, broken bones in 3%, and head trauma in 7%.

## Medical Treatment for Physical Harm

Investigating workers were asked to indicate whether identified physical harm was severe enough to require medical treatment. Table 4-1(c) presents medical treatment ratings for six CIS harm categories. Thirteen percent of investigations (an estimated 1,618) involving bruises, cuts, and scrapes required medical treatment. Forty-nine percent of cases involving burns and scalds, 93% of cases involving broken bones, and 68% of cases involving head trauma required medical attention. Medical treatment was needed in 43% of cases in which other health conditions were suspected to be caused by the investigated maltreatment.

## Emotional Harm

Information on mental/emotional harm was collected using a series of questions in the CIS Maltreatment Assessment Form. Child welfare workers were asked to describe the mental/emotional harm or trauma that was suspected or known to have been caused by the investigated maltreatment. Workers were asked to include changes in the child's development (regression, withdrawal), self-regulation (sleep patterns, elimination), or emotions (child crying, clinging, or anxious) that were apparent for at least 48 hours. Emotional harm should not be confused with emotional maltreatment, the first being defined in

**Table 4-2**  
**Emotional Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                       | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    | Multiple Categories |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                                       | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                     | Total              |                     |
|                                       | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total               |                    |                     |
| No Emotional Harm                     | 79% 32,541                | 69% 9,907          | 77% 40,634         | 71% 18,220             | <b>76% 101,302</b>  | 63% 19,813         |                     |
| Substantiated                         | 29%                       | 29%                | 36%                | 52%                    | <b>36%</b>          | 47%                |                     |
| Suspected                             | 22%                       | 22%                | 20%                | 27%                    | <b>22%</b>          | 26%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 49%                       | 49%                | 44%                | 21%                    | <b>42%</b>          | 27%                |                     |
| Emotional Harm, No Treatment Required | 9% 3,537                  | 8% 1,129           | 10% 5,117          | 12% 2,963              | <b>9% 12,746</b>    | 15% 4,673          |                     |
| Substantiated                         | 56%                       | 44%                | 69%                | 46%                    | <b>58%</b>          | 75%                |                     |
| Suspected                             | 25%                       | 34%                | 22%                | 45%                    | <b>29%</b>          | 21%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 19%                       | 22%                | 9%                 | 9%                     | <b>13%</b>          | 4%                 |                     |
| Emotional Harm, Treatment Required    | 12% 4,950                 | 23% 3,263          | 13% 7,032          | 17% 4,340              | <b>15% 19,585</b>   | 22% 6,993          |                     |
| Substantiated                         | 52%                       | 62%                | 60%                | 66%                    | <b>59%</b>          | 76%                |                     |
| Suspected                             | 27%                       | 19%                | 22%                | 28%                    | <b>24%</b>          | 18%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 21%                       | 19%                | 18%                | 6%                     | <b>17%</b>          | 6%                 |                     |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>100% 41,028</b>        | <b>100% 14,299</b> | <b>100% 52,783</b> | <b>100% 25,523</b>     | <b>100% 133,633</b> | <b>100% 31,479</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,444 child investigations with information about emotional harm. Because of missing information on 228 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-2.

terms of observable child behaviours and the latter in terms of parental behaviours (e.g. constant belittling, inappropriate nurturing).

Table 4-2 presents emotional harm identified during the child maltreatment investigations. In order to rate the severity of mental/emotional harm, workers indicated whether therapeutic intervention (treatment) was required as a result of the mental or emotional distress shown by the child.

It is more difficult than in the case of physical injuries to link emotional harm to specific incidents of maltreatment. To account for this difficulty, investigating workers were asked to rate general child functioning in addition to documenting maltreatment-specific mental/emotional harm. The child-functioning ratings are presented in Chapter 6.

Table 4-2 shows that emotional harm was noted in a quarter of all maltreatment investigations, involving an estimated 32,331 child investigations. Symptoms were severe enough to require treatment in 15% of investigations. Fifty-nine percent of cases requiring treatment were substantiated, an additional 24% remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Emotional harm was noted in 21% of physical abuse cases; in 12% of cases harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment, and in 9% symptoms were noted but treatment was not considered to be necessary (see Table 4-2). Over half of all physical abuse investigations in which emotional harm was noted were substantiated.

**Sexual Abuse:** Emotional harm was noted most often (31%) in sexual abuse cases: in 23% of these cases harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment, and in an additional 8% symptoms were noted but

treatment was not considered to be necessary (see Table 4-2). Although emotional harm was often documented in cases of sexual abuse, it may seem surprising that in many sexual abuse cases emotional harm was not noted. The CIS emotional harm question was limited to situations in which observable signs of harm were noted. Given the traumatic nature of sexual abuse, the absence of documented harm does not mean that victims have not suffered emotionally, nor does it mean that this harm will not be noted at a later point. Sixty-two percent of sexual abuse investigations in which emotional harm required treatment were substantiated.

**Neglect:** Emotional harm was identified in 23% of neglect cases; in 13% of these cases harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment, and in 10% symptoms were noted but treatment was not considered to be necessary (see Table 4-2). Sixty percent of neglect investigations in which emotional harm required treatment were substantiated.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Emotional harm was identified in 29% of emotional maltreatment cases; in 17% of these cases harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment, and in 12% symptoms were noted but treatment was not considered to be necessary (see Table 4-2). It is important not to confuse emotional maltreatment and documented emotional harm. Although a child exposed repeatedly to spousal assault may not show symptoms of emotional harm at the time of the investigation, the long-term traumatic nature of such situations is well documented. Two-thirds of emotional maltreatment investigations in which emotional harm required treatment were substantiated.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Emotional harm was identified in 37% of investigations that involved more than one category of maltreatment;

in 22% of these cases harm was serious enough to necessitate treatment, and in 15% symptoms were noted but treatment was not considered to be necessary (see Table 4-2). Seventy-six percent of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment in which emotional harm required treatment were substantiated.

## Duration of Maltreatment

Duration of maltreatment was documented on a three-point scale as follows:

- 1) Single incident.
- 2) Multiple incidents for less than 6 months.
- 3) Multiple incidents for more than 6 months.

Given the length restrictions for the CIS questionnaire, it was not possible to gather additional information on the frequency of maltreatment in order to distinguish between long-term situations with infrequent maltreatment and long-term situations with frequent maltreatment. Unlike most other items in this chapter, duration was documented only in cases of substantiated or suspected maltreatment.<sup>62</sup>

Table 4-3 shows that 39% of substantiated or suspected investigations (an estimated 34,045 child investigations) involved situations that had been ongoing for more than 6 months, and 23% of investigations involved single incidents.

**Physical Abuse:** Maltreatment was indicated as a single incident in 38% of substantiated or suspected physical abuse investigations, as multiple incidents over a period of less than 6 months in 14%, and as multiple incidents over longer than 6 months in 27% of substantiated or suspected cases.

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<sup>62</sup> Although injuries or symptoms of emotional harm can be documented in unsubstantiated cases, it only makes sense to document duration in cases in which maltreatment is indicated as substantiated or suspected.

**Table 4-3**  
**Duration of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation (Substantiated and Suspected Only) in Canada in 1998\***

|                      | Investigated Maltreatment |                   |                    |                        |                    |                    | Multiple Categories |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                      | Primary Category          |                   |                    |                        |                    | Total              |                     |
|                      | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse      | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total              |                    |                     |
| Single Incident      | 38% 8,766                 | 33% 2,850         | 15% 5,188          | 15% 3,125              | <b>23% 19,929</b>  | 14% 3,387          |                     |
| Substantiated        | 73%                       | 58%               | 77%                | 72%                    | <b>72%</b>         | 74%                |                     |
| Suspected            | 27%                       | 42%               | 23%                | 28%                    | <b>28%</b>         | 26%                |                     |
| Less Than Six Months | 14% 3,241                 | 19% 1,649         | 23% 7,580          | 12% 2,521              | <b>17% 14,991</b>  | 15% 3,641          |                     |
| Substantiated        | 57%                       | 63%               | 73%                | 69%                    | <b>68%</b>         | 80%                |                     |
| Suspected            | 43%                       | 37%               | 27%                | 31%                    | <b>32%</b>         | 20%                |                     |
| More Than Six Months | 27% 6,210                 | 32% 2,796         | 40% 13,539         | 54% 11,500             | <b>39% 34,045</b>  | 53% 12,604         |                     |
| Substantiated        | 66%                       | 86%               | 71%                | 69%                    | <b>71%</b>         | 77%                |                     |
| Suspected            | 34%                       | 14%               | 29%                | 31%                    | <b>29%</b>         | 23%                |                     |
| Unknown              | 21% 5,004                 | 16% 1,361         | 22% 7,328          | 19% 3,948              | <b>21% 17,641</b>  | 18% 4,252          |                     |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>100% 23,221</b>        | <b>100% 8,656</b> | <b>100% 33,635</b> | <b>100% 21,094</b>     | <b>100% 86,606</b> | <b>100% 23,884</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 4,915 child investigations with information about duration of maltreatment. Estimates include only substantiated and suspected cases. Because of missing information on 45 cases and a total of 2,712 unsubstantiated cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-3.

**Sexual Abuse:** Maltreatment was documented as a single incident in 33% of substantiated or suspected sexual abuse investigations, as multiple incidents over a period of less than 6 months in 19%, and as multiple incidents over more than 6 months in 32% of substantiated or suspected cases.

**Neglect:** In contrast to abuse, maltreatment was reported as a single incident in only 15% of substantiated or suspected neglect investigations. It was indicated as multiple incidents over a period of less than 6 months in 23% of these cases, and as multiple incidents over more than 6 months in 40% of substantiated or suspected cases.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** As with neglect, maltreatment was noted as a single incident only in 15% of substantiated or suspected emotional maltreatment investigations, as multiple incidents over a period of less than 6 months in 12%, and as multiple incidents

over more than 6 months in 54% of substantiated or suspected cases.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Maltreatment was indicated as a single incident in 14% of substantiated or suspected investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment. It was indicated as multiple incidents over a period of less than 6 months in 15% of these cases, and as multiple incidents over more than 6 months in 53% of substantiated or suspected cases.

### Alleged Perpetrator

The alleged perpetrator refers to the person or persons who were suspected of having maltreated the child. In cases in which maltreatment was substantiated, the alleged perpetrator was confirmed to have maltreated the child; in suspected cases, the role of the alleged perpetrator remained unconfirmed, and in unsubstantiated cases the investigation determined that

the alleged perpetrator had not maltreated the child. The CIS tracked seven pre-coded classifications of alleged perpetrators:

**Mother:** Biological parent.

**Father:** Biological parent.

**Step-father:** Included common-law partner.

**Step-mother:** Included common-law partner.

**Sibling:** Sibling or half-sibling of the child.<sup>63</sup>

**Stranger:** Unknown person to the child and family.

**Other:** Any other individual.

Information on the approximate age and sex of perpetrators was also collected. Perpetrators classified under the “other” category were re-coded under 22 additional categories, including adoptive or foster parents, grandparents, extended family, family acquaintances, and involved professionals. On the basis of the frequency of response, these were combined for the purpose of this report into the following nine classifications:

**Adoptive Parents/Foster Family:** Includes adoptive parents and foster family.

**Other Relative:** Any other relative, adult or child, who had contact with the investigated child (e.g. grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling).

**Family Friend:** Friend of the caregiver(s) living with the child.

**Parent’s Boyfriend/Girlfriend:** Parent’s partner not in a caregiving role.

**Child’s Friend (peer):** Another child considered a friend or peer.

**Babysitter:** An individual of any age in a babysitting role to the child.

**Teacher:** Includes teachers but not other school personnel (e.g. caretakers)

**Other Professional:** Includes recreation, health, and social service professionals.

**Other Acquaintance:** An individual known to the child’s family.

As shown in Table 4-4(a), most investigations involved allegations against parents: biological mothers (61%), biological fathers (38%), step-fathers/common-law partners (9%) or step-mothers/common-law partners (3%). It should be noted that in many instances, non-familial allegations of abuse are investigated by the police, not by a child welfare service.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, there is a significant overlap between these classifications, since multiple perpetrators were identified for the primary category of maltreatment in 24% of investigations (see Appendix I, Table 3). One or both parents were alleged perpetrators in 87% of maltreatment investigations (see Appendix I, Table 4). Other than parents, relatives were the most frequently identified perpetrators (7%). Only 6% of all maltreatment investigations involved a non-family individual as the alleged perpetrator, as shown in Table 4-4(b). Less than 1% involved allegations against another professional or a stranger.

Forty-one percent of investigations identifying biological mothers as the alleged perpetrator were substantiated, 24% remained suspected, and 35% were unsubstantiated. Similarly, cases involving biological fathers were substantiated in 45% of the investigations, 23% remained suspected, and 32% were unsubstantiated. Forty-three percent of investigations involving step-fathers as the alleged perpetrator were substantiated, 27% remained suspected, and 30% were unsubstantiated. Investigations identifying stepmothers as the alleged perpetrator for the primary category of maltreatment were most likely to be substantiated (51%), although 13% remained suspected, and 36% were unsubstantiated.

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<sup>63</sup> In select jurisdictions, information on alleged sibling perpetrators was collected under the “Other Relative” category.

<sup>64</sup> Trocmé N, Brison R. Homicide and injuries due to assault and to abuse and neglect. In: Beaulne G (ed). *For the safety of Canadian children and youth: from data to preventive measures*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1998.



**Table 4-4(a)**  
**Alleged Perpetrator (Relatives) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |                  |                   |                        |                    | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |                  |                   |                        |                    |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse     | Neglect           | Emotional Maltreatment | Total              |                     |
| <b>Relatives</b>   |                           |                  |                   |                        |                    |                     |
| Biological Mother  | 47% 19,535                | 5% 681           | 86% 46,310        | 61% 15,642             | <b>61% 82,168</b>  | 66% 21,063          |
| Substantiated  | 31%                       | 21%              | 42%               | 52%                    | <b>41%</b>         | 59%                 |
| Suspected  | 26%                       | 27%              | 20%               | 31%                    | <b>24%</b>         | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 43%                       | 52%              | 38%               | 17%                    | <b>35%</b>         | 16%                 |
| Biological Father  | 42% 17,385                | 15% 2,101        | 33% 17,934        | 55% 14,215             | <b>38% 51,635</b>  | 36% 11,367          |
| Substantiated  | 37%                       | 20%              | 46%               | 58%                    | <b>45%</b>         | 60%                 |
| Suspected  | 22%                       | 20%              | 19%               | 27%                    | <b>23%</b>         | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 41%                       | 60%              | 35%               | 15%                    | <b>32%</b>         | 19%                 |
| Step-father  | 10% 4,338                 | 9% 1,329         | 5% 2,640          | 14% 3,510              | <b>9% 11,817</b>   | 7% 2,377            |
| Substantiated  | 40%                       | 34%              | 38%               | 55%                    | <b>43%</b>         | 63%                 |
| Suspected  | 28%                       | 27%              | 26%               | 27%                    | <b>27%</b>         | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 32%                       | 39%              | 36%               | 18%                    | <b>30%</b>         | 13%                 |
| Step-mother  | 3% 1,344                  | 2% 345           | 2% 1,253          | 3% 883                 | <b>3% 3,825</b>    | 4% 1,308            |
| Substantiated  | 40%                       | —                | 56%               | 56%                    | <b>51%</b>         | 78%                 |
| Suspected  | 14%                       | —                | 15%               | 12%                    | <b>13%</b>         | 14%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 46%                       | —                | 29%               | 32%                    | <b>36%</b>         | 8%                  |
| Foster Family/Adoptive Parents                                     | 1% 253                    | 4% 546           | 0% 183            | 0% 101                 | <b>1% 1,083</b>    | 1% 161              |
| Substantiated  | —                         | 6%               | —                 | —                      | <b>25%</b>         | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | 2%               | —                 | —                      | <b>8%</b>          | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | 92%              | —                 | —                      | <b>67%</b>         | —                   |
| Other Relative   | 6% 2,616                  | 28% 4,097        | 4% 2,252          | 3% 777                 | <b>7% 9,742</b>    | 8% 2,698            |
| Substantiated  | 29%                       | 59%              | 50%               | 68%                    | <b>49%</b>         | 58%                 |
| Suspected  | 20%                       | 14%              | 17%               | 17%                    | <b>17%</b>         | 18%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 51%                       | 27%              | 33%               | 15%                    | <b>34%</b>         | 24%                 |
| <b>Child Investigations With At Least One Relative Perpetrator</b> | <b>95% 39,375</b>         | <b>61% 8,834</b> | <b>99% 53,137</b> | <b>98% 25,067</b>      | <b>93% 126,413</b> | <b>96% 30,737</b>   |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>                                | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b>    | <b>53,922</b>     | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>     | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about alleged perpetrators. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-4.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Physical Abuse:** Cases of physical abuse were evenly split between mothers and fathers, with female parents being investigated in 50% of cases (47% biological mothers and 3% step-mothers), and male parents in 52% of cases (42% biological fathers and 10% step-fathers). This distribution is somewhat biased by the fact that 40% of investigated families were female-

parent families (see Table 7-1). The alleged roles of mothers and fathers in two-parent families is somewhat different, with fathers being investigated in 71% of physical abuse cases, and mothers in 43% (see Appendix I, Table 5). Six percent of physical abuse investigations involved other relatives. Substantiation rates for cases involving families or relatives ranged from a low

**Table 4-4(b)**  
**Alleged Perpetrator (Non-Relatives) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |                  |                 |                        |                 | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |                  |                 |                        |                 |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse     | Neglect         | Emotional Maltreatment | Total           |                     |
| <b>Non-Relatives</b>   |                           |                  |                 |                        |                 |                     |
| Family Friend  | 0% 196                    | 5% 693           | 0% 120          | 1% 147                 | <b>1% 1,156</b> | 1% 452              |
| Substantiated  | —                         | 40%              | —               | —                      | <b>31%</b>      | 23%                 |
| Suspected  | —                         | 21%              | —               | —                      | <b>28%</b>      | 38%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | 39%              | —               | —                      | <b>41%</b>      | 39%                 |
| Parent's Boyfriend/Girlfriend  | 1% 462                    | 2% 217           | 1% 467          | 2% 619                 | <b>1% 1,765</b> | 2% 507              |
| Substantiated  | 57%                       | —                | 30%             | 60%                    | <b>45%</b>      | 42%                 |
| Suspected  | 29%                       | —                | 48%             | 11%                    | <b>28%</b>      | 36%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 14%                       | —                | 22%             | 29%                    | <b>27%</b>      | 22%                 |
| Child's Friend (Peer)  | — —                       | 6% 856           | — —             | — —                    | <b>1% 900</b>   | 1% 195              |
| Substantiated  | —                         | 29%              | —               | —                      | <b>30%</b>      | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | 40%              | —               | —                      | <b>38%</b>      | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | 31%              | —               | —                      | <b>32%</b>      | —                   |
| Babysitter   | 1% 375                    | 5% 746           | 1% 467          | — —                    | <b>1% 1,622</b> | 1% 335              |
| Substantiated  | —                         | 53%              | 100%            | —                      | <b>54%</b>      | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | 22%              | 0%              | —                      | <b>23%</b>      | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | 25%              | 0%              | —                      | <b>23%</b>      | —                   |
| Teacher  | 1% 501                    | 3% 423           | — —             | — —                    | <b>1% 987</b>   | — —                 |
| Substantiated  | 22%                       | 46%              | —               | —                      | <b>33%</b>      | —                   |
| Suspected  | 15%                       | 42%              | —               | —                      | <b>26%</b>      | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | 63%                       | 12%              | —               | —                      | <b>41%</b>      | —                   |
| Other Professional   | 0% 123                    | 2% 297           | — —             | — —                    | <b>0% 442</b>   | — —                 |
| Substantiated  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | <b>18%</b>      | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | <b>43%</b>      | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | <b>39%</b>      | —                   |
| Other Acquaintance   | 0% 101                    | 5% 756           | — —             | — —                    | <b>1% 897</b>   | 1% 163              |
| Substantiated  | —                         | 57%              | —               | —                      | <b>51%</b>      | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | 9%               | —               | —                      | <b>14%</b>      | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | 34%              | —               | —                      | <b>35%</b>      | —                   |
| Stranger   | — —                       | 2% 257           | — —             | — —                    | <b>0% 343</b>   | — —                 |
| Substantiated  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | —               | —                   |
| Suspected  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | —               | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated  | —                         | —                | —               | —                      | —               | —                   |
| <b>Child Investigations With At Least One Non-Relative Perpetrator</b> | <b>4% 1,787</b>           | <b>29% 4,237</b> | <b>2% 1,237</b> | <b>3% 841</b>          | <b>6% 8,102</b> | <b>6% 1,784</b>     |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>                                    | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b>    | <b>53,922</b>   | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>  | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about alleged perpetrators. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 4-4.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates, estimates are too unreliable to be given.

of 29% for cases involving other relatives to a high of 40% for cases involving step-parents.

Parent's boyfriend/girlfriend, babysitter, and teacher were the non-familial members most frequently reported as the alleged perpetrators in physical abuse investigations.

**Sexual Abuse:** In contrast to physical abuse cases, non-parental figures were most often investigated in sexual abuse cases. Non-parental relatives represented the largest group of alleged perpetrators (28%), followed by biological fathers (15%), and step-fathers (9%). In 6% of investigations the child's friend (peer) was identified as the alleged perpetrator, and family friends, other acquaintances, and babysitters were identified in 5% of investigations each. Teachers were investigated in 3% and other professionals, strangers, and parent's boyfriend/girlfriend were each investigated in 2% of cases. Seven percent of sexual abuse investigations involved mothers as the alleged perpetrator (5% biological mothers and 2% step-mothers).

Substantiation rates varied from a low of 20% (biological father), to a high of 59% (other relative). As with other low-frequency CIS figures, the estimates for the lower frequency categories (i.e. less than 1,000) should be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, it is important to note that many sexual abuse cases involving non-family members are investigated by the police alone, and child welfare services are only involved if there are concerns about the ongoing protection of the child.

**Neglect:** Biological mothers were investigated in 86% and biological fathers in 33% of neglect cases. The over-representation of biological mothers in this category should be interpreted with caution, given that 40% of investigations involved female-parent families (see Table 7-1). In two-parent families, fathers/step-fathers were investigated in 67% of neglect cases, and mothers/step-mothers in 92% (see Appendix I, Table 6). Forty-two percent of cases involving biological mothers were substantiated, and 46% of cases involving biological fathers were substantiated.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Biological fathers/step-fathers were investigated in 69% and mothers/step-mothers in 64% of cases of emotional maltreatment. Substantiation rates for parents ranged from a low of 52% (biological mothers) to a high of 58% (biological fathers).

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Two-thirds of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment involved biological mothers, 36% involved biological fathers, 7% step-fathers, and 4% step-mothers. In cases involving two-parent families, mothers were investigated in 61% of cases and fathers in 65% (see Appendix I, Table 7). Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 58% to a high of 78%.

## ■ 5. INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES

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Five interventions during investigation were documented by the Maltreatment Assessment Form: (1) provision of ongoing child welfare services; (2) referrals to other services; (3) placement of children in out-of-home care; (4) application to child welfare court; and (5) police involvement and criminal charges. The data presented in this chapter should be interpreted with care because they track only case events that occurred during the investigation. Additional referrals for services, admissions to out-of-home care, court applications, and criminal charges are likely to occur for cases kept open after the initial investigation. It should also be noted that investigation outcome statistics presented in this chapter apply only to child welfare cases open because of alleged maltreatment. Children referred to child welfare services for reasons other than child maltreatment (e.g. behavioural or emotional, see Chapter 2) may have been admitted to care or been subject to child welfare court proceedings, but were not tracked by the CIS.

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

The tables in this chapter present information for each of the specific interventions in terms of (1) the number of child investigations; (2) the primary categories of investigated maltreatment; (3) the proportion of investigations involving multiple categories of

maltreatment; and (4) levels of substantiation (substantiated, suspected, and unsubstantiated).

### Ongoing Child Welfare Services

Investigating workers were asked whether the case would remain open for ongoing child welfare services after the initial investigation. Workers completed these questions on the basis of the information available at that time or upon completion of the intake investigation.

At the completion of the initial investigation, 34% of child maltreatment investigations (an estimated 45,934) were identified as remaining open for ongoing services, and 64% of investigations were to be closed. In a further 2% of investigations, the ongoing case status could not be determined because decisions were pending as a result of court involvement, active police investigations, or incomplete assessments (Table 5-1). Sixty-five percent of cases remaining open were substantiated, and 23% remained suspected. Twelve percent of maltreatment cases which remained open were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Thirty-one percent of physical abuse investigations (an estimated 12,804) were identified as remaining open, with 51% of these cases being substantiated.

**Sexual Abuse:** An estimated 4,514 sexual abuse investigations (31%) remained open at the completion of the initial investigation. Sixty-three percent of cases remaining open were substantiated.

**Neglect:** Thirty-five percent of neglect investigations (an estimated 18,869) remained open after the initial investigation, and of this group 73% were substantiated.

**Table 5-1**  
**Ongoing Child Welfare Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total       |                |                     |
| Case to Be Closed | 67% 27,243                | 67% 9,613          | 62% 33,124         | 60% 15,345             | <b>64%</b>  | <b>85,325</b>  | 47% 14,931          |
| Substantiated     | 26%                       | 26%                | 26%                | 45%                    | <b>30%</b>  |                | 37%                 |
| Suspected         | 20%                       | 23%                | 20%                | 30%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 29%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 54%                       | 51%                | 54%                | 25%                    | <b>48%</b>  |                | 34%                 |
| Case to Stay Open | 31% 12,804                | 31% 4,514          | 35% 18,869         | 38% 9,747              | <b>34%</b>  | <b>45,934</b>  | 51% 16,034          |
| Substantiated     | 51%                       | 63%                | 73%                | 70%                    | <b>65%</b>  |                | 79%                 |
| Suspected         | 27%                       | 21%                | 19%                | 26%                    | <b>23%</b>  |                | 17%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 22%                       | 16%                | 8%                 | 4%                     | <b>12%</b>  |                | 4%                  |
| Other             | 2% 804                    | 2% 240             | 3% 1,440           | 2% 541                 | <b>2%</b>   | <b>3,025</b>   | 2% 732              |
| Substantiated     | 23%                       | —                  | 40%                | 31%                    | <b>34%</b>  |                | 48%                 |
| Suspected         | 42%                       | —                  | 35%                | 57%                    | <b>41%</b>  |                | 39%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 35%                       | —                  | 25%                | 12%                    | <b>25%</b>  |                | 13%                 |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>100% 40,851</b>        | <b>100% 14,367</b> | <b>100% 53,433</b> | <b>100% 25,633</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>134,284</b> | <b>100% 31,697</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,638 child investigations with information about ongoing child welfare services. Because of missing information on 34 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-1.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** An estimated 9,747 emotional maltreatment investigations (38%) were reported as remaining open. Emotional maltreatment was substantiated in 70% of these investigations.

**Multiple Maltreatment:** Fifty-one percent of child investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment (an estimated 16,034) remained open after the initial investigation; 79% of these cases were substantiated.

## Child and Family Referrals

The CIS tracked referrals made to programs designed to offer services beyond the parameters of “ongoing child welfare services”. Workers were asked to indicate all applicable referral classifications identified for the family or child. This included referrals made internally to a specialized program provided by a child welfare agency/office as well as referrals made

externally to other agencies or services. A referral selection was meant to indicate whether a formal referral had been made, not whether the child or family had actually started to receive services.

Fifteen referral categories were tracked:

**Family Preservation/Reunification Program:**

Family or home-based service designed to support families, reduce risk of out-of-home placement, or reunify children in care with their families (e.g. Family Preservation, Home Builders).

**Parent Support Program:** Any group program designed to offer support or education (e.g. Parents Anonymous, parenting instruction course, Parent Support Association).

**Other Family/Parent Counseling:** Includes programs for family therapy/counseling or couple counseling (e.g. family service bureau, mental health centre).

**Drug/Alcohol Counseling:** Addiction programs (any substance) for caregiver(s).

**Welfare/Social Assistance:** Referral for social assistance to address financial concerns of the household.

**Food Bank:** Referral to any food bank.

**Shelter Services:** Regarding family violence or homelessness.

**Domestic Violence Counseling:** Regarding domestic violence, abusive relationships, or the effects of witnessing violence.

**Psychiatric/Psychological Services:** Child referral to psychological or psychiatric services (trauma, high-risk behaviour, or intervention).

**Special Education Referral:** Any specialized school program to meet a child's educational, emotional, or behavioural needs.

**Recreational Program:** Referral to a community recreational program (e.g. organized sports leagues, community recreation, Boys and Girls Clubs).

**Victim Support Program:** Child-focused support program related to victim support.

**Medical/Dental Services:** Any specialized service to address the child's immediate medical or dental health needs.

**Other Child Counseling:** Any other child-focused counseling service (e.g. counseling centre, mental health centre, family service bureaus, drug or alcohol counseling).

**Other Referral:** Any other form of child- or family-focused referral.

As shown in Table 5-2(b), a minimum of one child or family referral was made for more than 60% of child maltreatment investigations, representing an estimated 81,058 child investigations. Fifty-four percent of these cases were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 23% were unsubstantiated. Thirty-three percent of investigations had at least one child referral, and 47% led to a family referral (see Table 5-2(a)). Fifty-nine percent of investigations with a minimum of one child referral were substantiated, 21% remained suspected, and 20% were unsubstantiated. Likewise, 57% of

investigations leading to a family referral were substantiated, 23% remaining suspected, and 20% being unsubstantiated.

Twenty-eight percent of investigations were referred for other family/parent counseling, 21% were referred to a parent support program, 16% for other child counseling, 15% for psychiatric/psychological services, and 10% for parental drug/alcohol counseling. Rates of substantiation ranged from a high of 75% for cases involving referrals to victim support programs, to a low of 53% for cases involving referrals to food banks.

**Physical Abuse:** Fifty-nine percent of physical abuse investigations led to at least one family or child referral. A minimum of one family referral was made in 47% of physical abuse investigations, and at least one child referral was made in 30% of cases.

Referrals for family and parent counseling were made in 30% of the physical abuse investigations. Forty-seven percent of these investigations were substantiated. Referrals to parent support programs were made for an estimated 8,256 child investigations, almost half (49%) of which were substantiated. Ten percent of physical abuse investigations were referred for domestic violence counseling or drug and alcohol counseling, and an additional 4% were referred to family preservation or family reunification programs.

Child-focused referrals were made primarily for other child counseling services (14%), psychiatric or psychological services (12%), medical/dental services (4%), and recreational services (4%).

**Sexual Abuse:** At least one family or one child referral occurred in 61% of sexual abuse investigations (51% had child referrals, and 33% had family referrals). Fifty-six percent of sexual abuse cases involving referrals were substantiated.

A referral for family and parent counseling occurred in 23% of sexual abuse investigations, of which 64% were substantiated. A referral was made to parent support programs for 13% of child investigations with sexual abuse as the primary category of maltreatment. Over half (54%) of these were substantiated.

Child-focused referrals for sexual abuse investigations were primarily made for clinical and counseling services. More than one-quarter of sexual abuse investigations received a referral to psychiatric and psychological services, and two-thirds of these were substantiated. Eighteen percent of sexual abuse investigations were referred to other child counseling services, and an additional 11% were referred to victim support programs. Sixty-nine percent of sexual abuse investigations that were referred to a victim support program were substantiated, and 55% of cases involving referrals to other child counseling services were substantiated.

**Neglect:** A minimum of one family or child referral was made for 56% of neglect investigations (31% had child referrals, and 47% had family referrals). Fifty-seven percent of neglect cases involving referrals were substantiated.

A referral for family/parent counseling occurred for 27% of neglect investigations, of which 62% were substantiated. A parent support referral was made for 24% of child investigations that identified neglect as the primary category of maltreatment, 68% of which were substantiated. An additional 13% of neglect cases were referred for drug and alcohol counseling. Seventy-five percent of cases involving referrals for drug or alcohol counselling were substantiated.

Fifteen percent of neglect investigations (an estimated 7,897) received a referral to psychiatric and psychological services, and 70% of these investigations were substantiated. Fourteen percent of neglect investigations were referred for other child counseling, 7%

were referred to recreational programs, and 6% to medical or dental services.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** At least one family or child referral was reported for 69% of emotional maltreatment investigations (35% had child referrals, and 58% had family referrals). Sixty-two percent of these investigations were substantiated.

Twenty-nine percent of emotional maltreatment investigations received a referral for family and parent counseling, 22% were referred to a parent support program, and an additional 15% were referred for drug and alcohol counseling. Nineteen percent of emotional maltreatment investigations were referred to domestic violence counseling, and an additional 8% were referred to a shelter service. The percentage of cases that were substantiated ranged from 84% for those referred to shelter service to 59% for family preservation and reunification programs.

Child-focused referrals for emotional maltreatment investigations were made primarily to other child counseling services (20%) and psychiatric and psychological services (15%). An additional 5% of emotional maltreatment investigations received a referral to recreational services, and 4% were referred to victim support programs. More than three-quarters of investigations involving referrals to other child counseling services and 60% of those involving referrals to psychiatric or psychological services were substantiated.

**Multiple Categories:** At least one family or child referral was made for 72% of these investigations, 68% of which were substantiated. A minimum of one family referral was reported for 61% of investigations with multiple categories of maltreatment, and at least one child referral was reported for 43% of these cases.

Thirty-eight percent of investigations with multiple categories of maltreatment reported a referral to other parent/family counseling, and almost three-quarters of

**Table 5-2(a)**  
**Family-Focused Referrals to Other Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |               |               |                        | Total             |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment |                   |                     |
| <b>Family-Focused Referrals</b>                           |                           |               |               |                        |                   |                     |
| Family Preservation/Reunification                         | 4% 1,606                  | — —           | 3% 1,734      | 5% 1,318               | <b>3% 4,701</b>   | 4% 1,319            |
| Substantiated   | 56%                       | —             | 68%           | 59%                    | <b>61%</b>        | 64%                 |
| Suspected   | 25%                       | —             | 25%           | 39%                    | <b>29%</b>        | 28%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 19%                       | —             | 7%            | 2%                     | <b>10%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Parent Support Program                                    | 20% 8,256                 | 13% 1,937     | 24% 12,892    | 22% 5,739              | <b>21% 28,824</b> | 30% 9,741           |
| Substantiated   | 49%                       | 54%           | 68%           | 62%                    | <b>60%</b>        | 74%                 |
| Suspected   | 19%                       | 27%           | 17%           | 29%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 18%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 32%                       | 19%           | 15%           | 9%                     | <b>19%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Other Family/Parent Counseling                            | 30% 12,557                | 23% 3,359     | 27% 14,310    | 29% 7,575              | <b>28% 37,801</b> | 38% 12,192          |
| Substantiated   | 47%                       | 64%           | 62%           | 68%                    | <b>58%</b>        | 73%                 |
| Suspected   | 26%                       | 22%           | 21%           | 21%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 19%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 27%                       | 14%           | 17%           | 11%                    | <b>19%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Drug /Alcohol Counseling                                  | 5% 2,257                  | 2% 280        | 13% 6,943     | 15% 3,878              | <b>10% 13,358</b> | 17% 5,584           |
| Substantiated   | 47%                       | —             | 75%           | 77%                    | <b>70%</b>        | 76%                 |
| Suspected   | 35%                       | —             | 16%           | 19%                    | <b>20%</b>        | 19%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 18%                       | —             | 9%            | 4%                     | <b>10%</b>        | 5%                  |
| Welfare/Social Assistance                                 | 1% 496                    | — —           | 3% 1,855      | 3% 787                 | <b>2% 3,191</b>   | 4% 1,152            |
| Substantiated   | 30%                       | —             | 63%           | 75%                    | <b>60%</b>        | 77%                 |
| Suspected   | 28%                       | —             | 29%           | 25%                    | <b>27%</b>        | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 42%                       | —             | 8%            | 0%                     | <b>13%</b>        | 0%                  |
| Food Bank   | 1% 473                    | — —           | 5% 2,924      | 2% 548                 | <b>3% 4,000</b>   | 3% 1,026            |
| Substantiated   | 52%                       | —             | 53%           | 48%                    | <b>53%</b>        | 87%                 |
| Suspected   | 22%                       | —             | 30%           | 51%                    | <b>32%</b>        | 10%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 26%                       | —             | 17%           | 1%                     | <b>15%</b>        | 3%                  |
| Shelter Services  | 1% 620                    | — —           | 2% 1,177      | 8% 2,055               | <b>3% 3,894</b>   | 4% 1,341            |
| Substantiated   | 51%                       | —             | 74%           | 84%                    | <b>75%</b>        | 92%                 |
| Suspected   | 40%                       | —             | 9%            | 12%                    | <b>16%</b>        | 5%                  |
| Unsubstantiated   | 9%                        | —             | 17%           | 4%                     | <b>9%</b>         | 3%                  |
| Domestic Violence Counseling                              | 5% 2,201                  | 1% 104        | 2% 1,291      | 19% 4,823              | <b>6% 8,419</b>   | 9% 2,796            |
| Substantiated   | 61%                       | —             | 65%           | 75%                    | <b>69%</b>        | 84%                 |
| Suspected   | 16%                       | —             | 26%           | 19%                    | <b>20%</b>        | 15%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 23%                       | —             | 9%            | 6%                     | <b>11%</b>        | 1%                  |
| <b>Investigations With Minimum of One Family Referral</b> | 47% 19,448                | 33% 4,749     | 47% 25,288    | 58% 14,884             | <b>47% 64,369</b> | 61% 19,411          |
| Substantiated   | 45%                       | 58%           | 60%           | 67%                    | <b>57%</b>        | 70%                 |
| Suspected   | 24%                       | 24%           | 22%           | 24%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 31%                       | 18%           | 18%           | 9%                     | <b>20%</b>        | 9%                  |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>                       | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,922</b> | <b>25,694</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about referrals to other services. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-2.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.



**Table 5-2(b)**  
**Child-Focused Referrals to Other Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   |               | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |               |               |                        |                   | Total         |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment |                   |               |                     |
| <b>Child-Focused Referrals</b>                                     |                           |               |               |                        |                   |               |                     |
| Psychiatric/Psychological Services                                 | 12% 5,101                 | 27% 3,953     | 15% 7,897     | 15% 3,841              | <b>15% 20,792</b> | 23% 7,386     |                     |
| Substantiated  | 50%                       | 66%           | 70%           | 60%                    | <b>63%</b>        | 78%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 23%                       | 20%           | 16%           | 38%                    | <b>22%</b>        | 14%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 27%                       | 14%           | 14%           | 2%                     | <b>15%</b>        | 8%            |                     |
| Special Education Referral   | 2% 874                    | 3% 399        | 5% 2,432      | 3% 881                 | <b>3% 4,586</b>   | 5% 1,757      |                     |
| Substantiated  | 44%                       | 47%           | 66%           | 64%                    | <b>60%</b>        | 77%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 20%                       | 33%           | 21%           | 34%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 18%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 36%                       | 20%           | 13%           | 2%                     | <b>16%</b>        | 5%            |                     |
| Recreational Program   | 4% 1,625                  | 3% 390        | 7% 4,034      | 5% 1,197               | <b>5% 7,246</b>   | 9% 2,817      |                     |
| Substantiated  | 62%                       | 47%           | 70%           | 73%                    | <b>68%</b>        | 68%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 17%                       | 23%           | 17%           | 19%                    | <b>17%</b>        | 27%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 21%                       | 30%           | 13%           | 8%                     | <b>15%</b>        | 5%            |                     |
| Victim Support Program   | 2% 703                    | 11% 1,548     | 2% 1,180      | 4% 921                 | <b>3% 4,352</b>   | 5% 1,490      |                     |
| Substantiated  | 67%                       | 69%           | 78%           | 86%                    | <b>75%</b>        | 85%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 12%                       | 24%           | 9%            | 13%                    | <b>16%</b>        | 9%            |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 21%                       | 7%            | 13%           | 1%                     | <b>9%</b>         | 6%            |                     |
| Medical/Dental Services  | 4% 1,674                  | 2% 291        | 6% 3,253      | 3% 762                 | <b>4% 5,980</b>   | 7% 2,173      |                     |
| Substantiated  | 51%                       | —             | 71%           | 83%                    | <b>64%</b>        | 79%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 24%                       | —             | 13%           | 15%                    | <b>17%</b>        | 16%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 25%                       | —             | 16%           | 2%                     | <b>19%</b>        | 5%            |                     |
| Other Child Counseling   | 14% 5,659                 | 18% 2,611     | 14% 7,621     | 20% 5,142              | <b>16% 21,033</b> | 18% 5,843     |                     |
| Substantiated  | 51%                       | 55%           | 64%           | 76%                    | <b>62%</b>        | 72%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 16%                       | 25%           | 19%           | 12%                    | <b>17%</b>        | 19%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 33%                       | 20%           | 17%           | 12%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 9%            |                     |
| <b>Investigations With Minimum of One Child Referral</b>           | 30% 12,355                | 51% 7,314     | 31% 16,686    | 35% 8,970              | <b>33% 45,325</b> | 43% 13,843    |                     |
| Substantiated  | 48%                       | 60%           | 63%           | 67%                    | <b>59%</b>        | 72%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 20%                       | 24%           | 19%           | 24%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 19%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 32%                       | 16%           | 18%           | 9%                     | <b>20%</b>        | 9%            |                     |
| <b>Other Child/Family Referral</b>                                 | 13% 5,448                 | 11% 1,606     | 14% 7,758     | 13% 3,432              | <b>13% 18,244</b> | 18% 5,760     |                     |
| Substantiated  | 46%                       | 54%           | 59%           | 64%                    | <b>56%</b>        | 72%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 18%                       | 13%           | 18%           | 22%                    | <b>18%</b>        | 17%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 36%                       | 33%           | 23%           | 14%                    | <b>26%</b>        | 11%           |                     |
| <b>Investigations With Minimum of One Child or Family Referral</b> | 59% 24,336                | 61% 8,825     | 56% 30,290    | 69% 17,607             | <b>60% 81,058</b> | 72% 22,917    |                     |
| Substantiated  | 44%                       | 56%           | 57%           | 62%                    | <b>54%</b>        | 68%           |                     |
| Suspected  | 23%                       | 23%           | 22%           | 26%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 22%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 33%                       | 21%           | 21%           | 12%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 10%           |                     |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>                                | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,922</b> | <b>25,694</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about referrals to other services. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-2.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

these cases were substantiated. Thirty percent of investigations with multiple categories were referred to parent support programs, 17% were referred for drug and alcohol counseling, and 9% for domestic violence counseling. Substantiation rates for investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment with family-focused referrals were generally high, ranging from 64% for family preservation/reunification to 92% for referrals to shelter services.

Child-focused referrals for investigation with multiple categories of maltreatment were reported for psychiatric and psychological services (23%), other child counseling (18%), recreational services (9%), and medical and dental services (7%). There was little variation in substantiation rates in investigations when multiple categories of maltreatment were reported.

## Out-of-Home Placement

Workers were asked to indicate the placement status of investigated children at the conclusion of the initial investigation. Admissions to out-of-home care at any time during the investigation were also tracked. The following placement classifications were used:

**No Placement Required:** No placement was required following the investigation.

**Placement Is Being Considered:** At the end of the initial investigation, out-of-home placement was still being considered.

**Informal Placement:** An informal placement was arranged within the family support network (kinship care, extended family).

**Placement in Child Welfare Care:** Includes foster care assessment and receiving, general and treatment foster care placements, structured group living setting, or therapeutic-residential or secure treatment centre.

In Table 5-3, 8% of all child investigations (an estimated 11,058) led to a child being placed in child welfare care (foster placement, group home, or residential/secure treatment) during the initial investigation. Sev-

enty-eight percent of investigations in which the child was placed in a child welfare setting were substantiated, 14% remained suspected, and only 8% were unsubstantiated cases of maltreatment. Placement in care was considered in an additional estimated 4,732 child investigations (4%) at the completion of the initial intake, but it is not known how many of these investigations eventually resulted in out-of-home placement.

In an estimated 5,852 child investigations (4%), the investigated children moved to an informal out-of-home care arrangement by the end of the investigation, staying either with relatives, neighbours, or another community care provider. Child welfare services do not assume formal care for children in informal placements, but this figure, when combined with the findings on referrals to child welfare care, means that more than 12% of investigated children experienced a change in their living arrangements on completion of the initial investigation.

**Physical Abuse:** Placement in child welfare care occurred in 6% of physical abuse investigations (an estimated 2,660), and of those investigations 67% were substantiated. An additional 5% (an estimated 1,999) led to children being placed in an informal community placement, and placement was considered for an additional 2%.

**Sexual Abuse:** Eight percent or an estimated 1,124 child investigations for alleged sexual abuse resulted in children being placed in foster care or another child welfare setting. Almost two-thirds of sexual abuse investigations involving child placements were substantiated. Two percent of investigated children were placed in informal placements, and placement was considered for another 1%.

**Neglect:** Placement in child welfare care occurred in an estimated 5,989 neglect investigations (11%). Eighty-seven percent of these cases were substantiated. Placement was considered in 5% of neglect investigations, and informal placements occurred in 4%. The

**Table 5-3**  
**Out-of-Home Placement in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                     | Total              |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total               |                    |                     |
| No Placement Required                                   | 87% 35,963                | 89% 12,711         | 80% 42,719         | 85% 21,838             | <b>84% 113,231</b>  | 73% 23,190         |                     |
| Substantiated   | 29%                       | 34%                | 32%                | 52%                    | <b>36%</b>          | 47%                |                     |
| Suspected   | 24%                       | 22%                | 23%                | 29%                    | <b>24%</b>          | 29%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated   | 47%                       | 44%                | 45%                | 19%                    | <b>40%</b>          | 24%                |                     |
| Placement Considered                                    | 2% 781                    | 1% 146             | 5% 2,420           | 5% 1,385               | <b>4% 4,732</b>     | 7% 2,209           |                     |
| Substantiated   | 50%                       | —                  | 77%                | 69%                    | <b>70%</b>          | 89%                |                     |
| Suspected   | 33%                       | —                  | 18%                | 30%                    | <b>24%</b>          | 8%                 |                     |
| Unsubstantiated   | 17%                       | —                  | 5%                 | 1%                     | <b>6%</b>           | 3%                 |                     |
| Informal Placement                                      | 5% 1,999                  | 2% 356             | 4% 2,365           | 5% 1,132               | <b>4% 5,852</b>     | 8% 2,499           |                     |
| Substantiated   | 64%                       | —                  | 76%                | 60%                    | <b>68%</b>          | 82%                |                     |
| Suspected   | 19%                       | —                  | 13%                | 36%                    | <b>20%</b>          | 14%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated   | 17%                       | —                  | 11%                | 4%                     | <b>12%</b>          | 4%                 |                     |
| Placement in Foster Care or Other Child Welfare Setting | 6% 2,660                  | 8% 1,124           | 11% 5,989          | 5% 1,285               | <b>8% 11,058</b>    | 12% 3,938          |                     |
| Substantiated   | 67%                       | 64%                | 87%                | 68%                    | <b>78%</b>          | 92%                |                     |
| Suspected   | 14%                       | 28%                | 9%                 | 28%                    | <b>14%</b>          | 7%                 |                     |
| Unsubstantiated   | 19%                       | 8%                 | 4%                 | 4%                     | <b>8%</b>           | 1%                 |                     |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100% 41,403</b>        | <b>100% 14,337</b> | <b>100% 53,493</b> | <b>100% 25,640</b>     | <b>100% 134,873</b> | <b>100% 31,836</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,582 child investigations with information about out of home placement. Because of missing information on 90 cases the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-3.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

substantiation rate for investigations that considered placement was 77%, and for investigations resulting in informal placement the substantiation rate was 76%.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Five percent or 1,285 estimated child investigations for alleged emotional maltreatment led to placement in child welfare care. More than two-thirds of investigations leading to placement were substantiated. Five percent of emotional maltreatment investigations led to informal placements, and placement was considered in an additional 5%.

**Multiple Categories:** In 12% of child investigations with multiple categories of maltreatment (an estimated 3,938 child investigations), child welfare care

was indicated. Ninety-two percent of these investigations were substantiated. Eight percent of child investigations with multiple categories of maltreatment led to placement in informal care, and placement was considered for 7%.

## Child Welfare Court Involvement

Application to child welfare court can be made for an order of supervision (child remaining in the home), temporary wardship (for a set time period), or permanent wardship. The CIS tracked the number of applications made or which were considered during the initial investigation, but it did not track the types of applications. Because applications may have been made at a point following the CIS case selection period, the

**Table 5-4**  
**Applications to Child Welfare Court in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*\*/\*\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                     |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total               |                     |
| No Court Considered  | 91% 34,502                | 90% 11,299         | 89% 39,650         | 86% 19,886             | <b>89% 105,337</b>  | 77% 20,488          |
| Substantiated  | 29%                       | 32%                | 33%                | 47%                    | <b>34%</b>          | 45%                 |
| Suspected  | 24%                       | 23%                | 23%                | 32%                    | <b>25%</b>          | 30%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 47%                       | 45%                | 44%                | 21%                    | <b>41%</b>          | 25%                 |
| Application Considered   | 4% 1,688                  | 5% 585             | 6% 2,743           | 10% 2,240              | <b>6% 7,256</b>     | 11% 2,942           |
| Substantiated  | 57%                       | 45%                | 61%                | 78%                    | <b>64%</b>          | 86%                 |
| Suspected  | 22%                       | 54%                | 27%                | 22%                    | <b>26%</b>          | 12%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 21%                       | 1%                 | 12%                | 0%                     | <b>10%</b>          | 2%                  |
| Application Made   | 5% 1,722                  | 5% 616             | 5% 2,310           | 4% 947                 | <b>5% 5,595</b>     | 12% 3,111           |
| Substantiated  | 63%                       | 64%                | 85%                | 71%                    | <b>74%</b>          | 85%                 |
| Suspected  | 20%                       | 19%                | 14%                | 24%                    | <b>18%</b>          | 12%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 17%                       | 17%                | 1%                 | 5%                     | <b>8%</b>           | 3%                  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100% 37,912</b>        | <b>100% 12,500</b> | <b>100% 44,703</b> | <b>100% 23,073</b>     | <b>100% 118,188</b> | <b>100% 26,541</b>  |
| <p>* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 5,357 child investigations with information about child welfare court. Because of missing information on 6 cases and because information on child welfare court was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-4.</p> <p>** Excluding jurisdictions where information about child welfare court could not be collected in a comparable manner. The remaining subsample represents at least 80% of child welfare investigations in Canada.</p> |                           |                    |                    |                        |                     |                     |

CIS court involvement figures should be treated as underestimates of the true rate of court involvement. Court status was tracked in terms of three possible worker responses:

**Application Made:** An application to child welfare court was submitted.

**Application Considered:** The child welfare worker considered whether or not to submit an application to child welfare court.

**No Application Considered:** Court involvement was not considered.

As seen in Table 5-4, applications to child welfare court were made in an estimated 5,595 child investigations (5%) and considered in an additional 7,256 (6%). Seventy-four percent of investigations involving a court application were substantiated, 18% remained suspected, and 8% were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Applications to child welfare court were made in 5% of physical abuse investigations. Almost two-thirds (63%) of these were substantiated after the initial investigation. An application to child welfare court was considered for an additional 4% of physical abuse investigations.

**Sexual Abuse:** Applications to child welfare court were made in 5% of sexual abuse investigations, of which almost two-thirds (64%) were substantiated. In 5% of sexual abuse investigations an application to child welfare court had been considered.

**Neglect:** Applications to child welfare court were made in 5% of neglect investigations; of these investigations, 85% were substantiated. Applications to court were considered in an additional 6% of neglect investigations.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** An application to child welfare court was made in 4% of emotional maltreatment investigations, and 71% of these cases were substantiated. A child welfare court application was considered in 10% of emotional maltreatment investigations.

**Multiple Categories:** An application to child welfare court was made in 12% of child investigations involving multiple categories of investigated maltreatment; 85% of these were substantiated. In 11% of child investigations with multiple categories of maltreatment, an application to child welfare court was considered.

## Police Involvement and Criminal Charges

There has been a growing emphasis on involving police in all situations that could lead to criminal charges, particularly in cases of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse. Detailed protocols between child welfare and police services specify the points during an investigation when police should be contacted. The CIS tracked whether a police investigation had been initiated during the child welfare investigation and, if so, whether criminal charges had been laid. As with the other interventions during investigations described in this chapter, the CIS tracked only events that occurred during the initial child welfare investigation; it is therefore possible that police decided to lay charges or became involved in some cases after the CIS information forms had been completed. It should be noted further that the police also investigate many non-familial child maltreatment cases that do not involve child welfare services.<sup>65</sup>

As illustrated in Table 5-5, an estimated 27,799 child investigations (21%) involved a police investigation in addition to a child welfare investigation. Criminal charges were laid in an estimated 13,343 child investigations and were considered in an estimated 14,456 cases.

Seventy-nine percent of child maltreatment investigations involving a police investigation and charges were substantiated. In 12% of the investigations maltreatment remains suspected and only 9% of the investigations were found to be unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Police investigations occurred in 22% of physical abuse investigations, and charges were laid in 8%. Seventy-nine percent of cases in which charges were laid were substantiated.

**Sexual Abuse:** Police investigations occurred in 61% of sexual abuse investigations, and charges were laid in 34%. Seventy-seven percent of cases in which charges were laid were substantiated.

**Neglect:** Police investigations occurred in 7% of neglect investigations, and charges were laid in 2%. Sixty-eight percent of cases in which charges were laid were substantiated.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Police investigations occurred in 27% of emotional maltreatment investigations, and charges were laid in 17%. Eighty-four percent of cases in which charges were laid were substantiated.<sup>66</sup>

**Multiple Categories:** Police investigations occurred in 25% of investigations involving more than one category of maltreatment, and charges were laid in 11%. Eighty-four percent of cases in which charges were laid were substantiated.

<sup>65</sup> See for example Trocmé N, Brison R. Homicide and injuries due to assault and to abuse and neglect. In: Beaulne G (ed). *For the safety of Canadian children and youth: from data to preventive measures*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1998.

<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately the CIS did not distinguish between charges laid regarding assault against children and charges laid regarding spousal assault.

**Table 5-5**  
**Police Investigations and Charges Laid in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                       | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                                       | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                                       | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| No Police Investigation               | 78% 31,787                | 39% 5,442          | 93% 46,919         | 73% 17,399             | <b>79%</b>  | <b>101,547</b> | 75% 22,746          |
| Substantiated                         | 28%                       | 17%                | 40%                | 44%                    | <b>36%</b>  |                | 52%                 |
| Suspected                             | 23%                       | 19%                | 21%                | 35%                    | <b>24%</b>  |                | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 49%                       | 64%                | 39%                | 21%                    | <b>40%</b>  |                | 22%                 |
| Police Investigation, No Charges Laid | 14% 5,564                 | 27% 3,829          | 5% 2,607           | 10% 2,456              | <b>11%</b>  | <b>14,456</b>  | 14% 4,266           |
| Substantiated                         | 42%                       | 16%                | 49%                | 59%                    | <b>39%</b>  |                | 62%                 |
| Suspected                             | 23%                       | 38%                | 23%                | 30%                    | <b>28%</b>  |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 35%                       | 46%                | 28%                | 11%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 18%                 |
| Police Investigation, Charges Laid    | 8% 3,380                  | 34% 4,727          | 2% 1,107           | 17% 4,129              | <b>10%</b>  | <b>13,343</b>  | 11% 3,306           |
| Substantiated                         | 79%                       | 77%                | 68%                | 84%                    | <b>79%</b>  |                | 84%                 |
| Suspected                             | 12%                       | 15%                | 12%                | 9%                     | <b>12%</b>  |                | 14%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 9%                        | 8%                 | 20%                | 7%                     | <b>9%</b>   |                | 2%                  |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>100% 40,731</b>        | <b>100% 13,998</b> | <b>100% 50,633</b> | <b>100% 23,984</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>129,346</b> | <b>100% 30,318</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 6,905 child investigations with information about police investigations. Because of missing information on 767 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 5-5.

## ■ 6. CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter provides a description of children investigated because of reported maltreatment with respect to their age, sex, and functioning in terms of the four primary categories of maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment)<sup>67</sup> and by level of substantiation.

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

### Age and Sex of Investigated Children

Table 6-1 presents the age and sex of investigated children, the incidence of investigations by age and sex, and levels of substantiation. The incidence of investigated maltreatment varied from a low of 14.53 investigations per 1,000 children (14 year old males) to a high of 29.87 investigations per 1,000 children (14 year old females).

Forty-nine percent of child maltreatment investigations involved female children (an estimated 66,449), and males were the subjects of 51% of investigations (an estimated 68,725). Although the incidence rate was similar among females (21.65 investigations per 1,000

children) and males (21.26 investigations per 1,000 children), the sex distribution varied by age group. The incidence rate among males aged 0-3 was 21.93 investigations per 1,000 children and among females was 18.89 per 1,000 children. However, females aged 12-15 were more likely to be investigated for maltreatment than their male peers (25.08 versus 18.50 investigations per 1,000 children). Male children 3 years of age and female adolescents 14 years of age were most often the subjects of maltreatment investigation (27.78 and 29.87 investigations per 1,000 children respectively).

Rates of substantiation ranged from a low of 33% among 3 year old females to a high of 54% among 12 year old males. Comparisons between age and sex categories must be made with caution because investigations by category of maltreatment confound these comparisons (see Table 6-3).

Table 6-2 presents CIS estimates for investigations involving adolescents over 15 (see Chapter 1 Table 1-1). There were an estimated 4,046 child investigations of youth over 15 in the seven provinces/territories with legislation that provides protection to children 16, 17 and 18 years of age. The incidence of investigation ranged from 13.23 investigations per 1,000 children among 16-year-old females to 4.04 investigations per 1,000 children among 18-year-olds males. Females were investigated more often than their male peers (10.60 versus 7.14 investigations per 1,000 children).

Forty-nine percent of the cases involving adolescents over the age of 15 were substantiated, cases involving male subjects being more often substantiated than those involving females (60% versus 42%).

<sup>67</sup> Cases involving more than one category of maltreatment were classified under the primary category specified by the investigating worker (see Chapter 3).

**Table 6-1**  
**Child Age and Sex in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Incidence of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998 \***

|                    |                     | Child Maltreatment Investigations |             | Canadian Child Population |             | Incidence Per 1,000 Children | Level of Substantiation |            |                 |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|
|                    |                     |                                   |             |                           |             |                              | Substantiated           | Suspected  | Unsubstantiated |
| <b>0-15</b>        | <b>All Children</b> | <b>135,174</b>                    | <b>100%</b> | <b>6,301,300</b>          | <b>100%</b> | <b>21.45</b>                 | <b>45%</b>              | <b>22%</b> | <b>33%</b>      |
|                    | Females             | 66,449                            | 49%         | 3,069,300                 | 49%         | <b>21.65</b>                 | 45%                     | 23%        | 32%             |
|                    | Males               | 68,725                            | 51%         | 3,232,000                 | 51%         | <b>21.26</b>                 | 45%                     | 21%        | 34%             |
| <b>0-3 Years</b>   | <b>Females</b>      | <b>13,980</b>                     | <b>10%</b>  | <b>740,215</b>            | <b>12%</b>  | <b>18.89</b>                 | <b>40%</b>              | <b>26%</b> | <b>34%</b>      |
|                    | <b>Males</b>        | <b>16,971</b>                     | <b>13%</b>  | <b>773,750</b>            | <b>12%</b>  | <b>21.93</b>                 | <b>44%</b>              | <b>19%</b> | <b>37%</b>      |
| < 1 Year           | Females             | 2,891                             | 2%          | 178,615                   | 3%          | <b>16.19</b>                 | 48%                     | 28%        | 24%             |
|                    | Males               | 3,426                             | 3%          | 187,280                   | 3%          | <b>18.29</b>                 | 43%                     | 22%        | 35%             |
| 1 Year             | Females             | 3,262                             | 2%          | 181,880                   | 3%          | <b>17.93</b>                 | 44%                     | 20%        | 36%             |
|                    | Males               | 3,621                             | 3%          | 191,365                   | 3%          | <b>18.92</b>                 | 48%                     | 19%        | 33%             |
| 2 Years            | Females             | 3,121                             | 2%          | 188,170                   | 3%          | <b>16.59</b>                 | 39%                     | 23%        | 38%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,364                             | 3%          | 194,995                   | 3%          | <b>22.38</b>                 | 41%                     | 22%        | 37%             |
| 3 Years            | Females             | 4,706                             | 4%          | 191,550                   | 3%          | <b>24.57</b>                 | 33%                     | 32%        | 35%             |
|                    | Males               | 5,560                             | 4%          | 200,110                   | 3%          | <b>27.78</b>                 | 45%                     | 15%        | 40%             |
| <b>4-7 Years</b>   | <b>Females</b>      | <b>17,170</b>                     | <b>13%</b>  | <b>786,925</b>            | <b>12%</b>  | <b>21.82</b>                 | <b>47%</b>              | <b>20%</b> | <b>33%</b>      |
|                    | <b>Males</b>        | <b>19,449</b>                     | <b>14%</b>  | <b>829,325</b>            | <b>13%</b>  | <b>23.45</b>                 | <b>43%</b>              | <b>20%</b> | <b>37%</b>      |
| 4 Years            | Females             | 4,041                             | 3%          | 196,820                   | 3%          | <b>20.53</b>                 | 42%                     | 24%        | 34%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,242                             | 3%          | 206,620                   | 3%          | <b>20.53</b>                 | 40%                     | 21%        | 39%             |
| 5 Years            | Females             | 4,695                             | 3%          | 197,935                   | 3%          | <b>23.72</b>                 | 45%                     | 22%        | 33%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,859                             | 4%          | 209,740                   | 3%          | <b>23.17</b>                 | 39%                     | 21%        | 40%             |
| 6 Years            | Females             | 4,444                             | 3%          | 201,300                   | 3%          | <b>22.08</b>                 | 52%                     | 15%        | 33%             |
|                    | Males               | 5,236                             | 4%          | 209,885                   | 4%          | <b>24.95</b>                 | 47%                     | 18%        | 35%             |
| 7 Years            | Females             | 3,990                             | 3%          | 190,870                   | 3%          | <b>20.90</b>                 | 48%                     | 19%        | 33%             |
|                    | Males               | 5,112                             | 4%          | 203,080                   | 3%          | <b>25.17</b>                 | 46%                     | 21%        | 33%             |
| <b>8-11 Years</b>  | <b>Females</b>      | <b>15,856</b>                     | <b>12%</b>  | <b>766,920</b>            | <b>12%</b>  | <b>20.67</b>                 | <b>47%</b>              | <b>21%</b> | <b>32%</b>      |
|                    | <b>Males</b>        | <b>17,169</b>                     | <b>13%</b>  | <b>810,765</b>            | <b>13%</b>  | <b>21.18</b>                 | <b>44%</b>              | <b>22%</b> | <b>34%</b>      |
| 8 Years            | Females             | 4,906                             | 4%          | 186,680                   | 3%          | <b>26.28</b>                 | 46%                     | 19%        | 35%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,139                             | 3%          | 198,560                   | 3%          | <b>20.85</b>                 | 45%                     | 21%        | 34%             |
| 9 Years            | Females             | 4,101                             | 3%          | 191,185                   | 3%          | <b>21.45</b>                 | 43%                     | 27%        | 30%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,477                             | 3%          | 200,565                   | 3%          | <b>22.32</b>                 | 48%                     | 19%        | 33%             |
| 10 Years           | Females             | 3,311                             | 3%          | 194,555                   | 3%          | <b>17.02</b>                 | 50%                     | 16%        | 34%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,479                             | 3%          | 204,545                   | 3%          | <b>21.90</b>                 | 42%                     | 25%        | 33%             |
| 11 years           | Females             | 3,538                             | 3%          | 194,500                   | 3%          | <b>18.19</b>                 | 50%                     | 21%        | 29%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,074                             | 3%          | 207,095                   | 4%          | <b>19.67</b>                 | 40%                     | 23%        | 37%             |
| <b>12-15 Years</b> | <b>Females</b>      | <b>19,443</b>                     | <b>14%</b>  | <b>775,220</b>            | <b>12%</b>  | <b>25.08</b>                 | <b>46%</b>              | <b>25%</b> | <b>29%</b>      |
|                    | <b>Males</b>        | <b>15,136</b>                     | <b>11%</b>  | <b>818,150</b>            | <b>13%</b>  | <b>18.50</b>                 | <b>51%</b>              | <b>22%</b> | <b>27%</b>      |
| 12 Years           | Females             | 3,823                             | 3%          | 194,165                   | 3%          | <b>19.69</b>                 | 52%                     | 12%        | 36%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,373                             | 3%          | 203,210                   | 3%          | <b>21.52</b>                 | 54%                     | 20%        | 26%             |
| 13 Years           | Females             | 4,336                             | 3%          | 193,000                   | 3%          | <b>22.47</b>                 | 36%                     | 34%        | 30%             |
|                    | Males               | 4,097                             | 3%          | 203,815                   | 3%          | <b>20.10</b>                 | 53%                     | 17%        | 30%             |
| 14 Years           | Females             | 5,780                             | 4%          | 193,530                   | 3%          | <b>29.87</b>                 | 50%                     | 30%        | 20%             |
|                    | Males               | 2,957                             | 2%          | 203,550                   | 3%          | <b>14.53</b>                 | 47%                     | 27%        | 26%             |
| 15 Years           | Females             | 5,504                             | 4%          | 194,525                   | 3%          | <b>28.29</b>                 | 45%                     | 24%        | 31%             |
|                    | Males               | 3,709                             | 3%          | 207,575                   | 4%          | <b>17.87</b>                 | 47%                     | 25%        | 28%             |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,626 child investigations with information about child age and sex. Because of missing information for sex on 46 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H - Table 6-1.



**Table 6-2**  
**Child Age and Sex for Children over 15 in Provinces/Territories with Protection Mandates for Children over 15\*\***  
**in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Incidence of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation**  
**in Canada in 1998\***

|                            | Total Investigations | Child Population** | Incidence Per 1000 Children | Level of Substantiation |           |                 |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                            |                      |                    |                             | Substantiated           | Suspected | Unsubstantiated |
| Total Children 16-18 Years | <b>4,046</b>         | <b>459,095</b>     | <b>8.81</b>                 | 49%                     | 35%       | 16%             |
| Males 16-18 Years          | 1,695                | 237,245            | 7.14                        | 60%                     | 18%       | 22%             |
| Females 16-18 Years        | 2,351                | 221,850            | 10.60                       | 42%                     | 46%       | 12%             |
| 16 Years of Age            | <b>2,329</b>         | <b>209,015</b>     | <b>11.14</b>                | 50%                     | 30%       | 20%             |
| Males 16 Years             | 1,005                | 108,960            | 9.22                        | 58%                     | 14%       | 28%             |
| Females 16 Years           | 1,324                | 100,055            | 13.23                       | 44%                     | 42%       | 14%             |
| 17 Years of Age            | <b>1,477</b>         | <b>203,420</b>     | <b>7.26</b>                 | 49%                     | 44%       | 7%              |
| Males 17 Years             | 594                  | 104,530            | 5.68                        | 62%                     | 27%       | 11%             |
| Female 17 Years            | 883                  | 98,890             | 8.93                        | 40%                     | 56%       | 4%              |
| 18 Years of Age            | <b>239</b>           | <b>46,660</b>      | <b>5.12</b>                 | —                       | —         | —               |
| Males 18 Years             | 96                   | 23,755             | 4.04                        | —                       | —         | —               |
| Females 18 Years           | 143                  | 22,905             | 6.24                        | —                       | —         | —               |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 263 child investigations with information about child age and sex for children over 15 in provinces and territories with protection mandates for children over 15.  
\*\* This included Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, and Yukon Territory with legislation for children 16 and 17, and British Columbia with legislation for children 16, 17 and 18.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Physical Abuse:** Fifty-seven percent of physical abuse investigations involved boys and 43% involved girls (Table 6-3). The larger proportion of boys is particularly noteworthy in the 4-11 year old group: 13,474 investigations involved boys compared with an estimated 8,086 involving girls. By adolescence, male and female youth were equally represented.

Substantiation rates in physical abuse cases increased dramatically with age. Only 13% of investigations involving girls under 4 and 23% involving boys under 4 were substantiated, whereas 41% of physical abuse investigations involving adolescent females and 50% involving adolescent males were substantiated.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sixty-eight percent of sexual abuse investigations (an estimated 9,813) involved female children, and only 32% (an estimated 4,519 child investigations) involved males. Adolescent females aged 12-15 accounted for 21% of all sexual abuse investiga-

tions, and girls in the 4-7 age group accounted for a further 23%. Sixteen percent of investigations involved boys in the 4-7 age group, whereas boys represented only 5% to 6% of investigations in all other age categories.

The substantiation rate for sexual abuse of children ranged from 31% (males 8-11) to 52% (males 12-15). However, almost three-quarters of the investigations involving adolescent females were substantiated (40%) or suspected (31%).

**Neglect:** Investigations of neglect were evenly distributed across age and sex groups. The lowest proportion (11%) of investigations involved female children aged 4-7; boys 0-3 and females 12-15 accounted for most neglect investigations (14% each). Cases involving boys 0-3, girls 4-7, and adolescent males were most often substantiated (49%, 46% and 46% respectively).

**Table 6-3**  
**Age and Sex of Children Investigated in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                    | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    | Multiple Categories |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                    | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                     | Total              |                     |
|                    | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |                     |                    |                     |
| <b>0-3 Years</b>   |                           |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    |                     |
| Male               | 10% 4,189                 | 6% 781             | 14% 7,917          | 16% 4,081              | <b>13% 16,968</b>   | 11% 3,419          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 23%                       | 35%                | 49%                | 51%                    | <b>42%</b>          | 53%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 20%                       | 14%                | 14%                | 29%                    | <b>19%</b>          | 22%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 57%                       | 51%                | 38%                | 20%                    | <b>39%</b>          | 25%                |                     |
| Female             | 8% 3,333                  | 11% 1,591          | 12% 6,256          | 11% 2,801              | <b>10% 13,981</b>   | 12% 3,657          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 13%                       | 38%                | 36%                | 60%                    | <b>36%</b>          | 46%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 29%                       | 22%                | 29%                | 24%                    | <b>27%</b>          | 36%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 58%                       | 40%                | 35%                | 16%                    | <b>37%</b>          | 18%                |                     |
| <b>4-7 Years</b>   |                           |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    |                     |
| Male               | 17% 7,055                 | 16% 2,293          | 13% 7,060          | 12% 3,039              | <b>14% 19,447</b>   | 14% 4,579          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 27%                       | 36%                | 42%                | 53%                    | <b>38%</b>          | 62%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 25%                       | 25%                | 21%                | 24%                    | <b>23%</b>          | 16%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 48%                       | 39%                | 37%                | 23%                    | <b>39%</b>          | 22%                |                     |
| Female             | 10% 4,086                 | 23% 3,265          | 11% 5,957          | 15% 3,861              | <b>13% 17,169</b>   | 13% 4,052          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 27%                       | 38%                | 46%                | 65%                    | <b>44%</b>          | 64%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 20%                       | 19%                | 18%                | 28%                    | <b>21%</b>          | 18%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 53%                       | 43%                | 36%                | 7%                     | <b>35%</b>          | 18%                |                     |
| <b>8-11 Years</b>  |                           |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    |                     |
| Male               | 15% 6,419                 | 5% 781             | 12% 6,379          | 14% 3,592              | <b>13% 17,171</b>   | 13% 4,184          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 40%                       | 31%                | 38%                | 46%                    | <b>40%</b>          | 60%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 21%                       | 17%                | 23%                | 31%                    | <b>24%</b>          | 18%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 39%                       | 52%                | 39%                | 23%                    | <b>36%</b>          | 22%                |                     |
| Female             | 10% 4,000                 | 13% 1,903          | 12% 6,393          | 14% 3,560              | <b>12% 15,856</b>   | 11% 3,420          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 38%                       | 38%                | 41%                | 57%                    | <b>43%</b>          | 65%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 25%                       | 19%                | 18%                | 25%                    | <b>22%</b>          | 22%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 37%                       | 43%                | 41%                | 18%                    | <b>35%</b>          | 13%                |                     |
| <b>12-15 Years</b> |                           |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    |                     |
| Male               | 15% 6,163                 | 5% 664             | 12% 6,309          | 8% 2,000               | <b>11% 15,136</b>   | 10% 3,327          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 50%                       | 52%                | 46%                | 57%                    | <b>49%</b>          | 64%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 20%                       | 9%                 | 21%                | 34%                    | <b>22%</b>          | 23%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 30%                       | 39%                | 33%                | 9%                     | <b>29%</b>          | 13%                |                     |
| Female             | 15% 6,251                 | 21% 3,054          | 14% 7,395          | 10% 2,741              | <b>14% 19,441</b>   | 16% 5,221          |                     |
| Substantiated      | 41%                       | 40%                | 43%                | 45%                    | <b>42%</b>          | 52%                |                     |
| Suspected          | 24%                       | 31%                | 22%                | 40%                    | <b>27%</b>          | 33%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated    | 35%                       | 29%                | 35%                | 15%                    | <b>31%</b>          | 15%                |                     |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100% 41,496</b>        | <b>100% 14,332</b> | <b>100% 53,666</b> | <b>100% 25,675</b>     | <b>100% 135,169</b> | <b>100% 31,859</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,626 child investigations with information about child age and sex. Because of missing information on sex for 46 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 6-3.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** As with cases of neglect, there was an even distribution between boys (50%) and girls (50%) in cases involving emotional maltreatment as the primary reason for investigation, although more cases involving children under 4 were boys (16%) and fewer in the over-12 range involved boys (8%). Children 0-12 were fairly evenly represented (27% for ages 0-3, 27% for ages 4-7, and 28% for ages 8-11). Adolescents were not involved as frequently (18%). Substantiation rates were higher than for other forms of maltreatment, ranging from 45% to 65%.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Fifty-two percent of investigations of more than one category of maltreatment involved female children, and 48% involved males. The distribution of cases by age and sex was fairly equal, with the exception of adolescents: 16% involved adolescent females as compared with only 10% involving males. Substantiation rates ranged from 46% (girls aged 0-3) to 65% (girls aged 8-11).

## Child Functioning

Child functioning was documented on the basis of a short checklist of problems that child welfare workers were likely to be aware of as a result of their investigation. The child functioning checklist (see Appendix D, Maltreatment Assessment Form) was developed in consultation with child welfare workers and researchers to reflect the types of concerns that may be identified during an investigation. The checklist is not a validated measurement instrument for which population norms have been established.<sup>68</sup> The checklist documents only problems that child welfare workers

became aware of during their investigation and therefore likely undercounts the occurrence of child functioning problems.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, it provides a first estimate of the types of concerns that are identified during child maltreatment investigations.

Investigating workers were asked to indicate problems that had been confirmed by a formal diagnosis and/or directly observed as well as issues that they suspected were problems but could not fully verify at the time of the investigation.<sup>70</sup> The 6-month period before the investigation was used as a reference point where applicable. Child functioning classifications that reflect physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural issues were documented with a checklist that included the following categories:

**Developmental Delay:** The child has a diagnosis of a developmental delay, or developmental delay was clearly indicated by the child's appearance or behaviour.

**Physical/Developmental Disability:** The child has a diagnosis or indication of physical/developmental disabilities (e.g. autism, paralysis, cerebral palsy, or learning disability).

**Substance Abuse Related Birth Defect:** The child has a diagnosis or indication of birth defect(s) related to substance abuse by the biological mother (e.g. fetal alcohol syndrome/fetal alcohol effect).

**Other Health Condition:** The child has ongoing physical health condition (e.g. chronic disease, and frequent hospitalization).

**Specialized Education Class:** The child has been involved in special education program for learning disability, special needs, or behaviour problems.

**Depression or Anxiety:** The child has a diagnosis or indication of being extremely anxious or depressed.

<sup>68</sup> A number of child functioning measures with established norms exist; however, these are not currently used in child welfare settings and could not be feasibly used in the context of the CIS.

<sup>69</sup> Although child welfare workers assess the safety of children, they do not routinely conduct a detailed assessment of child functioning. Items on the checklist included only issues that workers happened to become aware of during their investigation. A more systematic assessment would therefore likely lead to the identification of more issues than noted by workers during the CIS.

<sup>70</sup> This report refers to both confirmed and suspected problems as "indicated" because this distinction was not documented in all jurisdictions.

**Self-harming Behaviour:** The child has engaged in high-risk or life-threatening behaviour, suicide attempts, or physical mutilation or cutting.

**Psychiatric Disorder:** The child has diagnosis of psychiatric disorder by a psychiatrist (e.g. conduct disorder, anxiety disorder).

**Behaviour Problem in the Home/Community:** The child has displayed significant behavioural problem(s) in the home or the community (e.g. school refusal, aggression, violence, and gang involvement).

**Negative Peer Involvement:** The child has been involved in high-risk peer activities, such as gang activities or vandalism.

**Substance Abuse:** The child has abused any type of substance, including prescription drugs, alcohol, illegal drugs, and solvents.

**Violence to Others:** The child has displayed aggression and violence toward other children, adults or property in the home, school, or community.

**Running:** The child has run away from home (or other residence) on at least one occasion, for at least one overnight period.

**Irregular School Attendance:** The child has shown irregular attendance and truancy (more than 5 days/month).

**Involvement in Prostitution:** The child has been involved in prostitution or sex trade in any way.

**Age-inappropriate Sexual Behaviour:** The child has been involved in age-inappropriate sexual behaviour with friends or with family members.

**Criminal/YO Involvement:** The child has been involved in charges, incarceration, or alternative measures with the Young Offenders system.

Table 6-4(a) and 6-4(b) have been organized to reflect the types of problems associated with either physical, emotional and/or cognitive health, or behaviour. In 44% of child investigations (an estimated 59,775), at least one child functioning issue was indicated by the investigating worker. Forty-seven percent of these cases were substantiated, 25% remained suspected, and 28% were unsubstantiated.

Table 6-4(a) presents child functioning characteristics that affect the physical, emotional, and cognitive health of children. In 26% of investigations (an estimated 35,173) at least one child functioning issue was reported regarding the physical, emotional, and/or cognitive health of the child. Forty-eight percent of these investigations were substantiated, 26% remained suspected, and 26% were unsubstantiated. Depression/anxiety was the most frequently reported category (11% of investigations), and developmental delay the second commonest (8% of investigations). Five percent of the investigations involved children placed in a special education program. Birth defects related to substance abuse were reported in 2% of cases, and a physical or developmental disability in 4%. Self-harming behaviours were reported in 4% of cases, but a psychiatric disorder was only noted in 2% of cases.

The behavioural functioning classifications are presented in Table 6-4(b) by primary category of maltreatment and level of substantiation. In 33% of the investigations (an estimated 44,862) at least one behavioural functioning issue was reported. In 47% of these cases maltreatment was substantiated, in 25% it remained suspected, and in 28% it was unsubstantiated. The most frequent type of issue noted fell in the general category of behaviour problems in the home or the community: a behaviour problem was indicated in 24% of cases, involving an estimated 32,690 child investigations. Irregular school attendance was identified in 9% of investigations, and negative peer involvement was noted in 10%. Criminal/Young Offender involvement was reported in 3% of investigations, and violence towards others and running away were noted in 6% each. Substance abuse was reported in 5% of investigations, and inappropriate sexual behaviour in 4%. There were not enough cases documenting prostitution to provide a reliable estimate.

Substantiation rates for cases in which a child functioning issue was noted ranged from a low of 34% (child was attending a special education class) to a high of 54% (substance abuse related birth defects).

**Physical Abuse:** The five most often indicated child functioning issues in cases of investigated physical abuse were general behaviour problems (31%), negative peer involvement (13%), depression (11%), developmental delay (9%), and violence toward others (8%). Overall, a physical, emotional, or cognitive health issue was reported in 26% of physical abuse investigations, involving 10,803 estimated child investigations. A behavioural issue was indicated in 39% of investigations (an estimated 16,044).

**Sexual Abuse:** The five most often reported child functioning issues indicated in cases of investigated sexual abuse were depression/anxiety (17%), behaviour problem (17%), inappropriate sexual behaviour (14%), negative peer involvement (10%), and school attendance problem (10%). Sixty-three percent of sexual abuse investigations in which depression or anxiety was noted were substantiated, whereas only 30% of cases involving a behaviour problem were substantiated. Somewhat surprisingly, running away from home was noted in only 3% of sexual abuse cases. It is important to note that these ratings are based on the initial intake investigation and do not capture behaviours that may become concerns after that time.

Overall, a physical, emotional, or cognitive health issue was reported in 30% of sexual abuse investigations, involving an estimated 4,355 child investigations, and a behavioural issue was indicated in 32% (an estimated 4,587).

**Neglect:** The six most often indicated child functioning issues in cases of investigated neglect were general behaviour problems (24%), irregular school attendance (14%), negative peer involvement (10%), developmental delay (9%), substance abuse (7%), and running away (7%). Overall, a physical, emotional, and/or cognitive health issue was reported in 25% of

neglect investigations, involving an estimated 13,304 estimated investigations. A behavioural issue was indicated in 33% of investigations (an estimated 17,929). Rates of substantiation for cases of neglect involving any child functioning issue ranged from 35% for specialized education class to 69% for substance abuse related birth defect.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Surprisingly, child functioning issues were least often noted in cases of emotional maltreatment. Overall, a physical, emotional, or cognitive health issue was reported in 26% of such investigations, involving an estimated 6,711 child investigations. A behavioural issue was indicated in only 25% (an estimated 6,302) of these investigations. The two child functioning issues that were most often indicated in these cases were depression/anxiety (15%) and behaviour problems (18%). Forty-seven percent of cases in which depression or anxiety was indicated were substantiated, as were 52% of cases in which behaviour problems were indicated.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Child functioning issues were most often indicated in cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment. The six issues most often indicated were general behaviour problems (31%), depression (17%), negative peer involvement (14%), developmental delay (13%), irregular school attendance (11%), and violence toward others (10%). Overall, a physical, emotional, and/or cognitive health issue was reported in 35% of investigations involving more than one category of maltreatment (11,147 child investigations). A behavioural issue was indicated in 42% of investigations (an estimated 13,315). Rates of substantiation for multiple maltreatment cases involving child functioning issues ranged from 44% for running away to 74% for other health conditions.

**Table 6-4(a)**  
**Child Functioning (Physical, Emotional, and Cognitive) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |               |               |                        |                   |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment | Total             |                     |
| <b>Physical, Emotional, and Cognitive Health</b>         |                           |               |               |                        |                   |                     |
| Developmental Delay                                      | 9% 3,601                  | 9% 1,234      | 9% 4,859      | 7% 1,776               | <b>8% 11,470</b>  | 13% 4,195           |
| Substantiated  | 37%                       | 34%           | 51%           | 48%                    | <b>44%</b>        | 63%                 |
| Suspected  | 31%                       | 21%           | 19%           | 49%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 32%                       | 45%           | 30%           | 3%                     | <b>28%</b>        | 10%                 |
| Physical/Developmental Disability                        | 4% 1,737                  | 2% 232        | 3% 1,850      | 4% 972                 | <b>4% 4,791</b>   | 5% 1,544            |
| Substantiated  | 41%                       | —             | 52%           | 34%                    | <b>44%</b>        | 61%                 |
| Suspected  | 20%                       | —             | 17%           | 40%                    | <b>22%</b>        | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 39%                       | —             | 31%           | 26%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 13%                 |
| Substance Abuse Related Birth Defect                     | 1% 552                    | 3% 374        | 3% 1,365      | 3% 693                 | <b>2% 2,984</b>   | 5% 1,535            |
| Substantiated  | 42%                       | —             | 69%           | 30%                    | <b>54%</b>        | 65%                 |
| Suspected  | 11%                       | —             | 24%           | 65%                    | <b>32%</b>        | 28%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 47%                       | —             | 7%            | 5%                     | <b>14%</b>        | 7%                  |
| Other Health Condition                                   | 4% 1,590                  | 2% 242        | 5% 2,722      | 2% 614                 | <b>4% 5,168</b>   | 5% 1,495            |
| Substantiated  | 34%                       | —             | 59%           | 44%                    | <b>47%</b>        | 74%                 |
| Suspected  | 32%                       | —             | 14%           | 48%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 34%                       | —             | 27%           | 8%                     | <b>29%</b>        | 6%                  |
| Specialized Education Class                              | 7% 2,758                  | 3% 384        | 4% 1,985      | 5% 1,172               | <b>5% 6,299</b>   | 5% 1,704            |
| Substantiated  | 39%                       | —             | 35%           | 25%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 54%                 |
| Suspected  | 23%                       | —             | 35%           | 51%                    | <b>33%</b>        | 30%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 38%                       | —             | 30%           | 24%                    | <b>33%</b>        | 16%                 |
| Depression or Anxiety                                    | 11% 4,377                 | 17% 2,520     | 7% 3,718      | 15% 3,788              | <b>11% 14,403</b> | 17% 5,308           |
| Substantiated  | 48%                       | 63%           | 49%           | 47%                    | <b>50%</b>        | 67%                 |
| Suspected  | 22%                       | 18%           | 28%           | 39%                    | <b>27%</b>        | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 30%                       | 19%           | 23%           | 14%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 9%                  |
| Self-harming Behaviour                                   | 4% 1,702                  | 3% 441        | 4% 2,327      | 3% 895                 | <b>4% 5,365</b>   | 6% 1,928            |
| Substantiated  | 29%                       | 38%           | 60%           | 25%                    | <b>42%</b>        | 51%                 |
| Suspected  | 30%                       | 34%           | 17%           | 66%                    | <b>31%</b>        | 30%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 41%                       | 28%           | 23%           | 9%                     | <b>27%</b>        | 19%                 |
| Psychiatric Disorder                                     | 2% 786                    | 3% 419        | 2% 1,179      | 2% 386                 | <b>2% 2,770</b>   | 3% 945              |
| Substantiated  | 42%                       | 39%           | 51%           | —                      | <b>47%</b>        | 68%                 |
| Suspected  | 25%                       | 33%           | 22%           | —                      | <b>27%</b>        | 10%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 33%                       | 28%           | 27%           | —                      | <b>26%</b>        | 22%                 |
| <b>Any Physical, Emotional or Cognitive Health Issue</b> | 26% 10,803                | 30% 4,355     | 25% 13,304    | 26% 6,711              | <b>26% 35,173</b> | 35% 11,147          |
| Substantiated  | 41%                       | 53%           | 53%           | 46%                    | <b>48%</b>        | 67%                 |
| Suspected  | 26%                       | 19%           | 21%           | 41%                    | <b>26%</b>        | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 33%                       | 28%           | 26%           | 13%                    | <b>26%</b>        | 10%                 |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>                      | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,921</b> | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about child functioning. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 6-4.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Table 6-4(b)**  
**Child Functioning (Behavioural) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                    | Investigated Maltreatment |              |            |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|                                    | Primary Category          |              |            |                        |                   |                     |
|                                    | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse | Neglect    | Emotional Maltreatment | Total             |                     |
| <b>Behavioural Functioning</b>     |                           |              |            |                        |                   |                     |
| Behaviour Problem                  | 31% 12,678                | 17% 2,469    | 24% 12,948 | 18% 4,595              | <b>24% 32,690</b> | 31% 9,829           |
| Substantiated                      | 43%                       | 30%          | 47%        | 52%                    | <b>45%</b>        | 62%                 |
| Suspected                          | 21%                       | 32%          | 24%        | 32%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 36%                       | 38%          | 29%        | 16%                    | <b>31%</b>        | 11%                 |
| Negative Peer Involvement          | 13% 5,436                 | 10% 1,380    | 10% 5,650  | 6% 1,569               | <b>10% 14,035</b> | 14% 4,533           |
| Substantiated                      | 39%                       | 50%          | 41%        | 30%                    | <b>40%</b>        | 56%                 |
| Suspected                          | 25%                       | 26%          | 31%        | 58%                    | <b>31%</b>        | 31%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 36%                       | 24%          | 28%        | 12%                    | <b>29%</b>        | 13%                 |
| Substance Abuse                    | 4% 1,493                  | 4% 611       | 7% 3,992   | 2% 534                 | <b>5% 6,630</b>   | 6% 1,882            |
| Substantiated                      | 45%                       | 39%          | 44%        | 23%                    | <b>42%</b>        | 45%                 |
| Suspected                          | 13%                       | 28%          | 34%        | 76%                    | <b>32%</b>        | 43%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 42%                       | 33%          | 22%        | 1%                     | <b>26%</b>        | 12%                 |
| Violence to Others                 | 8% 3,438                  | 3% 481       | 6% 3,339   | 5% 1,270               | <b>6% 8,528</b>   | 10% 3,064           |
| Substantiated                      | 44%                       | 40%          | 51%        | 64%                    | <b>50%</b>        | 66%                 |
| Suspected                          | 24%                       | 21%          | 34%        | 29%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 29%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 32%                       | 39%          | 15%        | 7%                     | <b>22%</b>        | 5%                  |
| Running                            | 6% 2,494                  | 3% 482       | 7% 3,642   | 3% 855                 | <b>6% 7,473</b>   | 7% 2,257            |
| Substantiated                      | 39%                       | 30%          | 43%        | 25%                    | <b>39%</b>        | 44%                 |
| Suspected                          | 26%                       | 42%          | 35%        | 74%                    | <b>37%</b>        | 41%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 35%                       | 28%          | 22%        | 1%                     | <b>24%</b>        | 15%                 |
| Irregular School Attendance        | 7% 2,750                  | 10% 1,375    | 14% 7,304  | 5% 1,366               | <b>9% 12,795</b>  | 11% 3,523           |
| Substantiated                      | 38%                       | 41%          | 48%        | 42%                    | <b>45%</b>        | 60%                 |
| Suspected                          | 26%                       | 28%          | 31%        | 48%                    | <b>31%</b>        | 32%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 36%                       | 31%          | 21%        | 10%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Involvement in Prostitution        | — —                       | 1% 108       | — —        | — —                    | <b>0% 143</b>     | — —                 |
| Substantiated                      | —                         | —            | —          | —                      | —                 | —                   |
| Suspected                          | —                         | —            | —          | —                      | —                 | —                   |
| Unsubstantiated                    | —                         | —            | —          | —                      | —                 | —                   |
| Age-inappropriate Sexual Behaviour | 2% 933                    | 14% 2,032    | 4% 2,229   | 1% 276                 | <b>4% 5,470</b>   | 5% 1,551            |
| Substantiated                      | 16%                       | 45%          | 42%        | —                      | <b>38%</b>        | 49%                 |
| Suspected                          | 34%                       | 30%          | 43%        | —                      | <b>36%</b>        | 32%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 50%                       | 25%          | 15%        | —                      | <b>26%</b>        | 19%                 |
| Criminal/YO Involvement            | 3% 1,209                  | 2% 253       | 3% 1,847   | 1% 138                 | <b>3% 3,447</b>   | 2% 722              |
| Substantiated                      | 23%                       | —            | 60%        | —                      | <b>45%</b>        | 57%                 |
| Suspected                          | 29%                       | —            | 21%        | —                      | <b>24%</b>        | 35%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 48%                       | —            | 19%        | —                      | <b>31%</b>        | 8%                  |
| <b>Any Behavioural Issue</b>       | 39% 16,044                | 32% 4,587    | 33% 17,929 | 25% 6,302              | <b>33% 44,862</b> | 42% 13,315          |
| Substantiated                      | 43%                       | 40%          | 51%        | 54%                    | <b>47%</b>        | 64%                 |
| Suspected                          | 23%                       | 30%          | 23%        | 31%                    | <b>25%</b>        | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 34%                       | 30%          | 26%        | 15%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 12%                 |

continued

**Table 6-4(b) (continued)**  
**Child Functioning (Behavioural) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |               |               |                        |                   |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment | Total             |                     |
| <b>Any Child Functioning Issue</b>  | 47% 19,615                | 47% 6,724     | 44% 23,593    | 38% 9,843              | <b>44% 59,775</b> | 54% 17,422          |
| Substantiated   | 40%                       | 47%           | 51%           | 51%                    | <b>47%</b>        | 66%                 |
| Suspected   | 25%                       | 24%           | 21%           | 35%                    | <b>25%</b>        | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 35%                       | 29%           | 28%           | 14%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 11%                 |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>   | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,921</b> | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b>       |
| <p>* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about child functioning. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 6-4.</p> <p>** The rows in this table are not additive: child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to add the rows will double count some child investigations.</p> <p>– Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.</p> |                           |               |               |                        |                   |                     |



## ■ 7. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Chapter 7 provides an overview of the characteristics of the households of investigated children tracked by the CIS. Household characteristics include household composition, sibling information, housing information, aboriginal heritage, source of household income, and parental functioning and family stressors. For the purpose of the CIS, a household was defined as the primary residence of the child when the investigation was launched. The findings are presented by the primary category of maltreatment and the level of substantiation. Each table also documents cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment.

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

### Parents and Caregivers in the Home

The CIS gathered information on up to two of the child's parents or other caregivers.<sup>71</sup> For each listed caregiver, investigating workers were asked to choose

the category that best described the relationship between the caregiver and the children in the home. If a caregiver was a biological parent to one child and a step-parent to another child in the family, workers were asked to use "step-parent" to describe that caregiver.<sup>72</sup> If recent household changes had occurred, investigating workers were asked to describe the situation at the time the referral was made.

Table 7-1 describes the parents and other caregivers looking after investigated children by primary category of maltreatment and level of substantiation in the CIS.<sup>73</sup> Twenty-nine percent of investigations involved children who lived with their two biological parents, and 18% lived in a two-parent blended family in which one of the caregivers was a step-parent, a common-law partner, or an adoptive parent who was not the biological parent of at least one of the children in the family. Two percent of all child investigations involved a biological parent living with another adult who also acted as a caregiver to the child/children (i.e. grandparent, aunt/uncle). Forty-six percent involved children who lived in a family led by a lone parent: 40% by a female parent and 6% by a male parent. In comparison, the 1996 census showed that families led by female parents represented 17% of families with children under the age of 17, whereas 80% of the families were two-parent led (see Appendix I, Table 8).<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> The two-caregiver limit was required to accommodate the form length restrictions set for the Household Information Sheet. The caregiver information usually corresponded to the parents and/or step-parent living in the home; if there was only one caregiver living in the home and a second living outside the home, information was gathered on both of these, but information on the latter is not reported here.

<sup>72</sup> This compromise was needed because the Household Information Sheet served as a common information source for all the children in the family. A much more extensive set of questions would have been required had the CIS gathered child-specific caregiver information, leading to a significantly longer form. Child-specific information on the caregiver-child relationship is available for caregivers who were investigated as alleged perpetrators (see Chapter 4).

<sup>73</sup> Household structure categories in Table 7-1 are consistent with Statistics Canada 1996 Census categories.

<sup>74</sup> Statistics Canada. *Census families in private households by age groups of never-married sons and/or daughters at home, showing family structure*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

**Table 7-1**  
**Household Structure in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                             | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                             | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                             | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| Two Parent-Biological       | 32% 13,085                | 37% 5,299          | 24% 12,563         | 33% 8,477              | <b>29%</b>  | <b>39,424</b>  | 26% 8,213           |
| Substantiated               | 32%                       | 39%                | 41%                | 53%                    | <b>41%</b>  |                | 52%                 |
| Suspected                   | 20%                       | 21%                | 19%                | 30%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 48%                       | 40%                | 40%                | 17%                    | <b>37%</b>  |                | 23%                 |
| Two Parent-Blended/Step     | 21% 8,513                 | 21% 3,030          | 13% 7,196          | 19% 4,874              | <b>18%</b>  | <b>23,613</b>  | 20% 6,309           |
| Substantiated               | 44%                       | 35%                | 45%                | 58%                    | <b>46%</b>  |                | 67%                 |
| Suspected                   | 21%                       | 22%                | 20%                | 22%                    | <b>21%</b>  |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 35%                       | 43%                | 35%                | 20%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 13%                 |
| Biological Parent and Other | 3% 1,075                  | 1% 152             | 3% 1,603           | 1% 278                 | <b>2%</b>   | <b>3,108</b>   | 3% 984              |
| Substantiated               | 31%                       | —                  | 55%                | —                      | <b>45%</b>  |                | 70%                 |
| Suspected                   | 23%                       | —                  | 13%                | —                      | <b>15%</b>  |                | 17%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 46%                       | —                  | 32%                | —                      | <b>40%</b>  |                | 13%                 |
| Lone Female Parent          | 32% 13,349                | 33% 4,741          | 49% 26,130         | 37% 9,455              | <b>40%</b>  | <b>53,675</b>  | 41% 13,237          |
| Substantiated               | 32%                       | 34%                | 40%                | 52%                    | <b>40%</b>  |                | 57%                 |
| Suspected                   | 25%                       | 27%                | 22%                | 34%                    | <b>25%</b>  |                | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 43%                       | 39%                | 38%                | 14%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 19%                 |
| Lone Male Parent            | 7% 3,030                  | 3% 425             | 6% 3,287           | 5% 1,263               | <b>6%</b>   | <b>8,005</b>   | 6% 1,766            |
| Substantiated               | 25%                       | 46%                | 53%                | 54%                    | <b>42%</b>  |                | 67%                 |
| Suspected                   | 32%                       | 19%                | 19%                | 12%                    | <b>23%</b>  |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 43%                       | 35%                | 28%                | 34%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 13%                 |
| Other                       | 5% 2,287                  | 5% 732             | 5% 2,836           | 5% 1,298               | <b>5%</b>   | <b>7,153</b>   | 4% 1,369            |
| Substantiated               | 28%                       | 53%                | 49%                | 66%                    | <b>45%</b>  |                | 42%                 |
| Suspected                   | 21%                       | 12%                | 20%                | 27%                    | <b>21%</b>  |                | 42%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 51%                       | 35%                | 31%                | 7%                     | <b>34%</b>  |                | 16%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>100% 41,339</b>        | <b>100% 14,379</b> | <b>100% 53,615</b> | <b>100% 25,645</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>134,978</b> | <b>100% 31,878</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,616 child investigations with information about household structure. Because of missing information on 56 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-1.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

Rates of substantiation ranged from 40% (female parent) to 46% (two-parent blended) of the investigations.

**Physical Abuse:** Over half of all physical abuse investigations involved children who lived in two-parent households: 32% with two biological parents and 21% with a two-parent blended family. Thirty-two percent of investigations involved children in a female-parent household and 7% in a male-parent household. Sub-

stantiation rates ranged from a low of 25% for investigations of children in male-parent households to a high of 44% for children in two-parent blended families.

**Sexual Abuse:** Fifty-eight percent of sexual abuse investigations involved children who lived in two-parent households: 37% with two biological parents and 21% with a two-parent blended family. Thirty-three percent of investigations involved children in a female-parent household and only 3% in a male-parent

household. Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 34% for female parent households to a high of 53% for investigation of children living in households classified as “other”.

**Neglect:** Unlike abuse investigations, over half of all neglect investigations involved lone-parent families<sup>75</sup> — 49% female-parent households and 6% male-parent households — whereas only 24% of investigations involved children from households with two biological parents, and 13% involved two-parent blended families. Rates of substantiation ranged from 40% for children in female-parent families to 55% for children living in households led by a biological parent and another caregiver.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Fifty-two percent of emotional maltreatment investigations involved children who lived in two-parent households: 33% with two biological parents and 19% with a two-parent blended family. Thirty-seven percent of investigations involved children in a female-parent household and 5% in a male-parent household. Rates of substantiation ranged from 52% for lone-parent families to 66% for others. Emotional maltreatment was suspected in between 12% and 34% of cases.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Forty-one percent of multiple maltreatment investigations occurred in female-parent households and 6% in male-parent households. In almost half of investigations involving more than one category of maltreatment, two caregivers resided with the child (26% with both biological

parents, 20% in two-parent blended families, and 3% with a biological parent and another caregiver). Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 52% for households of two biological parents to 70% for households led by a biological parent and another caregiver.

## Age of Primary Caregiver(s)

Investigating workers were asked to indicate the age of each caregiver living in the investigated household. Ten age groups were captured on the Household Information sheet, enabling the workers to provide an estimation of the caregiver’s age (see Appendix B, Maltreatment Assessment Form). Table 7-2(a) shows the age distribution of “mothers” (estimated 121,631 child investigations) and Table 7-2(b) the age distribution of “fathers” (estimated 71,321 child investigations). The categories of mother and father include biological parents, common-law partners, step-parents, and adoptive/foster parents.

Of the investigations involving children living with a mother, 61% lived with a mother who was over 30 and 17% with a mother aged 25 and under. With regard to fathers, 75% of children lived with a father who was over 30 and 10% with a father aged 25 and under. Substantiation levels varied with the age of mothers, from a low of 34% (those younger than 19) to 45% (those over 40) (Table 7-2(a)). For fathers, the substantiation rate varied from a low of 26% (those between 19 and 21) to 46% (those between 26 and 30) (Table 7-2(b)).

<sup>75</sup> It should be noted, however, that lone-parent families are also at higher risk of living in poverty, and that poverty, as opposed to family structure, could be the factor placing these families at high risk of being reported for alleged maltreatment—see Source of Income section of this chapter, also see the following:

Chamberland C, Bouchard C, et al. Conduites abusives envers les enfants: Réalités canadiennes et américaines. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 1986;8(4):391-412.

Drake B, Pandey S. Understanding the relationship between neighbourhood poverty and specific types of child maltreatment. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 1996;20(11): 1003-18.

Garbarino J, Sherman D. High-risk neighbourhoods and high-risk families: The human ecology of child maltreatment. *Child Development* 1980;51(1):188-98.

**Table 7-2(a)**  
**Age of Mothers\*\* in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                 | Investigated Maltreatment |                           |                           |                           |                            |                           |        | Multiple Categories |  |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------------------|--|
|                 | Primary Category          |                           |                           |                           |                            | Total                     |        |                     |  |
|                 | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse              | Neglect                   | Emotional Maltreatment    |                            |                           |        |                     |  |
| Less than 19    | 1% 419                    | — —                       | 3% 1,413                  | 1% 274                    | <b>2%</b> <b>2,116</b>     | 1%                        | 341    |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 39%                       | —                         | 34%                       | —                         | <b>34%</b>                 | —                         |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 7%                        | —                         | 30%                       | —                         | <b>28%</b>                 | —                         |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 54%                       | —                         | 36%                       | —                         | <b>38%</b>                 | —                         |        |                     |  |
| 19-21           | 3% 1,176                  | 2% 314                    | 5% 2,236                  | 7% 1,661                  | <b>4%</b> <b>5,387</b>     | 5%                        | 1,425  |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 30%                       | —                         | 41%                       | 57%                       | <b>41%</b>                 | 52%                       |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 32%                       | —                         | 16%                       | 32%                       | <b>27%</b>                 | 40%                       |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 38%                       | —                         | 43%                       | 11%                       | <b>32%</b>                 | 8%                        |        |                     |  |
| 22-25           | 11% 4,004                 | 4% 580                    | 12% 5,774                 | 10% 2,368                 | <b>11%</b> <b>12,726</b>   | 11%                       | 3,295  |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 14%                       | 20%                       | 42%                       | 61%                       | <b>36%</b>                 | 45%                       |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 36%                       | 46%                       | 15%                       | 24%                       | <b>25%</b>                 | 35%                       |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 50%                       | 34%                       | 43%                       | 15%                       | <b>39%</b>                 | 20%                       |        |                     |  |
| 26-30           | 19% 6,846                 | 21% 2,851                 | 24% 11,654                | 24% 5,704                 | <b>22%</b> <b>27,055</b>   | 24%                       | 6,986  |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 31%                       | 30%                       | 43%                       | 59%                       | <b>42%</b>                 | 62%                       |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 22%                       | 28%                       | 25%                       | 28%                       | <b>25%</b>                 | 17%                       |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 47%                       | 42%                       | 32%                       | 13%                       | <b>33%</b>                 | 21%                       |        |                     |  |
| 31-40           | 51% 18,826                | 54% 7,285                 | 44% 20,962                | 48% 11,268                | <b>48%</b> <b>58,341</b>   | 46%                       | 13,251 |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 37%                       | 43%                       | 39%                       | 49%                       | <b>41%</b>                 | 56%                       |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 21%                       | 17%                       | 20%                       | 32%                       | <b>22%</b>                 | 25%                       |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 42%                       | 40%                       | 41%                       | 19%                       | <b>37%</b>                 | 19%                       |        |                     |  |
| Over 40         | 15% 5,379                 | 19% 2,480                 | 12% 5,756                 | 10% 2,391                 | <b>13%</b> <b>16,006</b>   | 13%                       | 3,671  |                     |  |
| Substantiated   | 41%                       | 35%                       | 50%                       | 50%                       | <b>45%</b>                 | 60%                       |        |                     |  |
| Suspected       | 17%                       | 23%                       | 18%                       | 32%                       | <b>20%</b>                 | 21%                       |        |                     |  |
| Unsubstantiated | 42%                       | 42%                       | 32%                       | 18%                       | <b>35%</b>                 | 19%                       |        |                     |  |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>100%</b> <b>36,650</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>13,520</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>47,795</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>23,666</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>121,631</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>28,969</b> |        |                     |  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 6,742 child investigations with information about age of mothers. Because of 930 child investigations that did not involve a mother living in the home, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-2.

\*\* Includes step-mothers, female common-law partners and adoptive/foster mothers living with the investigated child.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

According to the 1996 census, 3% of primary caregivers with the youngest child under the age of 14 years were under 25 years old, 28% were 25 to 34 years old, and 69% were over 35 years old (see Appendix I, Table 9).<sup>76</sup>

**Physical Abuse:** In two-thirds (66%) of physical abuse investigations involving children living with their mothers, the mothers were over 30, and in 15% of cases they were 25 and under. In 79% of physical abuse investigations involving children living with their fathers, the fathers were over 30, and in 7% of cases they were 25 and under. Substantiation rates ranged

<sup>76</sup> Statistics Canada. *Private households by household type, showing age groups of primary household maintainer*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

**Table 7-2(b)**  
**Age of Fathers\*\* in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                 | Investigated Maltreatment |               |             |                        |             |               |             |               | Multiple Categories |               |             |               |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
|                 | Primary Category          |               |             |                        |             |               | Total       |               |                     |               |             |               |
|                 | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect     | Emotional Maltreatment |             |               |             |               |                     |               |             |               |
| Less than 19    | 0%                        | 105           | —           | —                      | 1%          | 148           | —           | —             | <b>0%</b>           | <b>253</b>    | 0%          | 39            |
| Substantiated   | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | —           | —             | —           | —             | —                   | —             | 80%         |               |
| Suspected       | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | —           | —             | —           | —             | —                   | —             | 20%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | —           | —             | —           | —             | —                   | —             | 0%          |               |
| 19-21           | 1%                        | 343           | 1%          | 106                    | 3%          | 770           | 2%          | 373           | <b>2%</b>           | <b>1,592</b>  | 3%          | 478           |
| Substantiated   | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | 17%         | —             | —           | —             | <b>26%</b>          | —             | 32%         |               |
| Suspected       | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | 24%         | —             | —           | —             | <b>26%</b>          | —             | 36%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | —                         | —             | —           | —                      | 59%         | —             | —           | —             | <b>48%</b>          | —             | 32%         |               |
| 22-25           | 6%                        | 1,489         | —           | —                      | 12%         | 2,734         | 8%          | 1,168         | <b>8%</b>           | <b>5,490</b>  | 9%          | 1,409         |
| Substantiated   | 13%                       | —             | —           | —                      | 30%         | —             | 67%         | —             | <b>33%</b>          | —             | 42%         |               |
| Suspected       | 20%                       | —             | —           | —                      | 28%         | —             | 12%         | —             | <b>23%</b>          | —             | 40%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | 67%                       | —             | —           | —                      | 42%         | —             | 21%         | —             | <b>44%</b>          | —             | 18%         |               |
| 26-30           | 14%                       | 3,362         | 15%         | 1,361                  | 17%         | 3,844         | 15%         | 2,219         | <b>15%</b>          | <b>10,786</b> | 14%         | 2,249         |
| Substantiated   | 33%                       | —             | 35%         | —                      | 49%         | —             | 67%         | —             | <b>46%</b>          | —             | 65%         |               |
| Suspected       | 27%                       | —             | 35%         | —                      | 17%         | —             | 20%         | —             | <b>23%</b>          | —             | 20%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | 40%                       | —             | 30%         | —                      | 34%         | —             | 13%         | —             | <b>31%</b>          | —             | 15%         |               |
| 31-40           | 54%                       | 13,395        | 54%         | 4,822                  | 43%         | 9,774         | 57%         | 8,396         | <b>51%</b>          | <b>36,387</b> | 50%         | 7,957         |
| Substantiated   | 36%                       | —             | 42%         | —                      | 46%         | —             | 52%         | —             | <b>43%</b>          | —             | 63%         |               |
| Suspected       | 21%                       | —             | 15%         | —                      | 16%         | —             | 25%         | —             | <b>20%</b>          | —             | 19%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | 43%                       | —             | 43%         | —                      | 38%         | —             | 23%         | —             | <b>37%</b>          | —             | 18%         |               |
| Over 40         | 25%                       | 6,153         | 29%         | 2,574                  | 24%         | 5,394         | 18%         | 2,692         | <b>24%</b>          | <b>16,813</b> | 24%         | 3,923         |
| Substantiated   | 42%                       | —             | 34%         | —                      | 45%         | —             | 55%         | —             | <b>44%</b>          | —             | 60%         |               |
| Suspected       | 21%                       | —             | 24%         | —                      | 19%         | —             | 30%         | —             | <b>22%</b>          | —             | 27%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated | 37%                       | —             | 42%         | —                      | 36%         | —             | 15%         | —             | <b>34%</b>          | —             | 13%         |               |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>100%</b>               | <b>24,847</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>8,962</b>           | <b>100%</b> | <b>22,664</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>14,848</b> | <b>100%</b>         | <b>71,321</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>16,055</b> |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 4,046 child investigations with information about age of father. Because of 3,626 child investigations that did not include a father in the home, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-2.

\*\* Includes step-fathers, male common-law partners and adoptive/foster fathers living with the investigated child.

— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

from a low of 14% for children living with mothers aged 22-25 to a high of 41% for those whose mothers were over 40. Similarly, substantiation rates differed with the father's age, from under 13% (fathers aged 25 and under) to 42% (fathers over 40).

**Sexual Abuse:** In 73 percent of sexual abuse investigations involving children living with their mothers, the mothers were over 30, and in only 6% of cases they were 25 and under. With regard to fathers, in 83% of

investigations the fathers were over 30. Substantiation rates for children living with mothers ranged from a low of 20% (mothers between 22 and 25) to a high of 43% (mothers between 31 and 40). With respect to fathers, substantiation rates ranged from 34% for fathers over 40 years to 42% for fathers between 31 and 40 years.

**Neglect:** Cases of neglect more often involved younger parents than did cases of abuse. In 20% of

neglect investigations involving children living with their mothers, the mothers were aged 25 and under, and a little more than half (56%) were over 30. With regard to fathers, in 16% of investigations the fathers were aged 25 and under, and in 67% of cases they were over 30. Neglect substantiation rates ranged from 34% for children living with mothers under 19 to 50% for children whose mothers were over 40. For children living with fathers, substantiation rates ranged from 17% for fathers between 19 and 21 years to 49% for fathers between 26 and 30 years.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** In 58% of emotional maltreatment investigations involving children living with their mothers, the mothers were over 30, and in 18% of cases they were 25 and under. Substantiation rates ranged from 49% for mothers aged 31 to 40 years to 61% for mothers aged 22 to 25 years. For fathers, 75% of cases involved children living with fathers over 30, and 10% involved children living with fathers who were aged 25 and under. Substantiation rates for fathers ranged from 52% for those aged 31 to 40 years to 67% for those aged 22 to 30 years.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** In 59% of investigations for more than one category of maltreatment involving children living with their mothers, the mothers were over 30 years, and in 17% of cases they were aged 25 and under. Substantiation rates for mothers ranged from 45% for those aged 22 to 25 years to 62% for those aged 26 to 30 years. In 74% of multiple maltreatment cases involving children living with their fathers, the fathers were over 30, and in 12% they were aged 25 and under. Substantiation rates for fathers ranged from 32% for those aged 19 to 21 years to 80% for aged less than 19 years.

## Number of Siblings in the Household

Investigating workers were asked to provide non-identifying information on all children under the age of 19 who were living in the home at the time of the investigation. As shown in Table 7-3, 27% of investi-

gated children had no siblings under 19 living at home, 38% had one sibling, 22% had two siblings, and 13% had three or more siblings. The more children in the household, the more often maltreatment was substantiated: 46% for children with three siblings and 49% for children with four or more.

**Physical Abuse:** Twenty-five percent of children investigated for physical abuse had no siblings under the age of 19 living with them at the time of the investigation. Forty percent had one sibling, 24% two, and 11% three or more. Substantiation rates were highest for children living in large families.

**Sexual Abuse:** In 30% of investigations for sexual abuse the child had no siblings under the age of 19 living in the home. Thirty-five percent had one sibling, 17% had two, and 18% had three or more. Substantiation rates ranged from 26% for investigations with four or more siblings to a high of 52% for those with three siblings.

**Neglect:** Twenty-nine percent of children investigated for neglect had no siblings under the age of 19 living in the home, 36% had one sibling, 20% two, and 15% three or more. Substantiation rates in cases of neglect ranged from 36% for those with 3 siblings to 47% for those with four or more siblings.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** In 24% of investigations for emotional maltreatment the child had no siblings under the age of 19 living in the home, 38% had one sibling, 23% two, and 15% three or more. Substantiation rates in cases of emotional maltreatment were generally high, ranging from 49% for those with two siblings to 76% for those with four more siblings.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Twenty-six percent of children investigated because of several categories of maltreatment had no siblings under the age of 19 living in the home, 37% had one sibling, 24% two, and 13% three or more. Substantiation rates in cases involving multiple forms of maltreatment were

**Table 7-3**  
**Siblings of Children in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                       | Investigated Maltreatment |                           |                           |                           |                            | Multiple Categories       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
|                       | Primary Category          |                           |                           |                           |                            |                           |
|                       | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse              | Neglect                   | Emotional Maltreatment    | Total                      |                           |
| No Sibling            | 25% 10,391                | 30% 4,348                 | 29% 15,628                | 24% 6,154                 | <b>27%</b> <b>36,521</b>   | 26% 8,216                 |
| Substantiated         | 38%                       | 36%                       | 43%                       | 52%                       | <b>42%</b>                 | 61%                       |
| Suspected             | 21%                       | 26%                       | 21%                       | 28%                       | <b>23%</b>                 | 26%                       |
| Unsubstantiated       | 41%                       | 38%                       | 36%                       | 20%                       | <b>35%</b>                 | 13%                       |
| One Sibling           | 40% 16,767                | 35% 5,085                 | 36% 19,411                | 38% 9,915                 | <b>38%</b> <b>51,178</b>   | 37% 11,899                |
| Substantiated         | 30%                       | 37%                       | 44%                       | 53%                       | <b>40%</b>                 | 55%                       |
| Suspected             | 23%                       | 20%                       | 19%                       | 33%                       | <b>23%</b>                 | 27%                       |
| Unsubstantiated       | 47%                       | 43%                       | 37%                       | 14%                       | <b>37%</b>                 | 18%                       |
| Two Siblings          | 24% 10,107                | 17% 2,377                 | 20% 10,825                | 23% 5,876                 | <b>22%</b> <b>29,185</b>   | 24% 7,729                 |
| Substantiated         | 33%                       | 34%                       | 42%                       | 49%                       | <b>40%</b>                 | 61%                       |
| Suspected             | 25%                       | 25%                       | 19%                       | 33%                       | <b>24%</b>                 | 16%                       |
| Unsubstantiated       | 42%                       | 41%                       | 39%                       | 18%                       | <b>36%</b>                 | 23%                       |
| Three Siblings        | 7% 2,752                  | 15% 2,098                 | 10% 5,256                 | 11% 2,785                 | <b>9%</b> <b>12,891</b>    | 8% 2,699                  |
| Substantiated         | 39%                       | 52%                       | 36%                       | 69%                       | <b>46%</b>                 | 54%                       |
| Suspected             | 18%                       | 13%                       | 26%                       | 15%                       | <b>20%</b>                 | 25%                       |
| Unsubstantiated       | 43%                       | 35%                       | 38%                       | 16%                       | <b>34%</b>                 | 21%                       |
| Four or More Siblings | 4% 1,534                  | 3% 498                    | 5% 2,801                  | 4% 965                    | <b>4%</b> <b>5,798</b>     | 5% 1,462                  |
| Substantiated         | 44%                       | 26%                       | 47%                       | 76%                       | <b>49%</b>                 | 65%                       |
| Suspected             | 29%                       | 38%                       | 24%                       | 7%                        | <b>24%</b>                 | 16%                       |
| Unsubstantiated       | 27%                       | 36%                       | 29%                       | 17%                       | <b>27%</b>                 | 19%                       |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100%</b> <b>41,551</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>14,406</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>53,921</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>25,695</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>135,573</b> | <b>100%</b> <b>32,005</b> |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about number of siblings in the home. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-3.

high, ranging from 54% for those with three siblings to 65% for those with four or more siblings.

## Number of Siblings Investigated

In addition to identifying all the children under the age of 19 in the household, investigating workers were asked to indicate the number of children who were also subject to investigation. Forty-nine percent of investigations involved children with at least one additional sibling who was also the subject of investigation, 24% had siblings who were not investigated, and 27% had no siblings (see Table 7-4). There was little variation in the substantiation levels when other siblings were also being investigated for maltreatment. The rates

range from 36% for those with two or more non-investigated siblings to 45% for those with two or more siblings and at least one is investigated.

**Physical Abuse:** Forty percent of physical abuse investigations involved children with at least one additional sibling who was also the subject of investigation. Thirty-five percent had siblings who were not investigated, and 25% had no siblings. Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 27% for cases in which a sibling was also investigated to 38% for cases in which investigated children had no siblings.

**Sexual Abuse:** In 37% of investigations of sexual abuse the child had at least one sibling who was also

**Table 7-4**  
**Investigated Siblings in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     |                    | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                     | Total              |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |                     |                    |                     |
| No Sibling                                      | 25% 10,365                | 30% 4,331          | 29% 15,316         | 24% 6,093              | <b>27%</b>          | <b>36,105</b>      | 25% 8,141           |
| Substantiated                                   | 38%                       | 36%                | 43%                | 51%                    | <b>42%</b>          |                    | 61%                 |
| Suspected                                       | 21%                       | 26%                | 21%                | 29%                    | <b>23%</b>          |                    | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                                 | 41%                       | 38%                | 36%                | 20%                    | <b>35%</b>          |                    | 13%                 |
| One Sibling, Not Investigated                   | 21% 8,731                 | 19% 2,744          | 11% 5,897          | 9% 2,200               | <b>15%</b>          | <b>19,572</b>      | 12% 3,689           |
| Substantiated                                   | 33%                       | 39%                | 41%                | 38%                    | <b>37%</b>          |                    | 53%                 |
| Suspected                                       | 22%                       | 16%                | 21%                | 54%                    | <b>24%</b>          |                    | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                                 | 45%                       | 45%                | 38%                | 8%                     | <b>39%</b>          |                    | 20%                 |
| One Sibling, Investigated                       | 19% 7,938                 | 16% 2,334          | 25% 13,193         | 29% 7,350              | <b>23%</b>          | <b>30,815</b>      | 25% 8,138           |
| Substantiated                                   | 27%                       | 34%                | 45%                | 55%                    | <b>42%</b>          |                    | 55%                 |
| Suspected                                       | 25%                       | 24%                | 19%                | 28%                    | <b>23%</b>          |                    | 28%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                                 | 48%                       | 42%                | 36%                | 17%                    | <b>35%</b>          |                    | 17%                 |
| Two or More Siblings, None Investigated         | 14% 5,820                 | 14% 2,001          | 7% 3,677           | 6% 1,446               | <b>9%</b>           | <b>12,944</b>      | 9% 2,749            |
| Substantiated                                   | 37%                       | 28%                | 42%                | 33%                    | <b>36%</b>          |                    | 50%                 |
| Suspected                                       | 19%                       | 30%                | 17%                | 27%                    | <b>21%</b>          |                    | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                                 | 44%                       | 42%                | 41%                | 40%                    | <b>43%</b>          |                    | 24%                 |
| Two or More Siblings, At Least One Investigated | 21% 8,574                 | 21% 2,973          | 28% 15,208         | 32% 8,186              | <b>26%</b>          | <b>34,941</b>      | 29% 9,140           |
| Substantiated                                   | 35%                       | 50%                | 41%                | 62%                    | <b>45%</b>          |                    | 62%                 |
| Suspected                                       | 27%                       | 15%                | 23%                | 25%                    | <b>24%</b>          |                    | 16%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                                 | 38%                       | 35%                | 36%                | 13%                    | <b>31%</b>          |                    | 22%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>100% 41,428</b>        | <b>100% 14,383</b> | <b>100% 53,291</b> | <b>100% 25,275</b>     | <b>100% 134,377</b> | <b>100% 31,857</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,588 child investigations with information about number of siblings investigated for maltreatment. Due to missing information on 84 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-4.

the subject of investigation, 33% had siblings who were not investigated, and 30% had no siblings. Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 28% for cases involving children with two or more siblings, none investigated, to 50% for cases in which there were two or more siblings, at least one of whom was also investigated.

**Neglect:** Fifty-three percent of neglect investigations involved children with at least one additional sibling who was also the subject of investigation. Eighteen percent had siblings who were not investigated, and 29% had no siblings. Substantiation rates range from 41% for cases with one uninvestigated sibling to 45% for cases with one investigated sibling.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** In 61% of investigations of emotional maltreatment the child had at least one sibling who was also the subject of investigation. Fifteen percent had siblings who were not investigated, and 24% had no siblings. Substantiation rates in cases of emotional maltreatment were generally high. The rates range from 33% for cases with two or more uninvestigated siblings to 62% for cases with two or more siblings where at least one was investigated.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Fifty-four percent of investigations of multiple maltreatment involved children with at least one additional sibling



who was also the subject of investigation, 21% had siblings who were not investigated, and 25% had no siblings. As with emotional maltreatment, substantiation rates in multiple maltreatment cases were generally high. The rates range from 50% for cases with two or more uninvestigated siblings to 62% for cases with two or more siblings where at least one was investigated.

## Source of Income

Investigating workers were requested to choose the income source that best described the primary source of the household income. Income source was designated by investigating workers in terms of five possible classifications:

**Full Time:** At least one caregiver is employed in a permanent, full-time position.

**Part Time/Seasonal Employment/Multiple Jobs:** Family income is derived primarily from part-time employment (less than 30 hours/week), full-time or part-time positions for temporary periods of the year, or several part-time temporary jobs. Neither caregiver is employed in a permanent, full-time position.

**Benefits/Employment Insurance (EI)/Social Assistance:** Family income is derived primarily from benefits (e.g. long-term disability, pension, or child support), employment insurance benefits, or social assistance (e.g. general welfare or family assistance).

**Unknown:** Source of income was not known.

**No Reliable Source:** There is no reliable source of income for the family. Caregiver(s) may work at temporary jobs, but these are not predictable.

Table 7-5 shows the source of income for the households of children investigated for maltreatment as tracked by the CIS. Thirty-nine percent of investigations involved children in families that derived their primary income from full-time employment. Thirty-six percent involved children whose families received benefits/EI/social assistance as the primary source of income. In an additional 10%, families relied on part-time/seasonal employment/multiple jobs. In 13% of investigations the source of income was unknown by

the workers, and in 2% of cases no steady source of income was reported.

Forty-two percent of investigations involving households with full-time employment were substantiated, 20% remained suspected, and 38% were unsubstantiated. Forty percent of investigations involving families receiving benefits/EI or social assistance were substantiated, 24% remained suspected, and 36% were unsubstantiated. In contrast, 49% of investigations involving families relying on part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs were substantiated, 22% remaining suspected and 29% being unsubstantiated. Of cases in which families had no reliable source of income 54% were substantiated, 25% remained suspected, and 21% were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Fifty-one percent of physical abuse investigations involved children from families with full-time employment, and 28% involved families receiving benefits/EI or social assistance as the primary source of income. Forty-one percent of the former were substantiated, in contrast to only 28% of the latter.

**Sexual Abuse:** Full-time employment was reported as the primary source of income in 50% of all sexual abuse investigations, benefits/EI or social assistance in 25% of cases, and part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs in 8%. Fifty-one percent of investigations involving part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs and 45% of investigations of full-time employment families were substantiated.

**Neglect:** In contrast to abuse cases, only 27% of neglect investigations involved families that relied on full-time employment as their primary source of income. Forty-five percent involved families that were receiving some form of benefits/EI or social assistance, and a further 11% involved families relying on part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs. Rates of substantiation were lowest in cases involving families dependent on full-time employment (37%) and highest

**Table 7-5**  
**Household Source of Income in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| Full-Time Employment                        | 51% 20,920                | 50% 7,243          | 27% 14,314         | 37% 9,479              | <b>39%</b>  | <b>51,956</b>  | 34% 10,800          |
| Substantiated                               | 41%                       | 45%                | 37%                | 49%                    | <b>42%</b>  |                | 59%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 18%                       | 15%                | 18%                | 30%                    | <b>20%</b>  |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 41%                       | 40%                | 45%                | 21%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 21%                 |
| Part-Time/Multiple Jobs/Seasonal Employment | 9% 3,946                  | 8% 1,138           | 11% 5,409          | 13% 3,349              | <b>10%</b>  | <b>13,842</b>  | 11% 3,592           |
| Substantiated                               | 31%                       | 51%                | 56%                | 61%                    | <b>49%</b>  |                | 64%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 23%                       | 12%                | 18%                | 29%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 15%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 46%                       | 37%                | 26%                | 10%                    | <b>29%</b>  |                | 21%                 |
| Benefits/Unemployment/Social Assistance     | 28% 11,644                | 25% 3,612          | 45% 23,742         | 35% 8,904              | <b>36%</b>  | <b>47,902</b>  | 42% 13,192          |
| Substantiated                               | 28%                       | 30%                | 43%                | 54%                    | <b>40%</b>  |                | 55%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 25%                       | 31%                | 20%                | 29%                    | <b>24%</b>  |                | 29%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 47%                       | 39%                | 37%                | 17%                    | <b>36%</b>  |                | 16%                 |
| Unknown                                     | 11% 4,392                 | 15% 2,092          | 15% 7,976          | 11% 2,687              | <b>13%</b>  | <b>17,147</b>  | 10% 3,022           |
| Substantiated                               | 21%                       | 24%                | 37%                | 51%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 48%                 |
| Suspected                                   | 36%                       | 39%                | 28%                | 33%                    | <b>32%</b>  |                | 32%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                             | 43%                       | 37%                | 35%                | 16%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 20%                 |
| No Reliable Source of Income                | 1% 390                    | 2% 273             | 2% 1,110           | 4% 1,081               | <b>2%</b>   | <b>2,854</b>   | 3% 886              |
| Substantiated                               | —                         | —                  | 46%                | 77%                    | <b>54%</b>  |                | 80%                 |
| Suspected                                   | —                         | —                  | 34%                | 17%                    | <b>25%</b>  |                | 6%                  |
| Unsubstantiated                             | —                         | —                  | 20%                | 6%                     | <b>21%</b>  |                | 14%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>100% 41,292</b>        | <b>100% 14,358</b> | <b>100% 52,551</b> | <b>100% 25,500</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>133,701</b> | <b>100% 31,492</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,534 child investigations with information about household source of income. Due to missing information on 138 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-5.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

in cases involving families relying on part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs (56%).

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Full-time employment was reported as the primary source of income in 37% of investigations of emotional maltreatment, benefits/EI or social assistance in 35%, and part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs in 13%. Substantiation rates in cases of emotional maltreatment ranged from 49% in cases involving families dependent on full-time employment to 77% in cases where no source of income was reported.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Thirty-four percent of investigations of multiple maltreatment involved families dependent on full-time employment, 42% were receiving benefits/EI or social assistance, and 11% relied primarily on part-time/seasonal employment or multiple jobs. Substantiation rates in cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment were consistently high regardless of families' sources of income. The rates range from 48% for unknown sources of income to 80% where no source of income was reported.

## Housing

Investigating workers were asked to select the housing category that best described the investigated child's household living situation. The types of housing included:

**Private Rental Accommodation:** A private rental unit, including an apartment unit, a house, or a townhouse.

**Rental Unit in a Public Housing Complex:** A rental unit in a public housing complex (i.e. rent-subsidized, government-owned housing).

**Purchased Home:** A purchased house, condominium, or townhouse.

**Shelter/Hotel:** A homeless or family shelter, SRO hotel (single room occupancy), or temporary motel accommodation.

**Unknown:** Housing accommodation was unknown.

**Other:** Any other form of shelter (Armed Forces barracks or housing, trailers, mobile homes, etc.).

In addition to housing type, investigating workers were asked to indicate whether the investigated child lived in unsafe housing conditions where children were at risk of injury or impairment from their living situation (e.g. broken windows, insufficient heat, parents and children sharing single room). Workers also noted the number of family moves in the 6 months before the investigation.

At the time of the study, 57% of all investigations involved children living in rental accommodations (47% private rentals and 10% public housing), 26% involved children living in purchased homes, 6% in other accommodations, and 1% in shelters or hostels. In 10% of cases, investigating workers did not have enough information to describe the housing type (Table 7-6). According to the 1996 census, 27% of families with never-married children living at home

resided in rental accommodation, and 73% owned their home (see Appendix I, Table 10).<sup>77</sup>

Housing conditions were described as safe in 71% of investigations and unsafe in 14% (Table 7-7). Fifty percent of investigations involved families that had not moved in the previous 6 months, whereas 23% had moved at least once (Table 7-8).

There is a marked difference in substantiation rates by type of housing. For children living in private rental units the rate was 39%, for those in shelters/hotels it was 44%, in purchased homes it was 45%, and in a public housing complex it was 53% (Table 7-6). Sixty-five percent of investigations were substantiated if the child was living in unsafe housing conditions as compared with only 37% for children living in an adequately safe home (Table 7-7). The rate of substantiation was 38% among families with one move, 40% with two moves, and 38% for children from families who had not moved in the 6 months before the investigation (Table 7-8).

**Physical Abuse:** Thirty-three percent of physical abuse investigations involved children who were living in purchased homes, 43% were living in private market rentals, and 7% in public housing complexes. Substantiation rates were highest for investigations involving children in purchased homes, and lowest for children living in other accommodations.

Ten percent of physical abuse investigations involved children living in unsafe housing conditions, and 49% of these investigations were substantiated (Table 7-7). Fifty-three percent involved children who had not moved in the previous 6 months, and in at least 20% of investigations the child had moved at least once in the previous 6 months (Table 7-8).

<sup>77</sup> Statistics Canada. *Census families in private households by selected household and dwelling characteristics showing family structure*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

**Table 7-6**  
**Housing Type in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| Private Rental Accommodation            | 43% 17,556                | 35% 5,034          | 54% 28,561         | 48% 12,095             | <b>47%</b>  | <b>63,246</b>  | 51% 16,062          |
| Substantiated                           | 30%                       | 33%                | 39%                | 55%                    | <b>39%</b>  |                | 58%                 |
| Suspected                               | 23%                       | 21%                | 22%                | 28%                    | <b>23%</b>  |                | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 47%                       | 46%                | 39%                | 17%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 18%                 |
| Rental Unit in a Public Housing Complex | 7% 2,769                  | 7% 937             | 13% 6,864          | 8% 2,139               | <b>10%</b>  | <b>12,709</b>  | 11% 3,618           |
| Substantiated                           | 38%                       | 31%                | 55%                | 75%                    | <b>53%</b>  |                | 72%                 |
| Suspected                               | 15%                       | 34%                | 11%                | 14%                    | <b>14%</b>  |                | 10%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 47%                       | 35%                | 34%                | 11%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 18%                 |
| Purchased Home                          | 33% 13,709                | 36% 5,189          | 17% 8,809          | 27% 6,867              | <b>26%</b>  | <b>34,574</b>  | 21% 6,769           |
| Substantiated                           | 41%                       | 53%                | 42%                | 51%                    | <b>45%</b>  |                | 54%                 |
| Suspected                               | 18%                       | 16%                | 16%                | 28%                    | <b>19%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 41%                       | 31%                | 42%                | 21%                    | <b>36%</b>  |                | 21%                 |
| Shelter/Hotel                           | 1% 504                    | — —                | 1% 806             | 2% 533                 | <b>1%</b>   | <b>1,904</b>   | 2% 614              |
| Substantiated                           | 30%                       | —                  | 52%                | 50%                    | <b>44%</b>  |                | 63%                 |
| Suspected                               | 23%                       | —                  | 18%                | 49%                    | <b>29%</b>  |                | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 47%                       | —                  | 30%                | 1%                     | <b>27%</b>  |                | 11%                 |
| Other                                   | 5% 2,095                  | 8% 1,165           | 7% 3,662           | 7% 1,745               | <b>6%</b>   | <b>8,667</b>   | 8% 2,361            |
| Substantiated                           | 26%                       | 8%                 | 40%                | 46%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 59%                 |
| Suspected                               | 34%                       | 27%                | 37%                | 46%                    | <b>37%</b>  |                | 33%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 40%                       | 65%                | 23%                | 8%                     | <b>30%</b>  |                | 8%                  |
| Unknown                                 | 11% 4,687                 | 14% 1,947          | 8% 4,317           | 8% 2,127               | <b>10%</b>  | <b>13,078</b>  | 7% 2,304            |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>100% 41,320</b>        | <b>100% 14,333</b> | <b>100% 53,019</b> | <b>100% 25,506</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>134,178</b> | <b>100% 31,728</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,515 child investigations with information about housing type. Because of missing information on 157 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-6.  
— Fewer than 5 cases with which to calculate estimates; estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Sexual Abuse:** Thirty-six percent of sexual abuse investigations involved children who were living in purchased homes, 35% were living in private market rentals, and 7% in public housing complexes. As with cases of physical abuse, substantiation rates were highest for investigations involving children in purchased homes, and lowest for children living in other accommodations.

Twelve percent of sexual abuse investigations involved children living in unsafe housing conditions, and 61% of these investigations were substantiated

(Table 7-7). Sixty-three percent involved children who had not moved in the previous 6 months, and 15% of investigated children had moved at least once (Table 7-8).

**Neglect:** Only 17% of neglect investigations involved children living in purchased homes. In 54% of investigations the children were living in private market rentals, and in 13% in public housing complexes. Unlike abuse cases, substantiation rates were highest for investigations involving children in public housing and shelters and lowest for children living in private rental units.

**Table 7-7**  
**Housing Conditions in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total       |                |                     |
| Safe Conditions   | 75% 31,060                | 70% 10,014         | 65% 34,241         | 76% 19,347             | <b>71%</b>  | <b>94,662</b>  | 64% 20,137          |
| Substantiated     | 32%                       | 37%                | 33%                | 53%                    | <b>37%</b>  |                | 53%                 |
| Suspected         | 22%                       | 20%                | 24%                | 29%                    | <b>24%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 46%                       | 43%                | 43%                | 18%                    | <b>39%</b>  |                | 22%                 |
| Unsafe Conditions | 10% 4,047                 | 12% 1,704          | 19% 9,859          | 12% 3,012              | <b>14%</b>  | <b>18,622</b>  | 18% 5,778           |
| Substantiated     | 49%                       | 61%                | 70%                | 73%                    | <b>65%</b>  |                | 77%                 |
| Suspected         | 13%                       | 12%                | 10%                | 16%                    | <b>12%</b>  |                | 12%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 38%                       | 27%                | 20%                | 11%                    | <b>23%</b>  |                | 11%                 |
| Unknown           | 15% 6,181                 | 18% 2,622          | 16% 8,742          | 12% 3,033              | <b>15%</b>  | <b>20,578</b>  | 18% 5,731           |
| <b>Total*</b>     | <b>100% 41,288</b>        | <b>100% 14,340</b> | <b>100% 52,842</b> | <b>100% 25,392</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>133,862</b> | <b>100% 31,646</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,490 child investigations with information about housing condition. Because of missing information on 182 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-7.

Nineteen percent of neglect investigations involved children living in unsafe housing conditions, and 70% of these investigations were substantiated (Table 7-7). Forty-three percent involved children who had not moved in the previous 6 months, and at least 28% of investigated children had moved at least once (Table 7-8).

**Emotional Maltreatment:** In 27% of emotional maltreatment investigations children were living in purchased homes, 48% were living in private market rentals, and 8% in public housing complexes. In emotional maltreatment cases, with the exception of “other”, substantiation rates were above 50%.

Twelve percent of emotional maltreatment investigations involved children living in unsafe housing conditions, and 73% of these cases were substantiated (Table 7-7). Fifty-two percent involved children who had not moved in the previous 6 months, and at least 25% had moved at least once (Table 7-8).

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Only 21% of multiple maltreatment investigations involved children living in purchased homes; in 51% of cases they were living in private market rentals and in 11% in public housing complexes. Substantiation rates were consistently over 54%.

Eighteen percent of multiple maltreatment investigations involved children living in unsafe housing conditions, and 77% of these cases were substantiated (Table 7-7). In 49%, the child had not moved house in the previous 6 months, and at least 29% of investigated children had moved at least once (Table 7-8).

## Aboriginal Heritage of Parents

Aboriginal heritage was documented by the CIS in an effort to better understand some of the factors that bring Aboriginal children into contact with the child

**Table 7-8**  
**Family Moves Within the Last Six Months in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998<sup>\*/\*\*</sup>**

|                             | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                             | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                             | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| No Moves in Last Six Months | 53% 20,184                | 63% 7,845          | 43% 19,036         | 52% 11,969             | <b>50%</b>  | <b>59,034</b>  | 49% 13,105          |
| Substantiated               | 35%                       | 36%                | 34%                | 51%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 52%                 |
| Suspected                   | 17%                       | 19%                | 18%                | 30%                    | <b>20%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 48%                       | 45%                | 48%                | 19%                    | <b>42%</b>  |                | 23%                 |
| One Move                    | 14% 5,301                 | 13% 1,628          | 18% 7,977          | 19% 4,373              | <b>16%</b>  | <b>19,279</b>  | 20% 5,293           |
| Substantiated               | 33%                       | 31%                | 35%                | 50%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 60%                 |
| Suspected                   | 22%                       | 34%                | 24%                | 34%                    | <b>26%</b>  |                | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 45%                       | 35%                | 41%                | 16%                    | <b>36%</b>  |                | 17%                 |
| Two or More Moves           | 6% 2,101                  | 2% 292             | 10% 4,638          | 6% 1,458               | <b>7%</b>   | <b>8,489</b>   | 9% 2,455            |
| Substantiated               | 27%                       | —                  | 44%                | 49%                    | <b>40%</b>  |                | 59%                 |
| Suspected                   | 39%                       | —                  | 30%                | 38%                    | <b>34%</b>  |                | 33%                 |
| Unsubstantiated             | 34%                       | —                  | 26%                | 13%                    | <b>26%</b>  |                | 8%                  |
| Unknown                     | 27% 10,397                | 22% 2,696          | 29% 12,775         | 23% 5,212              | <b>27%</b>  | <b>31,080</b>  | 22% 5,909           |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>100% 37,983</b>        | <b>100% 12,461</b> | <b>100% 44,426</b> | <b>100% 23,012</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>117,882</b> | <b>100% 26,762</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 5,328 child investigations with information about family moves in the past six months. Because of missing information on 35 cases and because information on family moves in past six months was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-8.

\*\* Excluding jurisdictions in which information about number of family moves in last six months could not be collected in a comparable manner. The remaining subsample represents at least 80% of child welfare investigations in Canada.

welfare system.<sup>78</sup> Aboriginal children and families were identified as a key group to examine because of concerns about overrepresentation of children from these communities in the foster care system.<sup>79</sup> The CIS tracked the aboriginal status of biological parents living with the children involved in maltreatment investigations, but not of biological parents who were residing elsewhere. The CIS also documented whether the children with one or more biological parents were living on- or off-reserve.

Neither parent was of aboriginal heritage in 84% of child maltreatment investigations (Table 7-9). Eight

percent identified at least one parent as being of aboriginal heritage living off-reserve; 5% lived on-reserve. A large proportion (58%) of the former were substantiated cases of maltreatment, 20% of them remained suspected, and 22% were unsubstantiated. Only 26% of investigations were substantiated when the family lived on-reserve, 30% remaining suspected, and 44% being unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Seven percent of physical abuse cases involved children who had at least one parent who was of aboriginal heritage, 3% living on-reserve

<sup>78</sup> The CIS collected information regarding ethno-cultural status. Unfortunately the number of cases sampled for most groups was too low to allow for accurate estimates and therefore, the data are not included in this report.

<sup>79</sup> See Armitage A. Family and child welfare in first nation communities. In: Wharf B (ed). *Rethinking child welfare in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993: 131-170.

**Table 7-9**  
**Aboriginal Heritage of Parents in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| Neither Parent of Aboriginal Heritage   | 91% 37,668                | 85% 12,255         | 79% 42,767         | 85% 21,781             | <b>84%</b>  | <b>114,471</b> | 79% 25,361          |
| Substantiated                           | 34%                       | 40%                | 40%                | 53%                    | <b>41%</b>  |                | 56%                 |
| Suspected                               | 22%                       | 24%                | 20%                | 29%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 44%                       | 36%                | 40%                | 18%                    | <b>37%</b>  |                | 19%                 |
| Aboriginal Parent**, Living Off-Reserve | 4% 1,765                  | 3% 481             | 10% 5,324          | 11% 2,711              | <b>8%</b>   | <b>10,281</b>  | 12% 3,771           |
| Substantiated                           | 34%                       | 19%                | 63%                | 71%                    | <b>58%</b>  |                | 72%                 |
| Suspected                               | 27%                       | 6%                 | 20%                | 19%                    | <b>20%</b>  |                | 15%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 39%                       | 75%                | 17%                | 10%                    | <b>22%</b>  |                | 13%                 |
| Aboriginal Parent**, Living On-Reserve  | 3% 1,451                  | 8% 1,151           | 5% 2,828           | 3% 820                 | <b>5%</b>   | <b>6,250</b>   | 5% 1,599            |
| Substantiated                           | 30%                       | 15%                | 21%                | 53%                    | <b>26%</b>  |                | 40%                 |
| Suspected                               | 38%                       | 12%                | 29%                | 42%                    | <b>30%</b>  |                | 28%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                         | 32%                       | 73%                | 50%                | 5%                     | <b>44%</b>  |                | 32%                 |
| Unknown                                 | 2% 667                    | 4% 519             | 6% 3,002           | 1% 383                 | <b>3%</b>   | <b>4,571</b>   | 4% 1,274            |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>100% 41,551</b>        | <b>100% 14,406</b> | <b>100% 53,921</b> | <b>100% 25,695</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>135,573</b> | <b>100% 32,005</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about aboriginal heritage of parents. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-9.  
\*\* At least one parent is aboriginal.

and 4% living off-reserve. Substantiation rates were 30% for on-reserve and 34% for off-reserve.

**Sexual Abuse:** Eleven percent of sexual abuse cases involved children who had at least one parent who was of aboriginal heritage, 8% living on-reserve and 3% living off-reserve. Substantiation rates were 15% in cases involving children living on-reserve and 19% off-reserve.

**Neglect:** Fifteen percent of neglect investigations involved children who had at least one parent who was of aboriginal heritage, 5% living on-reserve and 10% off-reserve. Substantiation rates were 21% in cases involving children living on-reserve and 63% in cases involving children with at least one aboriginal parent living off-reserve.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Fourteen percent of emotional maltreatment investigations involved children with at least one parent of aboriginal heritage, 3% living on-reserve and 11% living off-reserve. Substantiation rates in these cases were 53% for on-reserve and 71% off-reserve.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Seventeen percent of investigations of multiple categories of maltreatment involved children with at least one parent of aboriginal heritage, 5% living on-reserve and 12% living off-reserve. Substantiation rates were 40% in cases involving children living on-reserve and 72% in cases off-reserve.

## Caregiver Functioning and Family Stressors

Concerns related to caregiver functioning and family stressors were examined by investigating workers using a checklist of 10 items that could apply to either caregiver. Where applicable, the reference point for identifying concerns about caregiver functioning was the previous 6 months.<sup>80</sup> The checklist included:

**Alcohol or Drug Abuse:** Use of alcohol is known or suspected to pose a problem for the family, or at least one caregiver is known or suspected to abuse prescription drugs, illegal drugs, or other substances.

**Criminal Activity:** At least one caregiver is known or suspected to allow criminal acts to be committed with the children's knowledge, or is absent because of incarceration.

**Cognitive Impairment:** The cognitive ability of at least one caregiver is known or suspected to have an impact on the quality of care provided in the family.

**Mental Health Problems:** At least one caregiver is known or suspected to have mental health problems.

**Physical Health Issues:** At least one caregiver is known or suspected to have a chronic illness, frequent hospitalizations, or physical disability.

**Lack of Social Supports:** At least one caregiver is known or suspected to be socially isolated or lacking in social supports.

**Childhood History of Abuse:** Either caregiver is known or suspected to have a history of childhood maltreatment.

**Spousal Violence:** Either caregiver is known or suspected to be in a violent relationship.

**Custody Dispute:** Ongoing child custody dispute before the courts is known to the investigating worker.

**Other Concerns:** Any other issue/concern describing caregiver functioning.

Tables 7-10(a) and 10(b) present caregiver functioning and family stressors as noted by investigating workers. A caregiver/family stressor was identified in 73% of investigations (an estimated 98,412). The most frequently noted concerns were alcohol or drug abuse (34%), childhood history of abuse (31%), lack of social support (29%), spousal violence (23%), and mental health problems (24%). Other items noted were criminal activity (11%), ongoing custody disputes (11%), physical health issues (8%), and cognitive impairment (6%). Other than in cases involving custody disputes, rates of substantiation were high, ranging from 44% to 62%. In contrast, only 34% of cases in which ongoing custody disputes were noted were substantiated, with maltreatment remaining suspected in an additional 18% of cases and unsubstantiated in 48%.

**Physical Abuse:** At least one caregiver functioning/family stressor issue was identified in 66% of physical abuse investigations: 27% involved a caregiver reporting childhood history of abuse; 26% noted a lack of social supports; 21% noted that one of the child's caregivers was abusing alcohol or drugs; and a further 19% of cases indicated a mental health issue. Spousal violence was identified in 16% of physical abuse investigations, and custody disputes were ongoing in 13%. Physical health issues were noted in 7%, and criminal activity and cognitive impairment were both reported in 6% of investigations. The substantiation level ranged from a low of 28% for cases reporting cognitive impairment to 49% for cases in which criminal activity was noted.

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<sup>80</sup> Most items were rated on a 2-point scale differentiating "confirmed" and "suspected" caregiver functioning issues. A caregiver functioning or family stressor was classified as confirmed if a problem had been diagnosed, observed by the investigating worker or another worker, or disclosed by the caregiver. An issue was classified as suspected if investigating workers' suspicions were sufficient to include the concern in their written assessment of the family. For the purposes of the present report, the two categories have been collapsed. A comparison of the ratings will be completed in subsequent analyses.



**Table 7-10(a)**  
**Caregiver Functioning and Other Family Stressors\*\*\* in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |               |               |                        |                   |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment | Total             |                     |
| Alcohol or Drug Abuse  | 21% 8,787                 | 17% 2,507     | 40% 21,693    | 49% 12,604             | <b>34% 45,591</b> | 45% 14,349          |
| Substantiated  | 40%                       | 40%           | 50%           | 58%                    | <b>50%</b>        | 68%                 |
| Suspected  | 32%                       | 22%           | 27%           | 29%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 28%                       | 38%           | 23%           | 13%                    | <b>22%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Criminal Activity  | 6% 2,383                  | 9% 1,293      | 11% 5,773     | 19% 4,796              | <b>11% 14,245</b> | 17% 5,334           |
| Substantiated  | 49%                       | 53%           | 65%           | 68%                    | <b>62%</b>        | 74%                 |
| Suspected  | 25%                       | 32%           | 20%           | 24%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 18%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 26%                       | 15%           | 15%           | 8%                     | <b>15%</b>        | 8%                  |
| Cognitive Impairment   | 6% 2,389                  | 8% 1,090      | 7% 3,545      | 4% 924                 | <b>6% 7,948</b>   | 7% 2,338            |
| Substantiated  | 28%                       | 25%           | 61%           | 42%                    | <b>44%</b>        | 67%                 |
| Suspected  | 29%                       | 10%           | 13%           | 47%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 19%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 43%                       | 65%           | 26%           | 11%                    | <b>35%</b>        | 14%                 |
| Mental Health Problems   | 19% 7,958                 | 16% 2,354     | 24% 12,839    | 37% 9,459              | <b>24% 32,610</b> | 34% 10,780          |
| Substantiated  | 45%                       | 32%           | 49%           | 55%                    | <b>49%</b>        | 73%                 |
| Suspected  | 24%                       | 23%           | 24%           | 31%                    | <b>26%</b>        | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 31%                       | 45%           | 27%           | 14%                    | <b>25%</b>        | 6%                  |
| Physical Health Issues   | 7% 2,790                  | 5% 780        | 9% 4,649      | 9% 2,223               | <b>8% 10,442</b>  | 10% 3,153           |
| Substantiated  | 40%                       | 38%           | 60%           | 58%                    | <b>52%</b>        | 68%                 |
| Suspected  | 25%                       | 30%           | 20%           | 29%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated  | 35%                       | 32%           | 20%           | 13%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 11%                 |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>  | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,921</b> | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b>       |
| <p>* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about parental functioning and other family stressors. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H - Table 7-10.</p> <p>** The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.</p> <p>*** Includes all issues noted for any parent or caregiver.</p> |                           |               |               |                        |                   |                     |

**Sexual Abuse:** In 55% of sexual abuse investigations at least one caregiver functioning/family stressor issue was noted: in 31% a caregiver with a childhood history of abuse was noted; in 17% alcohol or drug abuse was a concern; in 16% mental health problems were identified; and in 14% a lack of social supports was noted. Spousal violence was reported in 13%, and ongoing custody disputes were identified in 11% of the investigations. Criminal activity, cognitive impairment, physical health issues, and “other” concerns were each reported in less than 10% of investigations.

The substantiation level ranged from a low of 9% in cases in which a custody dispute was identified to a high of 53% when a caregiver was identified as participating in criminal activity. Twenty-five percent of sexual abuse investigations in which cognitive impairment was reported were substantiated, 10% remained suspected, and 65% were unsubstantiated.

**Neglect:** Workers indicated at least one caregiver functioning/family stressor issue in 75% of neglect investigations: alcohol/drug abuse (40%), lack of social supports (32%), childhood history of abuse (31%), mental health problems (24%), spousal violence (17%),

**Table 7-10(b)**  
**Caregiver Functioning and Other Family Stressors\*\*\* in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                  |                   |                        |                   | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                  |                   |                        |                   |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse     | Neglect           | Emotional Maltreatment | Total             |                     |
| Lack of Social Supports   | 26% 10,834                | 14% 2,042        | 32% 17,386        | 35% 8,939              | <b>29% 39,201</b> | 37% 11,990          |
| Substantiated   | 37%                       | 24%              | 52%               | 56%                    | <b>47%</b>        | 65%                 |
| Suspected   | 31%                       | 46%              | 24%               | 33%                    | <b>29%</b>        | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 32%                       | 30%              | 24%               | 11%                    | <b>24%</b>        | 9%                  |
| Childhood History of Abuse  | 27% 11,243                | 31% 4,447        | 31% 16,581        | 38% 9,825              | <b>31% 42,096</b> | 44% 14,131          |
| Substantiated   | 44%                       | 27%              | 56%               | 66%                    | <b>52%</b>        | 67%                 |
| Suspected   | 23%                       | 30%              | 21%               | 25%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 33%                       | 43%              | 23%               | 9%                     | <b>25%</b>        | 6%                  |
| Spousal Violence  | 16% 6,449                 | 13% 1,846        | 17% 9,057         | 54% 13,912             | <b>23% 31,264</b> | 32% 10,374          |
| Substantiated   | 47%                       | 29%              | 60%               | 68%                    | <b>59%</b>        | 73%                 |
| Suspected   | 26%                       | 19%              | 21%               | 28%                    | <b>25%</b>        | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 27%                       | 52%              | 19%               | 4%                     | <b>16%</b>        | 6%                  |
| Custody Dispute   | 13% 5,458                 | 11% 1,568        | 9% 4,920          | 14% 3,538              | <b>11% 15,484</b> | 13% 4,064           |
| Substantiated   | 29%                       | 9%               | 30%               | 56%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 48%                 |
| Suspected   | 18%                       | 22%              | 14%               | 22%                    | <b>18%</b>        | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 53%                       | 69%              | 56%               | 22%                    | <b>48%</b>        | 26%                 |
| Other Concerns  | 4% 1,695                  | 4% 592           | 4% 2,203          | 6% 1,497               | <b>4% 5,987</b>   | 7% 2,273            |
| Substantiated   | 41%                       | 40%              | 50%               | 46%                    | <b>45%</b>        | 67%                 |
| Suspected   | 35%                       | 26%              | 32%               | 46%                    | <b>36%</b>        | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 24%                       | 34%              | 18%               | 8%                     | <b>19%</b>        | 10%                 |
| <b>Investigations in which at Least One Caregiver/Family Stressor Was Noted</b> | <b>66% 27,249</b>         | <b>55% 7,960</b> | <b>75% 40,328</b> | <b>89% 22,875</b>      | <b>73% 98,412</b> | <b>85% 27,255</b>   |
| <b>Total Child Investigations **</b>  | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b>    | <b>53,921</b>     | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about parental functioning and other family stressors. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 7-10.  
\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.  
\*\*\* Includes all issues noted for any parent or caregiver.

criminal activity (11%), physical health issues (9%), and custody disputes (9%).

Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 30% for investigations with an ongoing custody dispute to a high of 65% for caregivers involved with criminal activity. Investigations in which cognitive impairment or physical health issues were identified were substantiated 61% and 60% of the time respectively. Notably, 60% of investigations reporting spousal violence were also substantiated.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** At least one caregiver functioning/family stressor issue was identified in 89% of emotional maltreatment investigations. These included alcohol or drug abuse (49%), childhood history of abuse (38%), lack of social supports (35%), mental health problems (37%), criminal activity (19%), custody disputes (14%), and physical health issues (9%). Spousal violence was noted in 54% of emotional maltreatment investigations, an expected finding given that the emotional maltreatment classification includes exposure to family violence.

The substantiation level for emotional maltreatment ranged from 42% in cases identifying cognitive impairment to 68% when criminal activity was reported. Sixty-eight percent of investigations indicating spousal violence were substantiated, and investigations identifying lack of social supports and a custody dispute were all substantiated at 56%. Emotional maltreatment investigations noting alcohol/drug abuse or physical health problems were each substantiated in 58% of cases.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Workers indicated at least one caregiver functioning/family stressor issue in 85% of multiple maltreatment investigations into more than one category of maltreatment reported: 45% involved a caregiver abusing alcohol or drugs, 44% involved a caregiver with a childhood history of abuse, 37% reported a lack of social support, 34% identified mental health problems, and 32% reported spousal violence. The substantiation level of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment was generally high, ranging from 48% to 74%.

## ■ 8. REFERRAL AND AGENCY CHARACTERISTICS

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Chapter 8 describes referral and agency characteristics, including referral sources, malicious and unsubstantiated referrals, previous investigations, agency size and structure, and investigating workers' professional training and years of experience. As with the previous chapters, the tables are presented in terms of the estimated number of child maltreatment investigations in Canada in 1998, by primary category of maltreatment and level of substantiation.

The figures presented in this chapter are weighted figures derived from child maltreatment investigations conducted in 1998 in a sample of Canadian child welfare services. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates **do not include** (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare services, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare services before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already opened by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

### Source of Referral/Allegation

Table 8-1 presents the different sources of referral that led to investigations of child maltreatment. The CIS tracked up to three separate sources of referral. Each independent contact with the child welfare agency or office regarding a child/children or family was counted as a separate referral. The person who actually contacted the child welfare agency/office was identified as the referral source. For example, if a child disclosed an incident of abuse to a schoolteacher, who then told the school principal of the disclosure, and the principal then made a report to child welfare services, only the principal was counted as a referral source. However, if both the principal and the child's parent independently called, both would be counted as separate referral sources.

The Maltreatment Assessment Form included 18 pre-coded referral source categories and an open "other" category. These are combined in Tables 8-1(a) and 8-1(b) in the following categories:

**Parent:** This includes parents involved as a caregiver to the reported child, as well as non-custodial parents.

**Child:** A self-referral by any child identified as a subject of referral on the Intake Face Sheet.

**Relative:** Any relative of the child in question. Workers were asked to code "other" for situations in which a child was living with a foster parent and a relative of the foster parent reported maltreatment.

**Neighbour/Friend:** This category includes any neighbour or friend of the child(ren), or of the family.

**Anonymous:** Any unidentified caller.

**Police:** Any member of police services, including municipal forces and the RCMP.

**School Personnel:** Any school personnel (teacher, principal, teacher's aide, school psychologist, etc.).

**Health Professional:** Includes hospital- and clinic-based physicians and nurses, and public health nurses.

**Mental Health Professional:** Includes family service agencies, mental health centres (other than hospital psychiatric wards), and private mental health practitioners (psychologists, social workers, other therapists) working outside of a school/hospital/child welfare/Young Offenders Act setting.

**Other Child Welfare Service:** Includes referrals from mandated child welfare service providers from other jurisdictions or provinces.

**Community Agency:** Includes agencies running any form of recreation and community activity program (e.g. organized sports leagues, Boys and Girls Club); shelter or crisis service for family violence or homelessness; social assistance workers; child care or day care services; or any other community agency or service.

**Other Referral Source:** Any other source of referral.

Over 59% of all referrals (an estimated 79,504) were made by professionals through their contact with children. The largest source of referrals was school personnel, who referred an estimated 29,040 child investigations to child welfare services, representing 21% of all investigations. The police referred 12% of investigations, and health personnel referred another 5%. Non-professional community sources referred 34% of cases. An estimated 21,212 child investigations (16%) were referred to child welfare services by parents. Relatives accounted for 8%, neighbours/family friends for 9%, and children themselves for 2%.

Police referrals had the highest substantiation rate, at 57%; maltreatment remained suspected in an additional 21% of investigations and was unsubstantiated in 22%. Referrals from other child welfare services and from mental health professionals also had higher than average substantiation rates (50% and 47% respectively), whereas 39% of referrals from school personnel were substantiated. Most referrals from non-professional sources were either substantiated or remained in the suspected category, substantiation rates ranging from 50% for children, 45% for parents, and 43% for relatives, to a low of 34% for referrals from neighbours/friends. Four percent of cases were referred by an anonymous source, and only 13% of these cases were substantiated, 28% remaining suspected and 59% deemed unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** School personnel referred over a third (35%) of all of physical abuse investigations, 39% of which were substantiated. Parents referred the second largest number (14%) of physical abuse cases, followed by neighbours/friends, and police, who each referred 7%. Substantiation rates in cases of physical abuse ranged from a high of 52% for cases referred by the police, to 22% for cases referred by neighbours.

**Sexual Abuse:** Parents were the most common source of referral for sexual abuse cases, being respon-

sible for referring 29% (an estimated 4,137) of cases. Of these, 47% were substantiated. School personnel and the police accounted for most of the other sexual abuse referrals (16% and 13% respectively).

**Neglect:** Unlike physical and sexual abuse investigations, no particular source of referral stands out in cases of neglect. School personnel referred 16% of neglect investigations, parents referred 13%, neighbours/friends referred 12%, and police and relatives each referred 11%. Most professional sources had substantiation rates of over 50%, other than referrals from school personnel, at only 38% of cases. Substantiation rates for referrals from parents, children, and relatives ranged from 50% of those initiated by children to 44% of those initiated by parents.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Police referrals accounted for nearly a quarter of emotional maltreatment investigations. The role of the police in these cases can be accounted for by the fact that many emotional maltreatment cases are identified after incidents of spouse abuse, in which police are often the first to intervene. School personnel and parents each initiated 15% of emotional maltreatment investigations. Substantiation rates were generally high in cases of investigated emotional maltreatment, ranging from 76%, 69%, and 68% in cases referred by community agencies, the police, and other child welfare services respectively to 41% in cases referred by schools, health professionals, and children.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** As with cases of investigated neglect, cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment came from many different sources, including school personnel, the police, parents, relatives, and neighbours/friends. Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 27% for anonymous referrals, to a high of 80% for health professional referrals.

**Table 8-1(a)**  
**All Referral Sources (Non-Professional) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                      | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |                   |               | Multiple Categories |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|
|                                      | Primary Category***       |               |               |                        |                   | Total         |                     |
|                                      | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment |                   |               |                     |
| Parent                               | 14% 6,019                 | 29% 4,137     | 13% 7,239     | 15% 3,817              | <b>16% 21,212</b> | 17% 5,363     |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 39%                       | 47%           | 44%           | 55%                    | <b>45%</b>        | 62%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 24%                       | 18%           | 21%           | 18%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 19%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 37%                       | 35%           | 35%           | 27%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 19%           |                     |
| Child                                | 4% 1,507                  | 1% 136        | 1% 646        | 1% 268                 | <b>2% 2,557</b>   | 4% 1,123      |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 48%                       | —             | 50%           | 41%                    | <b>50%</b>        | 53%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 18%                       | —             | 20%           | 30%                    | <b>20%</b>        | 32%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 34%                       | —             | 30%           | 29%                    | <b>30%</b>        | 15%           |                     |
| Relative                             | 6% 2,696                  | 5% 756        | 11% 5,713     | 7% 1,874               | <b>8% 11,039</b>  | 13% 4,009     |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 25%                       | 48%           | 48%           | 53%                    | <b>43%</b>        | 61%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 28%                       | 15%           | 15%           | 24%                    | <b>20%</b>        | 22%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 47%                       | 37%           | 37%           | 23%                    | <b>37%</b>        | 17%           |                     |
| Neighbour/Friend                     | 7% 2,858                  | 7% 997        | 12% 6,459     | 6% 1,498               | <b>9% 11,812</b>  | 10% 3,298     |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 22%                       | 28%           | 38%           | 43%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 45%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 32%                       | 11%           | 21%           | 25%                    | <b>23%</b>        | 24%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 46%                       | 61%           | 41%           | 32%                    | <b>43%</b>        | 31%           |                     |
| Any Non-Professional Referral Source | 31% 12,904                | 41% 5,954     | 37% 19,944    | 28% 7,275              | <b>34% 46,077</b> | 42% 13,525    |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 34%                       | 44%           | 43%           | 51%                    | <b>42%</b>        | 57%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 26%                       | 17%           | 19%           | 22%                    | <b>21%</b>        | 22%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 40%                       | 39%           | 38%           | 27%                    | <b>37%</b>        | 21%           |                     |
| Other Referral Sources               | 5% 2,265                  | 5% 711        | 7% 4,001      | 10% 2,470              | <b>7% 9,447</b>   | 8% 2,708      |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 23%                       | 41%           | 33%           | 46%                    | <b>35%</b>        | 51%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 33%                       | 13%           | 28%           | 37%                    | <b>31%</b>        | 34%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 44%                       | 46%           | 39%           | 17%                    | <b>34%</b>        | 15%           |                     |
| Anonymous                            | 4% 1,756                  | 1% 126        | 6% 3,296      | 2% 520                 | <b>4% 5,698</b>   | 5% 1,645      |                     |
| Substantiated                        | 9%                        | —             | 15%           | 15%                    | <b>13%</b>        | 27%           |                     |
| Suspected                            | 23%                       | —             | 28%           | 50%                    | <b>28%</b>        | 26%           |                     |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 68%                       | —             | 57%           | 35%                    | <b>59%</b>        | 47%           |                     |
| <b>Total Child Investigations**</b>  | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,921</b> | <b>25,695</b>          | <b>135,573</b>    | <b>32,005</b> |                     |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about the source of referral. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-1.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

\*\*\* Because Table 8-1 documents up to three sources of referral per investigation, categories will add up to more than 100%.

— Fewer than five cases with which to calculate estimates; so estimates are too unreliable to be given.

## Malicious Referrals

Most provincial and territorial child welfare statutes require that professionals and members of the public report suspected maltreatment. Reporters are not expected to attempt to verify their suspicions prior

to reporting. After an investigation, 33% of cases tracked by the CIS were found to be unsubstantiated. Although most of these were made in good faith (see Table 3-1), in some instances the allegations appeared to have been made with malicious intent by a reporter

**Table 8-1(b)**  
**All Referral Sources (Professional) in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                      | Investigated Maltreatment |               |               |                        |            |                | Multiple Categories |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                                      | Primary Category          |               |               |                        |            | Total          |                     |
|                                      | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect       | Emotional Maltreatment |            |                |                     |
| Police                               | 7% 2,895                  | 13% 1,874     | 11% 6,038     | 23% 5,891              | <b>12%</b> | <b>16,698</b>  | 10% 3,188           |
| Substantiated                        | 52%                       | 30%           | 56%           | 69%                    | <b>57%</b> |                | 72%                 |
| Suspected                            | 15%                       | 31%           | 20%           | 22%                    | <b>21%</b> |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 33%                       | 39%           | 24%           | 9%                     | <b>22%</b> |                | 8%                  |
| School Personnel                     | 35% 14,356                | 16% 2,321     | 16% 8,388     | 15% 3,975              | <b>21%</b> | <b>29,040</b>  | 19% 5,969           |
| Substantiated                        | 39%                       | 45%           | 38%           | 41%                    | <b>39%</b> |                | 52%                 |
| Suspected                            | 20%                       | 25%           | 21%           | 39%                    | <b>23%</b> |                | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 41%                       | 30%           | 41%           | 20%                    | <b>38%</b> |                | 22%                 |
| Health Professional                  | 5% 2,052                  | 4% 608        | 6% 3,209      | 3% 891                 | <b>5%</b>  | <b>6,760</b>   | 3% 1,094            |
| Substantiated                        | 30%                       | 35%           | 53%           | 41%                    | <b>43%</b> |                | 80%                 |
| Suspected                            | 15%                       | 29%           | 19%           | 39%                    | <b>22%</b> |                | 10%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 55%                       | 36%           | 28%           | 20%                    | <b>35%</b> |                | 10%                 |
| Mental Health Professional           | 4% 1,608                  | 5% 787        | 3% 1,764      | 4% 1,003               | <b>4%</b>  | <b>5,162</b>   | 4% 1,410            |
| Substantiated                        | 29%                       | 52%           | 60%           | 52%                    | <b>47%</b> |                | 60%                 |
| Suspected                            | 30%                       | 25%           | 15%           | 33%                    | <b>25%</b> |                | 20%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 41%                       | 23%           | 25%           | 15%                    | <b>28%</b> |                | 20%                 |
| Other Child Welfare Service          | 4% 1,519                  | 8% 1,131      | 6% 3,323      | 8% 2,146               | <b>6%</b>  | <b>8,119</b>   | 5% 1,505            |
| Substantiated                        | 28%                       | 40%           | 51%           | 68%                    | <b>50%</b> |                | 76%                 |
| Suspected                            | 29%                       | 18%           | 29%           | 28%                    | <b>27%</b> |                | 24%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 43%                       | 42%           | 20%           | 4%                     | <b>23%</b> |                | 0%                  |
| Community Agency                     | 5% 2,248                  | 7% 1,011      | 7% 3,572      | 4% 1,141               | <b>6%</b>  | <b>7,972</b>   | 6% 2,075            |
| Substantiated                        | 36%                       | 7%            | 53%           | 76%                    | <b>46%</b> |                | 76%                 |
| Suspected                            | 9%                        | 13%           | 9%            | 12%                    | <b>10%</b> |                | 19%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 55%                       | 80%           | 38%           | 12%                    | <b>44%</b> |                | 5%                  |
| Any Professional Referral            | 61% 25,408                | 58% 8,418     | 53% 28,812    | 66% 16,866             | <b>59%</b> | <b>79,504</b>  | 51% 16,180          |
| Substantiated                        | 37%                       | 35%           | 47%           | 60%                    | <b>45%</b> |                | 65%                 |
| Suspected                            | 20%                       | 26%           | 21%           | 28%                    | <b>23%</b> |                | 22%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 43%                       | 39%           | 32%           | 12%                    | <b>32%</b> |                | 13%                 |
| <b>Total Investigated Children**</b> | <b>41,551</b>             | <b>14,406</b> | <b>53,921</b> | <b>25,695</b>          |            | <b>135,573</b> | <b>32,005</b>       |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about the source of referral. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H - Table 8-1.

\*\* The columns in this table are not additive. Rows are additive where all cells are complete. Child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to sum the columns may double count some child investigations.

who knew that the allegation was false. Investigating workers classified such referrals as “malicious.”

Table 8-2(a) shows unsubstantiated and malicious reports for investigated children by primary category of maltreatment and by level of substantiation, and

Table 8-2(b) provides a breakdown of malicious referrals by source of report. Most unsubstantiated reports were considered to have been made in good faith, but 4% of all allegations of maltreatment (an estimated 5,322) were judged to have been intentionally false. In another 5% of cases the investigating worker was

**Table 8-2(a)**  
**Unsubstantiated and Malicious Reports of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |
| Substantiated Reports                                  | 34% 14,153                | 38% 5,449          | 43% 23,058         | 54% 13,887             | <b>42%</b>  | <b>56,547</b>  | 58% 18,587          |
| Suspected Reports                                      | 23% 9,446                 | 22% 3,215          | 20% 11,051         | 29% 7,446              | <b>23%</b>  | <b>31,158</b>  | 24% 7,534           |
| Unsubstantiated Non-Malicious Reports                  | 34% 14,302                | 33% 4,729          | 26% 13,874         | 13% 3,280              | <b>26%</b>  | <b>36,185</b>  | 14% 4,395           |
| Unsubstantiated Malicious Reports                      | 4% 1,516                  | 4% 591             | 5% 2,714           | 2% 501                 | <b>4%</b>   | <b>5,322</b>   | 2% 806              |
| Unsubstantiated Reports, Malicious Intent Undetermined | 5% 2,134                  | 3% 422             | 6% 3,224           | 2% 581                 | <b>5%</b>   | <b>6,361</b>   | 2% 683              |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100% 41,551</b>        | <b>100% 14,406</b> | <b>100% 53,921</b> | <b>100% 25,695</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>135,573</b> | <b>99% 32,005</b>   |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about malicious reports. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-2(a).

**Table 8-2(b)**  
**Unsubstantiated and Malicious Reports of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Referral Source Category in Canada in 1998\***

|  | Referral Source Category |                   |                       |                         |                   |                   |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|  | Parent                   | Child             | Relative or Neighbour | Professional or Service | Other             | Anonymous         |
| Substantiated Reports                                  | 45% 9,599                | 50% 1,267         | 38% 8,717             | 45% 36,035              | 35% 3,300         | 13% 762           |
| Suspected Reports                                      | 21% 4,400                | 20% 515           | 22% 4,931             | 23% 18,013              | 30% 2,879         | 28% 1,573         |
| Unsubstantiated Non-Malicious Reports                  | 23% 4,960                | 17% 445           | 29% 6,600             | 26% 20,631              | 26% 2,415         | 38% 2,151         |
| Unsubstantiated Malicious Reports                      | 7% 1,376                 | 9% 236            | 6% 1,429              | 1% 1,025                | 3% 326            | 18% 1,031         |
| Unsubstantiated Reports, Malicious Intent Undetermined | 4% 878                   | — —               | 5% 1,093              | 5% 3,801                | 6% 527            | 3% 182            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100% 21,213</b>       | <b>100% 2,558</b> | <b>100% 22,770</b>    | <b>100% 79,505</b>      | <b>100% 9,447</b> | <b>100% 5,699</b> |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,597 child investigations with information about malicious reports for the referral source. Because of missing information on 75 cases, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-2(b).  
— Fewer than five cases with which to calculate estimates; so estimates are too unreliable to be given.

unable to determine whether or not an unsubstantiated report had been made in good faith.

**Primary Categories of Maltreatment:** Most of the reports that were judged to be malicious involved allegations of neglect: an estimated 2,714 child investigations, as compared with an estimated 1,516 physical

abuse investigations, an estimated 591 sexual abuse investigations, and an estimated 501 emotional maltreatment investigations.

**Source of Referral:** Table 8-2(b) shows unsubstantiated and malicious referrals for investigated children by referral source. Parents and neighbours were



considered to be responsible for half of all malicious referrals, with over 2,800 children subjected to unnecessary maltreatment investigations as a result of referrals from these two sources.<sup>81</sup> Anonymous reports constituted the next largest group of malicious referrals, involving an estimated 1,031 child investigations. Although reports from professionals were rarely judged to have been intentionally false (1%, or an estimated 1,025 investigations), these reports nevertheless accounted for the fourth largest group of unsubstantiated malicious referrals. Child self-referrals represented a small proportion of all referrals; however, 9% were judged to be intentionally false.

## Previous Case Openings

Previous involvement with child welfare services was tracked in two ways: workers noted whether (1) the investigated child had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment and (2) whether the child's family had previous files with child welfare services for reasons other than suspected maltreatment. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient consistency in the service history information available to investigating workers to warrant collecting additional information on previous alleged incidents of maltreatment, or on the outcomes of previous investigations. CIS information about previous case openings is also limited by the fact that there is no Canada-wide method for tracking child welfare case openings, and in some jurisdictions there is no province-wide tracking system. Thus the CIS service history statistics should be interpreted as underestimates of the actual rates of previous service contact.

Table 8-3 shows the following case information: children who had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment; children who had not been previously investigated but whose family had received services once; children who had not been previously

investigated but whose family had received services more than once; children with no record of previous service; and children whose service history was unknown. The data are presented by primary category of maltreatment and by level of substantiation.

Over half of investigated children (51% or an estimated 58,289 cases) had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment; another 12% lived in families that had previously received child welfare services; only 34% came from families for which no previous record of service had been noted; and for an additional 3%, child welfare service history could not be determined. The substantiation rates for children with previous child welfare histories were similar to the rates for children without. However, 42% of no-previous-record cases were unsubstantiated as compared with only 34% of cases involving children previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment.

**Physical Abuse:** Forty-two percent of investigated children had been previously investigated because of suspected physical abuse, and an additional 16% lived in families that had previously received child welfare services; 39% came from families for which no previous record of service had been noted. Substantiation rates varied from a high of 40% for children whose families had received services once to only 20% for families who had received services more than once.

**Sexual Abuse:** Although sexual abuse investigations involved the greatest proportion of cases with no previous child welfare history (46%), an estimated 4,991 sexual abuse investigations (41%) had nevertheless been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment. Only 30% of the estimated 4,991 were substantiated, and only 17% of investigations involving children from families who had previously received child welfare services more than once were substantiated.

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<sup>81</sup> Calculation is derived by dividing the referral source for unsubstantiated malicious reports (Table 8-2(b)) by total unsubstantiated malicious reports (Table 8-2(a)).

**Table 8-3**  
**Previous Investigations in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*/\*\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        | Total               |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |                     |                     |
| Child Previously Investigated Because of Suspected Maltreatment                                     | 42% 15,609                | 41% 4,991          | 58% 25,065         | 57% 12,624             | <b>51% 58,289</b>   | 64% 16,721          |
| Substantiated   | 30%                       | 30%                | 40%                | 49%                    | <b>39%</b>          | 56%                 |
| Suspected   | 28%                       | 21%                | 24%                | 34%                    | <b>27%</b>          | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 42%                       | 49%                | 36%                | 17%                    | <b>34%</b>          | 17%                 |
| Child not Previously Investigated but Child's Family Previously Received Services Once***           | 10% 3,609                 | 5% 626             | 5% 2,139           | 5% 1,189               | <b>7% 7,563</b>     | 4% 979              |
| Substantiated   | 40%                       | 54%                | 28%                | 50%                    | <b>39%</b>          | 68%                 |
| Suspected   | 20%                       | 13%                | 24%                | 34%                    | <b>23%</b>          | 13%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 40%                       | 33%                | 48%                | 16%                    | <b>38%</b>          | 19%                 |
| Child not Previously Investigated but Child's Family Previously Received Services More than Once*** | 6% 2,275                  | 5% 578             | 4% 1,862           | 4% 826                 | <b>5% 5,541</b>     | 5% 1,356            |
| Substantiated   | 20%                       | 17%                | 26%                | 64%                    | <b>28%</b>          | 40%                 |
| Suspected   | 28%                       | 36%                | 27%                | 32%                    | <b>29%</b>          | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 52%                       | 47%                | 47%                | 4%                     | <b>43%</b>          | 35%                 |
| No Previous Record of Service   | 39% 14,321                | 46% 5,584          | 28% 12,131         | 32% 7,235              | <b>34% 39,271</b>   | 25% 6,357           |
| Substantiated   | 38%                       | 37%                | 32%                | 53%                    | <b>39%</b>          | 51%                 |
| Suspected   | 15%                       | 23%                | 19%                | 26%                    | <b>19%</b>          | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 47%                       | 40%                | 49%                | 21%                    | <b>42%</b>          | 26%                 |
| Unknown   | 3% 1,298                  | 3% 292             | 5% 2,022           | 2% 378                 | <b>3% 3,990</b>     | 2% 595              |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100% 37,112</b>        | <b>100% 12,071</b> | <b>100% 43,219</b> | <b>100% 22,252</b>     | <b>100% 114,654</b> | <b>100% 26,008</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 5,235 child investigations with information about previous child investigations. Because of missing information on 88 cases and because information on previous child investigations was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-3.

\*\* Excluding jurisdictions in which information about previous investigations could not be collected in a comparable manner. The remaining subsample represents at least 80% of child welfare investigations in Canada.

\*\*\* Case previously opened for a reason other than suspected maltreatment of the child. This could include situations in which another child had been investigated because of previous maltreatment, or cases opened for another service.

**Neglect:** Fifty-eight percent of neglect investigations had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment, 28% involved children who lived in families with no previous record of services, and 9% had previously received child welfare services at least once. Unlike abuse, neglect cases involving previously investigated children were more often substantiated (40%).

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Fifty-seven percent of cases of emotional maltreatment had been previously investigated because of suspected maltreatment, and another 9% involved families that had previously received child welfare services. Regardless of service history, substantiation rates were generally high in cases of emotional maltreatment, ranging from 64% among those with a repeated child welfare service history to 49% among those previously investigated.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** In only 25% of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment was there no previous history of child welfare service; 64% involved previously investigated children. Regardless of service history, substantiation rates were generally high in cases involving multiple categories of maltreatment, ranging from 68% among families with a single previous contact with child welfare services to 40% among those with a repeated child welfare service history.

**Time Since Last Closing:** For cases with a previous child welfare service history, Table 8-4 shows the time elapsed from when the case was last closed.<sup>82</sup> Although 38% of investigations had no previous case history, another 38% had previous histories that had been closed within 12 months of the CIS investigation, and another 20% had been closed for more than 12 months.

Forty-two percent of neglect and emotional maltreatment investigations had previous histories and had been closed within 12 months. In contrast, only 28% of sexual abuse and 34% of physical abuse cases had been closed within 12 months of the current opening.

## Agency/Office Size

The CIS sampled investigations from 51 sites across Canada. As noted in Chapter 2, the administrative structure of child welfare services varies considerably across the country. In some provinces, child welfare services are organized in terms of a limited number of large administrative units that cover several municipalities, whereas other provinces may use much smaller administrative units that correspond to a single municipal boundary. The following two tables provide a description of the types of child maltreatment inves-

tigations by agency/office size and level of urbanization.

Agency/office size is categorized in terms of the 1998 annual case openings:

**Small agencies/offices:** Less than 350 case openings per year.

**Medium agencies/offices:** Between 350 and 950 annual case openings.

**Large agencies/offices:** More than 950 annual case openings.

Size classification is agency/office specific rather than site specific. Three sites included more than one agency covering the same geographic area.<sup>83</sup> Two sites included two agencies/offices, and a third site included three agencies, yielding a total of 55 agencies/offices in 51 sites. In total, the CIS agencies/offices include 20 large agencies/offices that process 950 to 5,000 investigations per year, 13 medium-sized agencies/offices, and 22 small agencies/offices.

Table 8-5 presents child maltreatment investigations in terms of the size of the agencies/offices where the investigations were conducted. More than half (55%) of all investigations were conducted by large agencies/offices, 32% were conducted by medium agencies/offices, and 13% by small agencies/offices. In small agencies/offices maltreatment was substantiated in 47% of child investigations, suspected in 21%, and not substantiated in 32%. Thirty-eight percent of investigations conducted in medium agencies/offices were substantiated, 30% remained suspected, and 32% were unsubstantiated. Forty-three percent of investigations conducted in large agencies/offices were substantiated, 19% remained suspected, and 38% were unsubstantiated.

<sup>82</sup> Because of non-equivalent data available in some child welfare service areas, some figures in Table 8-4 may differ from those in Table 8-3, which is based on a reduced sample.

<sup>83</sup> These were faith-specific or language-specific agencies.

**Table 8-4**  
**Time Since Case was Last Closed in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*/\*\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                     | Multiple Categories |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        | Total               |                     |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |                     |                     |
| Case Not Previously Opened  | 43% 16,220                | 46% 5,799          | 33% 14,569         | 35% 8,024              | <b>38% 44,612</b>   | 28% 7,596           |
| Substantiated   | 36%                       | 36%                | 33%                | 51%                    | <b>38%</b>          | 48%                 |
| Suspected   | 18%                       | 23%                | 19%                | 29%                    | <b>21%</b>          | 27%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 46%                       | 41%                | 48%                | 20%                    | <b>41%</b>          | 25%                 |
| Case Previously Closed Less than 3 Months Before Current Investigation  | 13% 5,119                 | 14% 1,711          | 20% 8,795          | 17% 3,927              | <b>16% 19,552</b>   | 23% 6,300           |
| Substantiated   | 35%                       | 39%                | 44%                | 44%                    | <b>41%</b>          | 67%                 |
| Suspected   | 24%                       | 21%                | 25%                | 40%                    | <b>28%</b>          | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 41%                       | 40%                | 31%                | 16%                    | <b>31%</b>          | 12%                 |
| Case Previously Closed 3 to 6 Months Before Current Investigation       | 12% 4,599                 | 7% 815             | 10% 4,387          | 13% 2,967              | <b>11% 12,768</b>   | 13% 3,436           |
| Substantiated   | 25%                       | 20%                | 40%                | 48%                    | <b>35%</b>          | 52%                 |
| Suspected   | 37%                       | 26%                | 34%                | 37%                    | <b>35%</b>          | 36%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 38%                       | 54%                | 26%                | 15%                    | <b>30%</b>          | 12%                 |
| Case Previously Closed 7 to 12 Months Before Current Investigation      | 9% 3,452                  | 7% 907             | 12% 5,561          | 12% 2,816              | <b>11% 12,736</b>   | 12% 3,268           |
| Substantiated   | 25%                       | 16%                | 43%                | 64%                    | <b>41%</b>          | 47%                 |
| Suspected   | 20%                       | 30%                | 22%                | 17%                    | <b>21%</b>          | 21%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 55%                       | 54%                | 35%                | 19%                    | <b>38%</b>          | 32%                 |
| Case Previously Closed 13 to 24 Months Before Current Investigation     | 8% 3,068                  | 9% 1,120           | 9% 4,033           | 9% 2,039               | <b>9% 10,260</b>    | 7% 1,783            |
| Substantiated   | 31%                       | 28%                | 37%                | 45%                    | <b>36%</b>          | 57%                 |
| Suspected   | 24%                       | 17%                | 21%                | 43%                    | <b>26%</b>          | 31%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 45%                       | 55%                | 42%                | 12%                    | <b>38%</b>          | 12%                 |
| Case Previously Closed More than 24 Months Before Current Investigation | 12% 4,550                 | 9% 1,122           | 12% 5,578          | 8% 1,954               | <b>11% 13,204</b>   | 13% 3,426           |
| Substantiated   | 34%                       | 38%                | 28%                | 45%                    | <b>33%</b>          | 44%                 |
| Suspected   | 29%                       | 16%                | 21%                | 31%                    | <b>25%</b>          | 32%                 |
| Unsubstantiated   | 37%                       | 46%                | 51%                | 24%                    | <b>42%</b>          | 24%                 |
| Unknown   | 3% 1,222                  | 8% 1,025           | 4% 1,787           | 6% 1,389               | <b>4% 5,423</b>     | 4% 1,016            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100% 38,230</b>        | <b>100% 12,499</b> | <b>100% 44,710</b> | <b>100% 23,116</b>     | <b>100% 118,555</b> | <b>100% 26,825</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 5,363 child investigations with information about time since case was last closed. Because this information was not being collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-4.

\*\* Excluding jurisdictions in which information about the time since the case was last closed could not be collected in a comparable manner. The remaining subsample represents at least 80% of child welfare investigations in Canada.

**Physical Abuse:** Fifty-eight percent of physical abuse investigations were conducted by large agencies/offices, of which 34% were substantiated. Twenty-six percent of physical abuse investigations were con-

ducted by medium agencies/offices, and 30% of these were substantiated. Small agencies/offices investigated 16% of physical abuse allegations and had the highest substantiation rate, at 40%.

**Table 8-5**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Relative Size of Child Welfare Agency/Office by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                       | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                                       | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                                       | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total       |                |                     |
| Less than 350 Investigations Per Year | 16% 6,482                 | 15% 2,169          | 11% 5,622          | 12% 3,091              | <b>13%</b>  | <b>17,364</b>  | 15% 4,805           |
| Substantiated                         | 40%                       | 55%                | 45%                | 62%                    | <b>47%</b>  |                | 59%                 |
| Suspected                             | 25%                       | 26%                | 12%                | 27%                    | <b>21%</b>  |                | 22%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 35%                       | 19%                | 43%                | 11%                    | <b>32%</b>  |                | 19%                 |
| 350-950 Investigations Per Year       | 26% 10,879                | 33% 4,824          | 36% 19,598         | 33% 8,504              | <b>32%</b>  | <b>43,805</b>  | 37% 11,913          |
| Substantiated                         | 30%                       | 31%                | 41%                | 45%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 59%                 |
| Suspected                             | 33%                       | 22%                | 29%                | 35%                    | <b>30%</b>  |                | 26%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 37%                       | 47%                | 30%                | 20%                    | <b>32%</b>  |                | 15%                 |
| More than 950 Investigations Per Year | 58% 24,190                | 52% 7,413          | 53% 28,701         | 55% 14,100             | <b>55%</b>  | <b>74,404</b>  | 48% 15,287          |
| Substantiated                         | 34%                       | 37%                | 44%                | 58%                    | <b>43%</b>  |                | 57%                 |
| Suspected                             | 18%                       | 22%                | 16%                | 26%                    | <b>19%</b>  |                | 22%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                       | 48%                       | 41%                | 40%                | 16%                    | <b>38%</b>  |                | 21%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>100% 41,551</b>        | <b>100% 14,406</b> | <b>100% 53,921</b> | <b>100% 25,695</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>135,573</b> | <b>100% 32,005</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about the relative size of child welfare agency/office. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-5.

**Sexual Abuse:** Fifty-two percent of sexual abuse investigations were conducted by large agencies/offices, 37% of which were substantiated. Medium agencies/offices conducted 33% of sexual abuse investigations, and small agencies/offices conducted 15% of investigations. Medium agencies/offices substantiated 31% of investigations, and small agencies/offices had the highest sexual abuse substantiation rate, at 55%.

**Neglect:** Fifty-three percent of neglect cases were investigated by large agencies/offices, 36% by medium agencies/offices and 11% by small agency/offices. Small agencies/offices had the highest substantiation rate, at 45%. The rate in medium agencies/offices was 41% and in large agencies/offices was 44%.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Large agencies conducted 55% of emotional maltreatment investigations and substantiated 58% of them. Thirty-three percent of investigations were conducted by medium agency/offices and 12% by small agencies/offices. Small agency/offices substantiated 62% of emotional maltreatment investigations, and medium agency/offices substantiated 45%.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Large agencies/offices investigated 48% of cases involving more than one category of maltreatment. Medium agencies/offices conducted 37% and small agencies/offices conducted 15%. Small and medium agencies/offices had the highest substantiation rate, at 59%, followed by large agencies/offices, at 57%.

## Urban and Rural Service Area

The 51 CIS sites represented the levels of population density across Canada. The CIS sites were categorized into one of three service area classifications:

**Large Metropolitan Service Area:** Providing child welfare services to densely populated urban settings, including suburban sites within a metropolitan site.

**Mixed Urban/Rural Service Area:** Providing child welfare services to sites with a wide population density range.

**Primarily Rural Service Area:** Providing child welfare services primarily to sparsely populated areas.

Table 8-6 presents child investigations by child welfare services based on population density. Mixed urban/rural service areas investigated 46% of cases (an estimated 62,676). Large metropolitan service areas conducted 30% of investigations, and primarily rural child welfare services conducted 24%. Overall substantiation rates ranged from 49% for primarily rural service areas to 39% for large metropolitan service areas.

**Physical Abuse:** Mixed urban/rural services conducted 45% of physical abuse investigations and substantiated 33%. Large metropolitan services investigated 33% and substantiated physical abuse in 29% of cases. Primarily rural services investigated 22% of cases of physical abuse and substantiated 43% of those cases.

**Sexual Abuse:** Forty-eight percent of sexual abuse investigations were conducted by mixed urban/rural services; 27% by large metropolitan services; and 25% by primarily rural services. Substantiation rates were 30% for large metropolitan services, 31% for mixed urban and rural services, and 59% for primarily rural services.

**Neglect:** Forty-nine percent of neglect investigations were conducted by mixed urban/rural services (44% substantiated), 26% by large metropolitan ser-

vices (39% substantiated), and 25% by primarily rural services (45% substantiated).

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Large metropolitan services conducted 35% of emotional maltreatment investigations and substantiated 57%. Mixed-urban/rural services conducted 41% of emotional maltreatment investigations and substantiated 48%. Twenty-four percent of emotional maltreatment cases were investigated by primarily rural services, with a substantiation rate of 61%.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Mixed urban/rural service areas conducted 54% of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment. At the same time, primary rural service areas and large metropolitan service areas conducted 24% and 22% of investigations, respectively. Substantiation rates range from 61% for mixed urban/rural service areas to 50% for large metropolitan service areas.

## Worker Position, Experience, and Education

Child maltreatment investigations tracked by the CIS involved 986 child welfare workers. Workers in 44 out of the 51 CIS sites<sup>84</sup> were asked to complete professional background information forms. Responses were received from 490 workers (85%). The information collected included workers' position at the agency, educational experience, and number of years of experience as child welfare workers.

Table 8-7 shows the position of workers investigating reported maltreatment by primary category of maltreatment and by level of substantiation. A little over half (53%) of investigations were conducted by intake workers with specialized investigation caseloads, and 43% were conducted by generalists with a mixed caseload of investigations, including cases for which they

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<sup>84</sup> Seven sites did not participate in the worker background survey because of concerns about the time required to complete the worker forms.

**Table 8-6**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Urban/Rural Location of Child Welfare Agency/Office by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998\***

|                                    | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
|                                    | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |
|                                    | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total       |                |                     |
| Large Metropolitan Service Area    | 33% 13,676                | 27% 3,908          | 26% 14,163         | 35% 9,114              | <b>30%</b>  | <b>40,861</b>  | 22% 6,958           |
| Substantiated                      | 29%                       | 30%                | 39%                | 57%                    | <b>39%</b>  |                | 50%                 |
| Suspected                          | 19%                       | 25%                | 16%                | 25%                    | <b>20%</b>  |                | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 52%                       | 45%                | 45%                | 18%                    | <b>41%</b>  |                | 27%                 |
| Mixed Urban and Rural Service Area | 45% 18,705                | 48% 6,942          | 49% 26,508         | 41% 10,521             | <b>46%</b>  | <b>62,676</b>  | 54% 17,244          |
| Substantiated                      | 33%                       | 31%                | 44%                | 48%                    | <b>40%</b>  |                | 61%                 |
| Suspected                          | 26%                       | 24%                | 24%                | 33%                    | <b>26%</b>  |                | 23%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 41%                       | 45%                | 32%                | 19%                    | <b>34%</b>  |                | 16%                 |
| Primarily Rural Service Area       | 22% 9,170                 | 25% 3,556          | 25% 13,250         | 24% 6,060              | <b>24%</b>  | <b>32,036</b>  | 24% 7,803           |
| Substantiated                      | 43%                       | 59%                | 45%                | 61%                    | <b>49%</b>  |                | 60%                 |
| Suspected                          | 22%                       | 15%                | 19%                | 26%                    | <b>21%</b>  |                | 25%                 |
| Unsubstantiated                    | 35%                       | 26%                | 36%                | 13%                    | <b>30%</b>  |                | 15%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>100% 41,551</b>        | <b>100% 14,406</b> | <b>100% 53,921</b> | <b>100% 25,695</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>135,573</b> | <b>100% 32,005</b>  |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 7,672 child investigations with information about the urban/rural location of the child welfare agency/office. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-6.

were providing ongoing services such as counseling, case management, and monitoring. Workers in other positions, such as supervisors and night-duty workers, conducted 4% of investigations. Forty-four percent of cases investigated by generalists were substantiated, 26% remained suspected, and 30% were unsubstantiated. Specialists substantiated 35% of cases and classified another 23% as suspected; 42% were unsubstantiated.

**Physical Abuse:** Intake specialists investigated 56% of physical abuse cases, generalists 42%, and other workers only 2%. The substantiation rate for these cases was lowest for intake workers, at 29%, in comparison with generalists (37%) and other workers (38%). Generalists concluded that physical abuse remained suspected in 31% of the cases they investigated, while physical abuse remained suspected by intake specialists in 21% of cases.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse investigations were evenly distributed between intake workers (46% or an estimated 4,978 investigations) and generalists (51% or 5,407 investigations). Rates of substantiation showed marked differences between the two positions: intake workers substantiated 26% of sexual abuse cases, whereas generalists substantiated 43%. In contrast, intake specialists classified 30% of sexual abuse cases as suspected as compared with 23% for generalists.

**Neglect:** Intake workers investigated 51% of neglect cases, 35% of which were substantiated. Generalists conducted 46% of investigations and substantiated 46% of these cases.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Intake workers conducted the majority of emotional maltreatment investigations (54%) and substantiated maltreatment in 50% of cases. Generalists conducted 39% of investigations and substantiated 53%.

**Table 8-7**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Job Position of Investigating Worker by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*/\*\***

|   | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |             |                | Multiple Categories |               |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|
|   | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |             | Total          |                     |               |
|   | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment |             |                |                     |               |
| Intake and Investigation Specialists                        | 56% 18,264                | 46% 4,978          | 51% 18,983         | 54% 10,873             | <b>53%</b>  | <b>53,098</b>  | 42%                 | 9,950         |
| Substantiated   | 29%                       | 26%                | 35%                | 50%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 49%                 |               |
| Suspected   | 21%                       | 30%                | 20%                | 30%                    | <b>23%</b>  |                | 26%                 |               |
| Unsubstantiated   | 50%                       | 44%                | 45%                | 20%                    | <b>42%</b>  |                | 25%                 |               |
| Generalists with Mixed Intake and Ongoing Service Caseloads | 42% 13,821                | 51% 5,407          | 46% 17,012         | 39% 7,692              | <b>43%</b>  | <b>43,932</b>  | 54%                 | 12,608        |
| Substantiated   | 37%                       | 43%                | 46%                | 53%                    | <b>44%</b>  |                | 59%                 |               |
| Suspected   | 31%                       | 23%                | 20%                | 33%                    | <b>26%</b>  |                | 25%                 |               |
| Unsubstantiated   | 32%                       | 34%                | 34%                | 14%                    | <b>30%</b>  |                | 16%                 |               |
| Other   | 2% 766                    | 3% 287             | 3% 1,241           | 7% 1,414               | <b>4%</b>   | <b>3,708</b>   | 4%                  | 772           |
| Substantiated   | 38%                       | 15%                | 17%                | 53%                    | <b>35%</b>  |                | 61%                 |               |
| Suspected   | 17%                       | 17%                | 50%                | 27%                    | <b>32%</b>  |                | 14%                 |               |
| Unsubstantiated   | 45%                       | 68%                | 33%                | 20%                    | <b>33%</b>  |                | 25%                 |               |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100% 32,851</b>        | <b>100% 10,672</b> | <b>100% 37,236</b> | <b>100% 19,979</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>100,738</b> | <b>100%</b>         | <b>23,330</b> |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 4,778 child investigations with information about the job position of the investigating worker. Because of missing information on 585 cases and because information on job position of the investigating worker was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-7.

\*\* Excluding jurisdictions where information about the job position of the investigating worker could not be collected in a comparable manner. The remaining subsample represents at least 80% of child welfare investigations in Canada.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Generalists conducted 54% of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment, substantiating 59% of cases. Intake workers conducted 42% of investigations and substantiated maltreatment in 49%.

Table 8-8 presents child maltreatment investigations in terms of the investigator's years of child welfare experience. Close to half of the investigations (49% or an estimated 45,000) were conducted by workers who had more than 4 years of child welfare experience, 34% having more than 6 years of experience. Although the group, overall, was experienced, workers with up to 6 months of experience investigated 15% of cases, involving an estimated 15,000 children. Substantiation rates varied, from a low of 32% for workers with more than 2-4 years of experience to a high of 44% for workers with more than 1-2 years of experience.

**Physical Abuse:** Workers with more than 4 years' experience conducted 44% of physical abuse investigations, and those with up to 12 months of experience conducted 24%. Rates of substantiation ranged from 43% for workers with more than 1-2 years' experience to 20% for workers with more than 4-6 years' experience.

**Sexual Abuse:** Workers with over 4 years' experience conducted 52% of sexual abuse investigations. In contrast with other forms of maltreatment, only 12% of sexual abuse investigations were conducted by workers with up to 12 months of experience. Rates of substantiation ranged from a low of 20% for workers with greater than 2-4 years of experience to a high of 47% for workers with over 6 years of experience.



**Table 8-8**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Years of Child Welfare Experience for Investigating Workers by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*/\*\***

|  | Investigated Maltreatment |                    |                    |                        |                    |                    | Multiple Categories |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|  | Primary Category          |                    |                    |                        |                    | Total              |                     |
|  | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse       | Neglect            | Emotional Maltreatment | Total              |                    |                     |
| ≤ 6 Months   | 16% 5,188                 | 6% 600             | 18% 6,426          | 15% 2,752              | <b>15% 14,966</b>  | 18% 4,051          |                     |
| Substantiated  | 36%                       | 31%                | 39%                | 47%                    | <b>39%</b>         | 48%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 28%                       | 38%                | 11%                | 35%                    | <b>23%</b>         | 30%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 36%                       | 31%                | 50%                | 18%                    | <b>38%</b>         | 22%                |                     |
| > 6 Months to 12 Months  | 8% 2,416                  | 6% 649             | 8% 3,150           | 9% 1,822               | <b>8% 8,037</b>    | 8% 1,815           |                     |
| Substantiated  | 27%                       | 26%                | 39%                | 58%                    | <b>39%</b>         | 40%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 22%                       | 27%                | 13%                | 16%                    | <b>17%</b>         | 25%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 51%                       | 47%                | 48%                | 26%                    | <b>44%</b>         | 35%                |                     |
| > 1 Year to 2 Years  | 8% 2,523                  | 18% 1,941          | 8% 2,862           | 13% 2,673              | <b>10% 9,999</b>   | 10% 2,342          |                     |
| Substantiated  | 43%                       | 36%                | 33%                | 61%                    | <b>44%</b>         | 64%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 18%                       | 19%                | 15%                | 33%                    | <b>21%</b>         | 17%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 39%                       | 45%                | 52%                | 6%                     | <b>35%</b>         | 19%                |                     |
| > 2 Years to 4 Years   | 24% 7,567                 | 18% 1,922          | 14% 4,762          | 16% 3,247              | <b>18% 17,498</b>  | 20% 4,538          |                     |
| Substantiated  | 36%                       | 20%                | 25%                | 41%                    | <b>32%</b>         | 53%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 23%                       | 29%                | 23%                | 42%                    | <b>27%</b>         | 19%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 41%                       | 51%                | 52%                | 17%                    | <b>41%</b>         | 28%                |                     |
| > 4 Years to 6 Years   | 11% 3,692                 | 19% 1,989          | 17% 5,954          | 17% 3,370              | <b>15% 15,005</b>  | 17% 3,950          |                     |
| Substantiated  | 20%                       | 28%                | 55%                | 52%                    | <b>42%</b>         | 59%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 29%                       | 38%                | 24%                | 27%                    | <b>28%</b>         | 29%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 51%                       | 34%                | 21%                | 21%                    | <b>30%</b>         | 12%                |                     |
| Over 6 Years   | 33% 10,744                | 33% 3,434          | 35% 12,577         | 30% 6,017              | <b>34% 32,772</b>  | 27% 6,235          |                     |
| Substantiated  | 29%                       | 47%                | 39%                | 53%                    | <b>39%</b>         | 60%                |                     |
| Suspected  | 26%                       | 20%                | 27%                | 29%                    | <b>27%</b>         | 25%                |                     |
| Unsubstantiated  | 45%                       | 33%                | 34%                | 18%                    | <b>34%</b>         | 15%                |                     |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100% 32,130</b>        | <b>100% 10,535</b> | <b>100% 35,731</b> | <b>100% 19,881</b>     | <b>100% 98,277</b> | <b>100% 22,931</b> |                     |
| <p>* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 4,678 child investigations with information about years of child welfare experience for the investigating worker. Because of missing information on 685 cases and because information on years of child welfare experience for the investigating worker was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-8.</p> <p>** Excluding jurisdictions where information about years of child welfare experience for the investigating worker could not be collected in a comparable manner.</p> |                           |                    |                    |                        |                    |                    |                     |

**Neglect:** In 52% of neglect investigations workers with more than 4 years' experience were involved, and in 26% of cases workers with up to 12 months of experience were involved. The rates of substantiation ranged from a high of 55% for workers with more than 4-6 years' experience to a low of 25% for workers with more than 2-4 years of experience.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Workers with more than 4 years of experience conducted 47% of investigations, and those with up to 12 months of experience conducted 23%. Substantiation rates ranged from a low of 41% for workers with more than 2-4 years' experience to a high of 61% for workers with 1 to less than 2 years' experience.

**Table 8-9**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Highest Completed University Degree for Investigating Worker by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998\*/\*\***

|                                      | Investigated Maltreatment |               |             |                        |             |               |             | Multiple Categories |             |                |             |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
|                                      | Primary Category          |               |             |                        |             | Total         |             |                     |             |                |             |               |
|                                      | Physical Abuse            | Sexual Abuse  | Neglect     | Emotional Maltreatment |             |               |             |                     |             |                |             |               |
| MSW                                  | 12%                       | 3,909         | 10%         | 1,084                  | 12%         | 4,427         | 12%         | 2,321               | <b>12%</b>  | <b>11,741</b>  | 10%         | 2,144         |
| Substantiated                        | 22%                       |               | 25%         |                        | 28%         |               | 48%         |                     | <b>29%</b>  |                | 32%         |               |
| Suspected                            | 23%                       |               | 30%         |                        | 18%         |               | 32%         |                     | <b>24%</b>  |                | 35%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 55%                       |               | 45%         |                        | 54%         |               | 20%         |                     | <b>47%</b>  |                | 33%         |               |
| BSW                                  | 59%                       | 19,208        | 65%         | 6,829                  | 58%         | 21,526        | 63%         | 12,703              | <b>60%</b>  | <b>60,266</b>  | 64%         | 14,563        |
| Substantiated                        | 32%                       |               | 28%         |                        | 39%         |               | 54%         |                     | <b>39%</b>  |                | 54%         |               |
| Suspected                            | 25%                       |               | 27%         |                        | 17%         |               | 29%         |                     | <b>23%</b>  |                | 22%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 43%                       |               | 45%         |                        | 44%         |               | 17%         |                     | <b>38%</b>  |                | 24%         |               |
| Other Master's Degree                | 1%                        | 392           | 2%          | 161                    | 0%          | 162           | 2%          | 434                 | <b>1%</b>   | <b>1,149</b>   | 1%          | 217           |
| Substantiated                        | —                         |               | —           |                        | —           |               | 32%         |                     | <b>33%</b>  |                | —           |               |
| Suspected                            | —                         |               | —           |                        | —           |               | 40%         |                     | <b>23%</b>  |                | —           |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | —                         |               | —           |                        | —           |               | 28%         |                     | <b>44%</b>  |                | —           |               |
| Other Bachelor's Degree              | 23%                       | 7,586         | 20%         | 2,078                  | 14%         | 5,406         | 15%         | 2,866               | <b>18%</b>  | <b>17,936</b>  | 15%         | 3,599         |
| Substantiated                        | 35%                       |               | 62%         |                        | 37%         |               | 41%         |                     | <b>40%</b>  |                | 57%         |               |
| Suspected                            | 29%                       |               | 15%         |                        | 29%         |               | 37%         |                     | <b>29%</b>  |                | 33%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 36%                       |               | 23%         |                        | 34%         |               | 22%         |                     | <b>31%</b>  |                | 10%         |               |
| Other College Diploma or Certificate | 4%                        | 1,419         | 3%          | 327                    | 14%         | 5,209         | 8%          | 1,647               | <b>8%</b>   | <b>8,602</b>   | 10%         | 2,307         |
| Substantiated                        | 40%                       |               | 31%         |                        | 52%         |               | 54%         |                     | <b>50%</b>  |                | 76%         |               |
| Suspected                            | 18%                       |               | 39%         |                        | 32%         |               | 32%         |                     | <b>30%</b>  |                | 21%         |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | 42%                       |               | 30%         |                        | 16%         |               | 14%         |                     | <b>20%</b>  |                | 3%          |               |
| Other                                | 1%                        | 306           | —           | —                      | 2%          | 556           | —           | —                   | <b>1%</b>   | <b>1,010</b>   | —           | —             |
| Substantiated                        | —                         |               | —           |                        | 60%         |               | —           |                     | <b>58%</b>  |                | —           |               |
| Suspected                            | —                         |               | —           |                        | 6%          |               | —           |                     | <b>8%</b>   |                | —           |               |
| Unsubstantiated                      | —                         |               | —           |                        | 34%         |               | —           |                     | <b>34%</b>  |                | —           |               |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100%</b>               | <b>32,820</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>10,479</b>          | <b>100%</b> | <b>37,286</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>19,971</b>       | <b>100%</b> | <b>100,704</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>22,830</b> |

\* Weighted estimates are based on a sample of 4,780 child investigations with information about the highest completed university degree of the investigating worker. Because of missing information on 583 cases and because information on the highest completed university degree was not collected in some Canadian jurisdictions, the table totals are less than the totals in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. Refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for overall estimates of investigated maltreatment and investigated categories of maltreatment. Standard errors and confidence intervals are presented in Appendix H – Table 8-9.

\*\* Excluding jurisdictions in which the information about highest completed university degree of the investigating worker could not be collected in a comparable manner.

— Fewer than five cases with which to calculate estimates; so estimates are too unreliable to be given.

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Cases involving multiple categories were disproportionately investigated by workers with less than a year of experience (26%); workers with more than 4 years of experience conducted 44% of investigations. Substantiation rates were lowest for less experienced workers: 48% for those with less than 6 months of experience and 40% for those with 6-12 months' experience. In contrast,

cases investigated by workers with 1-2 years' experience were substantiated 64% of the time.

Table 8-9 presents child maltreatment investigations in terms of the investigator's highest completed professional degree. Sixty percent of cases were investigated by workers with a Bachelor of Social Work degree (BSW), 12% by workers with a Masters of

Social Work (MSW), 18% by workers with an “other” bachelor’s degree, 9% by workers with an “other” college diploma or certificate, and 1% by workers with either an “other” Masters degree or “other” education. Fifty percent of cases investigated by workers with a college diploma or certificate were substantiated, followed by 40% investigated by workers with an “other” bachelor’s degree. Substantiation rates were lowest in cases investigated by workers with an MSW (29%).

**Physical Abuse:** Workers with a BSW conducted 59% of physical abuse investigations, workers with a bachelor’s degree conducted 23%, and workers with an MSW conducted 12%. Between 22% and 32% of cases investigated by workers with BSWs or MSWs were substantiated.

**Sexual Abuse:** Workers with a BSW or an MSW investigated three-quarters of sexual abuse cases. As with physical abuse, sexual abuse cases investigated by workers with professional social work degrees were less often substantiated (28% of cases investigated by BSWs) than were those investigated by workers without a professional social work degree (31% of those with a college diploma or certificate and 62% of those with a Bachelor’s degree were substantiated).

**Neglect:** Workers with a BSW conducted 58% of neglect investigations, and workers without a professional social work degree conducted 30%. Substantiation rates varied from a high of 52% for investigations conducted by workers with an “other” college diploma or certificate to 28% for investigations conducted by workers with an MSW.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Workers with a BSW conducted 64% of emotional maltreatment investigations followed by workers with an “other” bachelor’s degree (15%) and workers with an MSW (12%). Substantiation rates were highest for cases investigated by workers with BSWs or with college diplomas (54%) and lowest for those conducted by workers with “other” master’s degree (32%).

**Multiple Categories of Maltreatment:** Workers with a BSW conducted 64% of investigations involving multiple categories of maltreatment, followed by workers with an “other” bachelor’s degree (16%), workers with an MSW (10%), and workers with an “other” college diploma or certificate (10%). Substantiation rates were highest for cases investigated by workers with an “other” college diploma or certificate (76%) and lowest for cases investigated by workers with MSWs (32%).

## ■ 9. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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The *Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: Final Report* presents the study's methodology, the incidence estimates for all forms of reported maltreatment, and descriptions of key case characteristics. This concluding chapter summarizes the report's major findings, discusses the comparative context for interpreting these results, and examines future directions for research.

### Summary of Major Findings

The results presented in this report are based on information collected directly from child welfare workers during the months of October to December 1998, in 51 randomly selected sites across Canada. The findings are summarized in six chapters: (1) estimates of the incidence of reported child maltreatment by category of maltreatment and level of substantiation; (2) characteristics of maltreatment, including evidence of physical or emotional harm, duration of maltreatment, and identity of the alleged perpetrators; (3) outcomes of investigations, provision of child welfare services, referrals for other services, placement, applications to child welfare court, and police involvement; (4) child characteristics, including forms of maltreatment by age and sex, and child functioning; (5) household characteristics, including household composition, sibling information, source of household income, and caregiver functioning and family stressors; and (6) child welfare referral and agency characteristics.

#### *Incidence of Abuse and Neglect*

- An estimated 135,573 child investigations involving children under 16 were conducted in Canada in 1998, a rate of 21.52 investigations per 1,000 children (see Table 3-1).
- Forty-five percent or an estimated 61,201 child investigations were substantiated by the investigating worker (9.71 investigations per 1,000 children). In a further 22% (29,668 estimated child

investigations, 4.71 investigations per 1,000 children), there was insufficient evidence to substantiate maltreatment; however, maltreatment remained suspected by the investigating worker. Thirty-three percent (an estimated 44,704 child investigations, 7.09 investigations per 1,000 children) were unsubstantiated (see Table 3-1).

- An estimated 41,551 child investigations (31%) involved alleged physical abuse as the primary reason for investigation. Of these cases, 34% were substantiated, 23% remained suspected, and 43% were unsubstantiated (see Table 3-3).
- An estimated 14,406 child investigations (11%) involved sexual abuse as the primary reason for investigation. Thirty-eight percent of these were substantiated, 22% remained suspected, and 40% were unsubstantiated (see Table 3-3).
- Neglect was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment. An estimated 53,922 child investigations (40%) involved allegations of neglect as the primary reason for investigation. Forty-three percent of these cases were substantiated, 20% remained suspected, and 37% were unsubstantiated (see Table 3-3).
- Emotional maltreatment was the primary reason for investigation in an estimated 25,694 child investigations (19%). Fifty-four percent of these cases were substantiated, 29% remained suspected, and 17% were unsubstantiated (see Table 3-3).

#### *Characteristics of Maltreatment*

- Some form of physical harm was identified in 13% of child maltreatment investigations. In 3% of investigations (an estimated 4,197), harm was sufficiently severe to require treatment, and 63% of these cases were substantiated. In a further 10% of investigations (an estimated 13,313), harm was noted but no treatment was considered to be

required; 62% of these investigations were substantiated (Table 4-1).

- Physical harm primarily involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes (69% of harm situations), or other health conditions (24%). Rates of substantiation for physical harm ranged from a low of 34% for broken bones to a high of 65% for other health conditions (Table 4-1(b)).
- Thirty-nine percent of investigations (an estimated 34,045) involved situations that had been ongoing for more than 6 months (71% substantiated), 17% involved situations that had been ongoing for less than 6 months (68% substantiated), and 23% involved single incidents (72% substantiated, see Table 4-3).
- Most investigations involved allegations against parents:<sup>85</sup> mothers (61%), fathers (38%), and step-fathers/common-law partners (9%) or step-mothers/common-law partners (3%). Other than parents, relatives were the most frequently identified perpetrators (7%, Table 4-4(a)). Substantiation rates for investigations with at least one relative as the alleged perpetrator ranged from 25% (foster family/adoptive parents) to 51% (step-mother). Only 6% of all maltreatment investigations involved suspected non-familial members as the alleged perpetrator: 1% of investigations focused on a family friend, a parent's boyfriend/girlfriend, or a babysitter, and 1% or less involved allegations against the child's peer or friend, a teacher, another professional, another acquaintance, or a stranger (Table 4-4(b)). Substantiation rates for investigations with at least one non-relative as the alleged perpetrator ranged from 18% (other professional) to 54% (babysitter). In many instances, non-familial allegations of abuse are investigated by the police, not by a child welfare service.

### *Outcomes of Investigations*

- After the initial investigation, 34% of child maltreatment investigations (65% of which were substantiated) were to remain open for ongoing services, and 64% of investigations (30% substantiated) were to be closed. In a further 2%, ongoing case status could not be determined because decisions were pending as a result of ongoing court involvement, active police investigations, or incomplete assessments. Thirty-four percent of these cases were substantiated cases of maltreatment (see Table 5-1).
- At least one referral to a program designed to offer services beyond the parameters of ongoing child welfare services was made in 60% of investigations, involving an estimated 81,058 child investigations. Of these cases 54% were substantiated. Twenty-one percent of investigations involved a referral to a parent support program, and 28% of cases involved a referral to some form of family or parent counseling (Table 5-2(a)). Drug/alcohol counseling referrals were made in 10% of all investigations, and domestic violence counseling referrals in 6%. Child-focused referrals were made most frequently for child counseling services (16%), psychiatric or psychological services (15%), and medical or dental services (4%). An additional 13% of investigated cases involved a referral for some other type of child or family service (see Table 5-2(b)).
- In an estimated 11,058 investigations (8%) children were placed in out-of-home care (foster placement, group home, or residential/secure treatment) during the initial intake investigation. Seventy-eight percent of these cases were substantiated cases of maltreatment. For an estimated 4,732 child investigations (4%), placement in care was being considered (70% were substantiated). In an additional 5,852 investigations (4%) the child had moved to an informal placement care arrangement,

<sup>85</sup> There is a significant overlap between these classifications, as multiple perpetrators were identified in 24% of cases. It should also be noted that many cases of non-familial abuse are not included in the CIS because they are investigated only by the police.

either with a relative, neighbours, or some other community care provider (68% of these cases were substantiated). In these circumstances, child welfare services do not assume formal care of the child (see Table 5-3).

- Applications to child welfare court were made in an estimated 5,595 child investigations (5%) and were being considered in an additional estimated 7,256 cases (6%, see Table 5-4). Seventy-four percent of child investigations in which an application to child welfare court was made were substantiated.
- An estimated 27,799 child investigations (21%) involved a police investigation along with a child welfare investigation. Criminal charges were laid in an estimated 13,343 investigations, 79% of which were substantiated (see Table 5-5).

### ***Child Characteristics***

- The incidence of investigated maltreatment ranged from 18.5 per 1,000 children among 12 to 15 year old males, to 25.08 per 1,000 for females in the same age group (Table 6-1).
- The overall incidence rate for investigations was similar for females (21.65 investigations per 1,000 children) and males (21.26 investigations per 1,000 children), but the sex distribution varied by age group and category of investigated maltreatment (see Table 6-1).
- In 44% of child investigations (an estimated 59,775), at least one child functioning issue was indicated by the investigating worker (Table 6-4(b)). Maltreatment was substantiated in 48% of investigations noting any physical, emotional, or cognitive health issue. Similarly, 47% of investigations reporting any behavioural problem were substantiated. A behavioural problem in the home or the community, the most frequently reported child functioning issue was indicated in 24% of cases, involving an estimated 32,690 child investigations (Table 6-4(b)); depression was the second most frequently reported child functioning issue (11% of investigations, see Table 6-4(a)).

Negative peer involvement was noted in 10% of investigations, and running away from home and violence toward others were each identified in 6% of investigations, substance abuse in 5%, inappropriate sexual behaviour in 4%, and criminal/young offender involvement in 3% (see Table 6-4(b)).

### ***Household Characteristics***

- Twenty-nine percent of investigations involved children who lived with their two biological parents, and 18% lived in a two-parent blended family. Forty-six percent of all investigations involved children living in a family led by a lone-parent: 40% by a female-parent and 6% by a male-parent. Substantiation rates varied little (from 40% for female-parent households to 46% for two-parent blended households) when household structure was considered (Table 7-1).
- Of those investigations involving children living with a mother, 61% lived with a mother who was over 30 and 17% with a mother aged 25 or under (Table 7-2(a)). Of investigations involving children living with a father, 75% lived with a father who was over 30 and 10% with a father aged 25 or under (Table 7-2(b)).
- Fifty-seven percent of investigations involved children living in rental accommodations (47% private market rentals and 10% public housing), 26% involved children living in purchased homes, and 1% living in shelters or hostels. Substantiation rates ranged from 33% (other housing type) to 53% (rental unit in a public housing complex, see Table 7-6).
- A caregiver functioning and/or family stressor was identified in 73% of investigations (an estimated 98,412 cases). The most frequently noted concerns were lack of social support (29%), substance abuse (34%), spousal violence (23%), mental health issue (24%), and a childhood history of abuse (31%). Substantiation rates ranged from 34% (custody dispute) to 62% (criminal activity, see Table 7-10).

### *Referral and Agency Characteristics*

- Fifty-nine percent of all referrals were made by professionals through their contact with children, and 45% of these cases were substantiated. The largest source of referrals was school personnel, who referred an estimated 29,040 children to child welfare services, representing 21% of all referrals (see Table 8-1(b)).
- Non-professional sources referred 34% of cases, 42% of which were substantiated. Parents referred an estimated 21,212 children (16% of all investigations, see Table 8-1(a)).
- Although most unsubstantiated reports were considered to have been made in good faith, 4% of all allegations of maltreatment (an estimated 5,322 child maltreatment investigations) were judged to have been intentionally false (Table 8-2(a)).
- In over half of the child investigations (51% or an estimated 58,289) there had been previous investigations because of suspected maltreatment, 39% of these cases being substantiated. Another 7% of children lived in families that had previously received child welfare services on one occasion, and maltreatment was substantiated in 39% of these cases. Five percent of child investigations involved families who had received services on more than one occasion (28% of these cases were substantiated). Only 34% of children came from families for which no previous record of service had been noted (39% of these cases were substantiated). For an additional 3% of cases, child welfare service history had not been determined (Table 8-3).
- Large metropolitan service areas conducted 30% of investigations, mixed urban/rural service areas investigated 46% of cases, and primarily rural child welfare services conducted 24% of investigations (Table 8-6). Thirty-nine percent of investigations conducted in large metropolitan service areas were substantiated; 40% conducted by mixed urban/rural service areas and 49% conducted by primarily rural service areas were substantiated.

- Close to half (49%) of investigations (an estimated 47,777) were conducted by workers who had more than 4 years of child welfare experience, 34% having more than 6 years of experience. Although the group overall was experienced, workers with less than 6 months of experience investigated 15% of cases, involving an estimated 14,966 child investigations. Rates of substantiation ranged from 32% for workers with 2-4 years' experience to 44% for workers with 1 year to under 2 years of experience (see Table 8-8).

### Comparative Analysis

The CIS provides useful descriptive information for service providers, policy makers, researchers, and the general public. Before the CIS, there was little Canada-wide information about the characteristics of children and families receiving child welfare services. Beyond providing a much needed description of the overall profile of child maltreatment investigations in Canada, the findings of this report also raise many interesting questions that cannot be answered by the descriptive data presented. For example, is a rate of 21.52 maltreatment investigations per 1,000 children high or low? In what types of circumstances are children most likely to be placed in out-of-home care? Is a 5% rate of court application high enough? Are poor families over-represented because of reporting bias or because of the stressful effects of living in poverty? Are too many unsubstantiated cases being needlessly investigated?

Some of these questions can be examined through further analysis of the CIS data set, but many of the questions raised by the CIS will be difficult to answer because this is the first study of its type in Canada. Comparative statistics are required to start assessing the significance of the descriptive results presented.

Although there are no Canadian baseline data that can be used to systematically analyze the CIS findings, an examination of child maltreatment statistics from

other sources does provide a useful perspective. However, **these reference points should be interpreted with caution**, since the statistics from other sources have been derived using different methodologies and definitions as well as different child welfare systems. The definitional framework and methodologic considerations presented in Chapters 1 and 2 explain many of the difficulties inherent in comparing such statistics.

Statistics from six other sources are outlined below in order to provide some context for interpreting the CIS findings.

### **Canadian Data on Investigated Maltreatment**

#### **Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information**

In 1994, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information produced *Child Welfare in Canada: The Role of Provincial and Territorial Authorities in Cases of Child Abuse*,<sup>86</sup> the first national report to outline the roles and responsibilities of provincial and territorial child welfare services and to present summary aggregate statistics on child welfare investigations and children in out-of-home care. A second edition of the report was published in 1998 and contains provincial and territorial child welfare statistics for 1994–95, 1995–96, and 1996–97. Because of differences in child welfare statutes, in the organization of child welfare services, and in the way child welfare statistics are kept (see Chapter 2), no national estimates of child abuse and neglect can be generated by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group documents. Rates of investigation, for example, cannot be compared because some jurisdictions count children whereas others count families, and some count all referrals whereas others count only cases of substantiated abuse. As a result, the rates taken

as a count of investigations per 1,000 children range from 1.09 to 48.96 investigations per 1,000. Interestingly enough, the CIS estimate of the rate of maltreatment investigations falls in the middle of this range: 21.52 investigations per 1,000 children.

#### **Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect**

The *Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect* (OIS),<sup>87</sup> conducted in 1993, was the first provincial incidence study in Canada. The OIS examined the characteristics of children and families investigated by Ontario's 54 children's aid societies. Like the CIS, the OIS used a multistage sample survey design to collect information about cases of reported child abuse and neglect directly from investigating child protection workers. The study provided estimates of the number of cases (child-based, as opposed to family-based) of suspected child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment) reported to and investigated by Ontario child welfare agencies in 1993 (screened-out cases not included). Based on a sample of 2,447 child maltreatment investigations, the OIS reported an overall investigation rate for Ontario in 1993 of 21.32 investigations per 1,000 children, 29% of these being substantiated and 30% remaining suspected. Forty-one percent of cases involved physical abuse as the primary category of investigated maltreatment, 35% involved sexual abuse, 30% neglect, and 10% emotional maltreatment. Comparative analysis of the 1993 OIS and the 1998 Ontario portion of the CIS will be released in the spring of 2001.

#### **Revised Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR II) Survey**

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics annually collects incident-based crime statistics from police agencies across Canada. As of 1997, the UCR II survey was being completed by 179 police agencies in six

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<sup>86</sup> Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information. *Child welfare in Canada: the role of provincial and territorial authorities in cases of child abuse*. Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1994.

<sup>87</sup> Trocmé N, McPhee D, et al. *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect*. Toronto: Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1994.



provinces,<sup>88</sup> representing 48% of the national volume of reported crime. Although the number of police agencies reporting to the UCR II is increasing, the sample is not nationally representative. Analysis of the 1993 UCR II data, using child population statistics from jurisdictions reporting to the UCR II, found that the rate of investigated assaults against youth under 20 was 8.5 investigations per 1,000 children.<sup>89</sup> Seventy-two percent of investigations involved suspected physical assaults, and 28% involved suspected sexual assaults. Caution should be employed in comparing these figures to CIS estimates, not only because the UCR II sample is non-representative and was collected in 1993, but also because cases investigated by police agencies and child welfare services only partially overlap.

### ***International Data on Investigated Maltreatment***

#### **U.S. National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System<sup>90</sup>**

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) provides the most extensive annual statistics on investigated maltreatment in the United States. The NCANDS collects data directly from each state and documents the total number of child and family investigations, rates of substantiation, and forms of maltreatment for substantiated cases. The NCANDS report for 1997 includes aggregate data from 49 states and case-level data from 16 states.

The rate of investigation reported by the NCANDS for 1997 was 42 investigations per 1,000 children, as compared with the estimated rate of 21 investigations per 1,000 children reported by the CIS for Canada in 1998. The rate of victimization reported by the NCANDS for 1997 (incidence of substantiated

maltreatment) was 13.9 investigations per 1,000 children, a decrease from a high of 15.3 investigations per 1,000 children in 1993. Fifty-six percent of these cases were classified as neglect, 27% as physical abuse, 17% as sexual abuse, 6% as psychological abuse or neglect, and 12% as other. By comparison, the rate of substantiated maltreatment reported by the CIS is 9.71 investigations per 1,000 children, with 31% of cases classified as involving primarily physical abuse, 11% sexual abuse, 40% neglect, and 19% emotional maltreatment.

#### **U.S. National Incidence Study<sup>91</sup>**

The National Incidence Study (NIS) is a congressionally mandated study conducted by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN). There have been three data collection periods (1979-80, 1986 and 1993). Unlike the state-based NCANDS statistics, the NIS collects data directly from child protection workers as well as from other professionals who work with children (“sentinels”) and may be aware of cases that are not reported to protective services. Although the sentinel-based survey methodology allows the NIS to go beyond officially reported child maltreatment cases, it nevertheless is limited to cases that sentinels are aware of.

The NIS 3 (1993) used a nationally representative sample from 42 counties in the United States. During a 3-month data selection period, the NIS 3 collected 4,711 detailed forms from non-child protection service sentinels and 3,154 from sampled child protection service agencies; it also collected partially identifying data on 42,864 cases reported to child protection service agencies during the selection period. Duplicate cases (i.e. cases identified by more than one source) were

<sup>88</sup> Statistics Canada. *Family violence in Canada: a statistical profile*. Catalogue No. 85-224. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1998.

<sup>89</sup> Trocmé N, Brison R. Homicide and injuries due to assault and to abuse and neglect. In: Beaulne G (ed). *For the safety of Canadian children and youth: from data to preventive measures*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1998.

<sup>90</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services, Children’s Bureau, Child Maltreatment. *Child maltreatment 1996: reports from the states to the national child abuse and neglect data system*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998.

<sup>91</sup> Sedlak A. *National incidence and prevalence of child abuse and neglect: 1988 (Rev. ed.)*. Rockville, MD: Westat, 1991.

identified and removed. Data were weighted to represent the total number of children in the United States and annualized to provide estimates for a full year.

The NIS 3 reported an overall maltreatment rate of 41.9 investigations per 1,000 children, a 98% increase in maltreated children since the NIS 2 (1986).<sup>92</sup> Nine investigations per 1,000 children involved physical abuse as a primary or secondary form of maltreatment, 4.5 per 1,000 children involved sexual abuse, and 29.2 per 1,000 children involved neglect, including emotional neglect. The reported NIS estimates cannot be directly compared with CIS estimates because they include cases that were not investigated by child protective services, only 33% of cases identified by the NIS 3 having been investigated by child protection services. The rate of substantiated child maltreatment cases investigated by child protection services was 13.8 investigations per 1,000 children. In comparison, the rate reported by the CIS is 9.71 substantiated investigations per 1,000 children.

### **Child Protection Australia 1997–98<sup>93</sup>**

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) annually collects aggregate statistics on reported and investigated maltreatment from the six states and territories responsible for child protection services in Australia. As with the data collected in Canada by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group, data collected by the AIHW from the state and territorial authorities are not directly comparable because each jurisdiction has its own legislation, policies, and practices in child protection. For 1997-98, the AIHW reported that rates of substantiated maltreat-

ment ranged from 1.1 to 5.9 investigations per 1,000 children, although in the three largest states (New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland) incidence rates were more consistent, ranging from 5.1 to 5.9 investigations per 1,000 children. In comparison, the rate of substantiated maltreatment reported by the CIS is 9.71 investigations per 1,000 children. Unlike the CIS, most Australian protection authorities use a two-tiered substantiation classification. In Australia's three largest states the proportion of substantiated physical abuse cases for 1997-98 ranged from 27% to 35%, the proportion of sexual abuse cases from 8% to 29%, and the proportion of neglect cases from 18% to 42%.

## **Further Research**

### **Secondary Analyses of 1998 CIS Data**

This first report presents the major descriptive findings from the CIS. As shown in the tables in Chapters 3 to 8, there are many noteworthy differences between subgroups. For example, a larger proportion of neglected children are placed in care than physically abused children. Sexual abuse investigations involving younger children are not substantiated as often as investigations involving adolescents. Further analysis of these tables is needed to examine the extent to which these differences are statistically significant and may be explained by other factors.<sup>94</sup>

The CIS is a rich data set of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations with information on child and family characteristics, forms and severity of maltreatment, and outcomes of investigations. It is the largest

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<sup>92</sup> These figures reflect cases counted under the NIS Endangerment Standard. Two standards – the Harm Standard and the Endangerment Standard – were used in calculating NIS estimates. The harm standard includes only those children who are harmed by a caregiver or a parent. The endangerment standard includes all children who meet the harm standard, and it broadens the definition to include children who were in danger or children whose maltreatment was substantiated or indicated in a CPS investigation. The endangerment standard also includes maltreatment of children by people other than caregivers.

<sup>93</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Child protection Australia: 1997-1998*. AIHW Catalogue. No. CXS8. Canberra: AIHW (Child Welfare Series), 1999.

<sup>94</sup> For example, the information presented in Chapter 4 on the relative role of mothers and fathers as perpetrators varies considerably if it is examined in the context of two-parent families, as opposed to simply considering the overall rate.

national data set of its type available for research purposes. In comparison, the U.S. *National Incidence Study* (1996) dataset is composed of 3,154 child protection investigations and does not include as much information about each investigation as the CIS. The CIS data set lends itself particularly well to three major lines of inquiry: (1) exploring the characteristics of different forms of reported maltreatment; (2) determining factors that influence outcomes of investigations (substantiation, child welfare court, criminal charges, placement in out-of-home care, and provision of services); and (3) comparing the CIS with other national datasets such as the NIS.

### **Subsequent Incidence Studies**

The CIS is the first national incidence study to track child abuse and neglect investigations in Canada. Health Canada's Child Maltreatment Division is committed to developing an ongoing series of incidence studies that will serve as the foundation for a national surveillance system on child maltreatment.

Over the next few years, the design of the CIS represents the most feasible and cost-effective method for tracking child abuse and neglect; in the longer term, however, the case-level data collection efforts of the NCANDS in the United States could be examined as an alternative long-term method for tracking child maltreatment rates in Canada.

Additional studies are also needed to examine cases that are not reported to child welfare services as well as to identify cases that are reported but not investigated (i.e. screened-out cases).

Such a series of coordinated studies would strengthen national surveillance of child abuse and neglect and would give the public, service providers, policy makers, and researchers critical information for improving the well-being of children at risk of maltreatment.

## APPENDIX A

### CIS Site Directors/Research Associates

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CIS site directors were involved in designing the study and facilitating data collection in their respective sites. CIS research associates provided training and data collection support at the 51 CIS sites. Their enthusiasm and dedication to the study were critical in ensuring its success.

The following is a list of those who participated in the CIS.

#### *British Columbia*

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### **Brian Kenny**

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## Data Entry

Data entry of the CIS Face Sheet was completed by Cita de los Santos in Toronto. Data entry in Montreal was completed by Lydie Bouchard, Véronique Gauthier, Annie Bérubé, Mireille Desrochers, Bibiane Monfette, Nathalie Robertson, Caroline Gélinas.

## Data Analysis

Assistance in developing the sampling design, custom area files, weights, and confidence intervals was provided by Statistics Canada. We would particularly like to thank Korina Besednik, Andrea Durning and Jane Mulvihill from Statistics Canada for their assistance.

Donald Morrison and Hong-Xing Wu are acknowledged for their statistical and technical support to the EIQ, specifically for data management and analysis.

Special thanks to Tim Daciuk, for his statistical support throughout the project.

## APPENDIX B

### National Advisory Committee and Health Canada Staff

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The National Advisory Committee provided consultation for the design of the study, in particular with respect to the enlistment strategies and survey instruments. Health Canada staff played an active role throughout the study, providing feedback, consultation, and support at all phases of the project.

#### *National Advisory Committee*

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Bureau of Reproductive and Child Health

**Catherine McCourt**

Director, Bureau of Reproductive and Child Health



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## APPENDIX C

### Glossary of Terms

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The following is an explanatory list of terms used throughout the Final Report of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS).

**Age Group:** The age range of children included in the CIS sample. Unless otherwise specified, all data are presented for children between 0 and 15 years of age. Table 6-2 presents data on adolescents between 16 and 19 years of age.

**Annual Incidence:** The number of child maltreatment investigations per 1,000 children in a given year.

**Case Duplication:** Children who are the subject of an investigation more than once in a calendar year are counted in most child welfare statistics as separate “cases” or “investigations”. As a count of children, these statistics are therefore duplicated.

**Case Openings:** Cases that appear on agency/office statistics as openings. These may be counted on a family basis or a child basis. Openings do not include referrals that have been screened out.

**Categories of Maltreatment:** The four key classifications under which the 22 forms of maltreatment were subsumed: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment.

**Child Maltreatment Investigations:** Case openings that meet the CIS criteria for investigated maltreatment (see Figure 1-1).

**Childhood Prevalence:** The proportion of people maltreated at any point during their childhood.

**CIS:** Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

**CWSA:** A child welfare service area, geographic area delimited by a child welfare jurisdiction. In decentralized provinces and territories, a child welfare service area refers to a child welfare agency/office, while in centralized provinces and territories, it corresponds to a district or regional office. In some cases several agencies serve the same geographic area on the basis of children’s religious or aboriginal status. In such instances, all child welfare agencies/offices sharing the same geographic boundaries are counted as a single child welfare service area.

**Definitional Framework:** The CIS provides an estimate of the number of cases (child-based, age under 16) of alleged child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment) reported to and investigated by Canadian child welfare services in 1998 (screened-out reports not included). The estimates are broken down by three levels of substantiation (substantiated, suspected, unsubstantiated). Cases opened more than once during the year are counted as separate investigations.

**EIQ:** Étude sur l’incidence et les caractéristiques des situations d’abus, de négligence, d’abandon et de troubles de comportement sérieux signalées à la Direction de la protection de la jeunesse (DPJ) au Québec (EIQ).

**Forms of Maltreatment:** Specific types of maltreatment (e.g. inappropriate punishment, sexual exploitation, or exposure to family violence) that are classified under the four CIS categories of maltreatment. The CIS captured 22 forms of maltreatment.

**Level of Identification and Substantiation:** There are four key levels in the case identification process: detection, reporting, investigation, and substantiation (see Figure 1-1). *Detection* is the first stage in the case

identification process. Little is known about the relationship between detected and undetected cases. *Reporting* suspected child maltreatment is required by law in all provinces and territories in Canada. The CIS does not document unreported cases. *Investigated* cases are subject to various screening practices, which vary across sites. The CIS did not track screened-out cases, nor did it track new incidents of maltreatment on already opened cases. *Substantiation* distinguishes between cases in which maltreatment is confirmed following an investigation, and cases in which maltreatment is not confirmed. The CIS uses a three-tiered classification system, in which a *suspected* level provides an important clinical distinction for cases in which maltreatment is suspected to have occurred by the investigating worker but cannot be substantiated.

**NIS:** U.S. Study of National Incidence and Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect.

**Non-maltreatment Cases:** Cases open for child welfare services for reasons other than suspected maltreatment (e.g. prevention services, parent-child conflict, services for young pregnant women, etc.).

**OIS:** 1993 Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

**Reporting Year:** The year in which child maltreatment cases were opened. The reporting year for the CIS is 1998.

**Screened out:** Referrals that are not opened for an investigation.

**Site:** Child welfare service area selected for the CIS.

**Two-Parent Blended Family:** A family in which one of the caregivers was identified as a step-parent, a common-law partner, or an adoptive parent who was not the biological parent of at least one of the children in the family.

**Unit of Analysis:** The denominator used in calculating maltreatment rates. In the case of the CIS, the unit of analysis is the child investigation.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Maltreatment Assessment Form**

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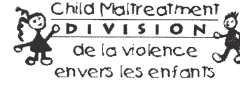
The Maltreatment Assessment Form consists of three pages:

- Intake Face Sheet;
- Household Information Sheet; and
- Child Information Sheet



Funded by **Health Canada Child Maltreatment Division, Bureau of Reproductive and Child Health** and supported by the **Provincial and Territorial Governments of Canada**.  
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Additional Funding was provided by the **Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit, University of Toronto**

STUDY of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect  
*Étude canadienne sur l'incidence des cas signalés de violence et de négligence à l'égard des enfants*



# CIS Maltreatment Assessment

INTAKE FACE SHEET (Please complete this face sheet for **all** cases)

Date referral was received:

Was case opened at this time? yes  no

If no, date case was opened

Source of allegation/referral (if more than one source of referral, assign number '1' to first source, '2' to second, etc.)

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Custodial Parent            | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Assistance Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> School                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Police           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-custodial Parent        | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Service/Shelter   | <input type="checkbox"/> Community/Recreation Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child (subject of referral) | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Professional  | <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relative                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Health Nurse      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Child Welfare Service |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbour/Friend            | <input type="checkbox"/> Physician                | <input type="checkbox"/> Day Care Centre             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)      |   |  |   |

These shaded areas to be filled only by the investigating worker

| List all children in the home (first name only – 19 years and under) | Date of Birth   | Gender of child                                       | Child(ren) subject of: referral investigation |                       |
|--|---|---|---|-----------------------|
|  |   |   | referral                                      | investigation         |
| <input type="text"/>   | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="radio"/>                         | <input type="radio"/> |
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| <input type="text"/>   | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="radio"/>                         | <input type="radio"/> |

TEAR OFF THIS PORTION

Was child maltreatment alleged by the referral or suspected at any point during this assessment period? no  yes

If yes, was case:

**A)**  screened out

why?  Alleged perpetrator not a caregiver  Child over age covered by legislation

Form of maltreatment not covered in legislation  Referral known to be malicious

Incomplete identifying information  Other (please elaborate under section: *Please describe reason for referrals/screening out*)

**OR**

**B)**  open for assessment/investigation

If open for assessment/investigation, **complete the remainder** of the CIS Maltreatment Assessment

TEAR OFF THIS PORTION

ASSESSMENT WORKER'S NAME

Family code   (First two letters of surname)  
  (Other surname, if applicable)

Case number

Postal code     -

or address

Please describe reason for referral/screening out for **all** cases

.....

.....

.....

If anyone other than the Assessment Worker has completed demographic information on the Maltreatment Assessment, please identify name and position

NAME

POSITION

This information will remain totally confidential, and no identifying information will be used outside of your own agency. This Intake Face Sheet will be destroyed at this location following the coded entry of this data by one of our researchers.

**The Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto**  
246 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1 • tel: (416) 978-2527 • fax: (416) 978-7072

**CIS Maltreatment Assessment: Household Information**

CIS Office Use Only:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

|  |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|--|---------------|---|----------------------|---|---------------------|---|------------|---|----------------------|---|--------|---|-------------------|---|------------------------|---|--|--|
| <p><b>1. Caregiver A:</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Biological Parent   <input type="radio"/> Foster Parent   <input type="radio"/> Common-Law Partner</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Adoptive Parent   <input type="radio"/> Step-parent   <input type="radio"/> Grandparent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other (Specify): _____</p> <p><b>Age:</b>   <input type="radio"/> &lt;16   <input type="radio"/> 16-18   <input type="radio"/> 19-21   <input type="radio"/> 22-25   <input type="radio"/> 26-30<br/> <input type="radio"/> 31-40   <input type="radio"/> 41-50   <input type="radio"/> 51-60   <input type="radio"/> 61-70   <input type="radio"/> &gt;70</p> <p><b>Gender:</b><br/> <input type="radio"/> Male<br/> <input type="radio"/> Female</p>   | <p><b>1. Caregiver B:</b>   <input type="radio"/> No Other Caregiver   <input type="radio"/> Caregiver in Home<br/> <input type="radio"/> Other Adult (not in household)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Biological Parent   <input type="radio"/> Foster Parent   <input type="radio"/> Common-Law Partner</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Adoptive Parent   <input type="radio"/> Step-parent   <input type="radio"/> Grandparent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other (Specify): _____</p> <p><b>Age:</b>   <input type="radio"/> &lt;16   <input type="radio"/> 16-18   <input type="radio"/> 19-21   <input type="radio"/> 22-25   <input type="radio"/> 26-30<br/> <input type="radio"/> 31-40   <input type="radio"/> 41-50   <input type="radio"/> 51-60   <input type="radio"/> 61-70   <input type="radio"/> &gt;70</p> <p><b>Gender:</b><br/> <input type="radio"/> Male<br/> <input type="radio"/> Female</p>  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>2. Primary Income Source:</b> <i>(Fill in only one)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Full Time   <input type="radio"/> Seasonal   <input type="radio"/> Other Benefits</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Part Time &lt;30 hrs   <input type="radio"/> Unemployment   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Multiple Jobs   <input type="radio"/> Social Assistance   <input type="radio"/> None</p>  | <p><b>2. Primary Income Source:</b> <i>(Fill in only one)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Full Time   <input type="radio"/> Seasonal   <input type="radio"/> Other Benefits</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Part Time &lt;30 hrs   <input type="radio"/> Unemployment   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Multiple Jobs   <input type="radio"/> Social Assistance   <input type="radio"/> None</p>  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>3. Educational Level:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Elementary or less   <input type="radio"/> College/University<br/> <input type="radio"/> Secondary or less   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p>   | <p><b>3. Educational Level:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Elementary or less   <input type="radio"/> College/University<br/> <input type="radio"/> Secondary or less   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p>   |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>4. Ethno-Racial Group:</b> <i>Based on Statistics Canada 1996 Census</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> White   <input type="radio"/> Arab/West Asian <i>(e.g. Armenian, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Moroccan)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Aboriginal   <input type="radio"/> South Asian <i>(e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chinese   <input type="radio"/> Southeast Asian <i>(e.g. Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Vietnamese)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Latin American   <input type="radio"/> Black <i>(e.g. African, Haitian, Jamaican)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Filipino   <input type="radio"/> Japanese</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Korean   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>If Aboriginal, please check all that apply:</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> On Reservation   <input type="radio"/> Non-Status   <input type="radio"/> Métis   <input type="radio"/> Inuit</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Off Reservation   <input type="radio"/> Status   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>Primary Language:</b> <input type="radio"/> English   <input type="radio"/> French   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p>   | <p><b>4. Ethno-Racial Group:</b> <i>Based on Statistics Canada 1996 Census</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> White   <input type="radio"/> Arab/West Asian <i>(e.g. Armenian, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Moroccan)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Aboriginal   <input type="radio"/> South Asian <i>(e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chinese   <input type="radio"/> Southeast Asian <i>(e.g. Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Vietnamese)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Latin American   <input type="radio"/> Black <i>(e.g. African, Haitian, Jamaican)</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Filipino   <input type="radio"/> Japanese</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Korean   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>If Aboriginal, please check all that apply:</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> On Reservation   <input type="radio"/> Non-Status   <input type="radio"/> Métis   <input type="radio"/> Inuit</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Off Reservation   <input type="radio"/> Status   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>Primary Language:</b> <input type="radio"/> English   <input type="radio"/> French   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>5. Contact with Caregiver:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Co-operative   <input type="radio"/> Not co-operative   <input type="radio"/> Not contacted</p>   | <p><b>5. Contact with Caregiver:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Co-operative   <input type="radio"/> Not co-operative   <input type="radio"/> Not contacted</p>   |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>6. Was Caregiver maltreated as a child?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Confirmed   <input type="radio"/> Suspected   <input type="radio"/> No/Unknown</p> <p><b>Is Caregiver in a violent relationship?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Confirmed   <input type="radio"/> Suspected   <input type="radio"/> No/Unknown</p> <p><b>Was this Caregiver the:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Victim   <input type="radio"/> Perpetrator</p>   | <p><b>6. Was Caregiver maltreated as a child?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Confirmed   <input type="radio"/> Suspected   <input type="radio"/> No/Unknown</p> <p><b>Is Caregiver in a violent relationship?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Confirmed   <input type="radio"/> Suspected   <input type="radio"/> No/Unknown</p> <p><b>Was this Caregiver the:</b>   <input type="radio"/> Victim   <input type="radio"/> Perpetrator</p>   |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>7. Other adults in the home:</b>   <input type="radio"/> None   <input type="radio"/> Grandparent   <input type="radio"/> Children &gt; 19 yrs   <input type="radio"/> Other Relative   <input type="radio"/> Boy/Girl-friend   <input type="radio"/> Boarder   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>a) Are you aware of a Caregiver outside of the home involved with any of the children?</b>   <input type="radio"/> None   <input type="radio"/> Mother   <input type="radio"/> Father   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>b) Is there an ongoing child custody dispute at this time?</b>   <input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> No   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p>  |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>8. Family Income Estimate:</b>   <input type="radio"/> &lt; \$15,000   <input type="radio"/> \$15-24,999   <input type="radio"/> \$25-40,999   <input type="radio"/> \$41-57,999   <input type="radio"/> \$58-80,000   <input type="radio"/> &gt; \$80,000   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p>   |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>9. Housing Accommodations:</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Public Housing   <input type="radio"/> Rental Apartment   <input type="radio"/> Rental Townhouse   <input type="radio"/> Rental House   <input type="radio"/> Purchased Home   <input type="radio"/> Shelter/Hotel   <input type="radio"/> Unknown   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><b>Unsafe housing conditions?</b>   <input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> No   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p> <p><b>Does family share a home?</b>   <input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> No   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p> <p><b>Approximate number of moves in past 6 months?</b>   <input type="radio"/> 0   <input type="radio"/> 1   <input type="radio"/> 2   <input type="radio"/> 3 or more   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p>   |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>10. Caregiver Functioning</b> <i>(Do any of the following apply to Caregivers in this household?)</i>   <input type="radio"/> No caregiver concerns for the household</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Confirmed   Suspected</td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Confirmed   Suspected</td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Confirmed   Suspected</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alcohol Abuse</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td>Cognitive Impairment</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td>Few Social Supports</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Drug Abuse</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td>Mental Health Issues</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td>Other:</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Criminal Activity</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td>Physical Health Issues</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/>   <input type="radio"/></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> |  |   | Confirmed   Suspected   |                           | Confirmed   Suspected                       |   | Confirmed   Suspected  | Alcohol Abuse | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Cognitive Impairment | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Few Social Supports | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Drug Abuse | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Mental Health Issues | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Other: | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Criminal Activity | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> | Physical Health Issues | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> |  |  |
|  | Confirmed   Suspected  |   | Confirmed   Suspected   |                           | Confirmed   Suspected                       |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| Alcohol Abuse  | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>  | Cognitive Impairment  | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>   | Few Social Supports       | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| Drug Abuse   | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>  | Mental Health Issues  | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>   | Other:                    | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| Criminal Activity  | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>  | Physical Health Issues  | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>11. Case Status:</b> a) <b>Was this case previously open?</b>   <input type="radio"/> Never   <input type="radio"/> 1 time   <input type="radio"/> 2-3 times   <input type="radio"/> &gt; 3 times   <input type="radio"/> Unknown</p> <p>b) <b>If case was previously open, how long was it closed before current opening?</b>   <input type="radio"/> &lt; 3 mo   <input type="radio"/> 3-6 mo   <input type="radio"/> 7-12 mo   <input type="radio"/> 13-24 mo   <input type="radio"/> &gt;24 mo</p> <p>c) <b>Will case stay open for ongoing child welfare services?</b>   <input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> No   <input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p>  |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><b>12. Referral(s) for any family member:</b> <i>(Fill in all that apply)</i>   <input type="radio"/> No referral made</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><input type="radio"/> Family Preservation/Reunification</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Parent Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Family/Parent Counseling</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Drug/Alcohol Counseling</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><input type="radio"/> Welfare/Social Assistance</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Food Bank</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Shelter Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Domestic Violence Counseling</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">(CHILD FOCUSED REFERRALS)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><input type="radio"/> Psychiatric/Psychological Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Special Education Placement</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Recreational Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child/Family Referral: _____</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><input type="radio"/> Victim Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Medical/Dental Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child Counseling</p> </td> </tr> </table>  |  | <p><input type="radio"/> Family Preservation/Reunification</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Parent Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Family/Parent Counseling</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Drug/Alcohol Counseling</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Welfare/Social Assistance</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Food Bank</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Shelter Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Domestic Violence Counseling</p> | (CHILD FOCUSED REFERRALS) |   | <p><input type="radio"/> Psychiatric/Psychological Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Special Education Placement</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Recreational Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child/Family Referral: _____</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Victim Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Medical/Dental Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child Counseling</p> |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><input type="radio"/> Family Preservation/Reunification</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Parent Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Family/Parent Counseling</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Drug/Alcohol Counseling</p>  | <p><input type="radio"/> Welfare/Social Assistance</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Food Bank</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Shelter Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Domestic Violence Counseling</p>  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| (CHILD FOCUSED REFERRALS)  |  |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |
| <p><input type="radio"/> Psychiatric/Psychological Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Special Education Placement</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Recreational Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child/Family Referral: _____</p>  | <p><input type="radio"/> Victim Support Program</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Medical/Dental Services</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other Child Counseling</p>   |   |   |                           |   |   |  |               |   |                      |   |                     |   |            |   |                      |   |        |   |                   |   |                        |   |  |  |

14663



**CIS Maltreatment Assessment: Child**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Male  Female Age:

*CIS Office Use Only:*

-  -  -

**13. Child Functioning:** (Are you aware if any of the following apply to this child at this point in time?)  No child functioning issues at this time

|                                       | Confirmed             | Suspected             |                                    | Confirmed             | Suspected             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Developmental Delay                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Running (One Incident)             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Physical/Developmental Disability     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Running (Multiple Incidents)       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other Health Condition                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Involvement in Prostitution        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Substance Abuse Related Birth Defects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Age-inappropriate Sexual Behaviour | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Depression/Anxiety                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Psychiatric Disorder               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Self-harming Behaviour                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Criminal/YOA Involvement           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Negative Peer Involvement             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Special Education Class            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Substance Abuse                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Irregular School Attendance        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Behaviour Problem (Home/Community)    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Other (Specify): _____             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Violence Towards Others               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |                                    |                       |                       |

**14. Maltreatment Codes:** (Enter primary form of maltreatment first)

- Physical Abuse** (1) Shaken Baby Syndrome  
(2) Inappropriate Punishment  
(3) Other Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse** (4) Sexual Activity Completed  
(5) Sexual Activity Attempted  
(6) Touching/Fondling Genitals  
(7) Exposure of Genitals  
(8) Exploitation: Pornography/Prostitution  
(9) Sexual Harassment  
(10) Voyeurism
- Neglect: (Failure to Provide)** (11) Failure to Supervise/Protect  
(12) Failure to Supervise/Protect: Sexual  
(13) Physical Neglect  
(14) Medical Neglect  
(15) Failure to Provide Treatment: Psych.  
(16) Maladaptive Behaviour  
(17) Abandonment  
(18) Educational Neglect
- Emotional Maltreatment** (19) Emotional Abuse  
(20) Non-organic Failure to Thrive  
(21) Emotional Neglect  
(22) Exposed to Family Violence
- Other Abuse** (23) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

→

**15. Alleged Perpetrator:** (Fill in all those that apply)

|   | 1st                   | 2nd                   | 3rd                   |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Mother (biological)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Father (biological)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Stepfather/Common-law | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Stepmother/Common-law | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Sibling               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Stranger              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Unknown               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

*CIS Office Use Only:*

**16. Substantiation:** (Fill in only one per column)

|  | 1st                   | 2nd                   | 3rd                   |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Unfounded                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Suspected: Insufficient Evidence | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Substantiated                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**If unfounded, was report a malicious referral?**  
 Yes  No  Unknown

**17. Duration of Maltreatment:** (Fill in only one per column)

|   | 1st                   | 2nd                   | 3rd                   |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Not Applicable (Maltreatment Unfounded) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Single Incident                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Less than Six Months                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> More than Six Months                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Unknown                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Describe harm suspected or known to be caused by investigated maltreatment.**

**18. Physical Harm:** (Fill in all that apply)

No Harm  Bruises/Cuts/Scrapes  Burns and Scalds  
 Broken Bones  Head Trauma  Fatal  
 Other Health Condition: \_\_\_\_\_

a) Medical treatment required for injury.  Yes  No  
 b) Health or safety seriously endangered by suspected or substantiated maltreatment.  Yes  No  
 c) History of undetected or misdiagnosed injuries.  Yes  No

**19. Mental or Emotional Harm:**

a) Child exhibits signs of mental or emotional harm.  Yes  No  
 b) Exhibited harm requires therapeutic treatment.  Yes  No  
 c) If maltreatment suspected/substantiated, is it probable that the child's mental or emotional health or capabilities have been significantly impaired?  Yes  No

**20. Out of Home Placement:** (Fill in only one)

No Placement Required  Foster Placement  
 Placement to be Considered  Group Home Placement  
 Informal Placement  Residential/Secure Treatment

If this sheet is for an additional child, check here to indicate Sections 21 to 25 are the same as for the 1st child recorded in the family.

**21. Child Welfare Court:**  
 Application Made  Application Considered  No Court Considered

**22. Previous Reports to Child Welfare:** (For this child)  
 Was child previously reported to Child Welfare for suspected maltreatment?  Yes  No  Unknown

**23. Criminal Court:** (Regarding the child maltreatment)  
 Was there a Police Investigation?  Yes  No  
 If yes, were criminal charges:  Laid  Considered  Not Laid

**24. Alleged Perpetrator Description:** (If not, caregiver A or B)  
 Age:  < 12  13-15  16-20  21-30  31-40  41-50  51-60  > 60  
 Gender:  Male  Female

**25. Response to Sexual Abuse:**

a) Non-offending caregiver(s) believes the child.  Yes  No  Unknown  
 b) Caregiver(s) provide emotional support.  Yes  No  Unknown  
 c) Caregiver(s) protect child from further incidents of sexual abuse.  Yes  No  Unknown  
 d) Alleged perpetrator is a known offender.  Yes  No  Unknown  
 e) Did he/she live in same home as child?  Yes  No  Unknown  
 f) Is he/she still living in same home as child?  Yes  No  Unknown

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## **APPENDIX E**

### **CIS Study Guide Book**

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The following is the CIS Study Guide Book used by child welfare workers to assist them in completing the Maltreatment Assessment Form.

## CIS GUIDE BOOK

September, 1998

**Principal Investigator:**

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**Site Directors:**

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**Design Team:**

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**CANADIAN INCIDENCE STUDY  
OF REPORTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Site Agency/Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Case Selection Starts \_\_\_\_\_  
Case Selection Ends \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions regarding the CIS Project, please contact:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Research Associate at the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Regional Site Office for the  
Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS).

Contact your Research Associate by:  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return all completed forms to your local Agency/Office Contact Person:  
\_\_\_\_\_, located at  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**If your Research Associate is not available, and you need immediate assistance,  
please contact the CIS Central Office in Toronto,  
at (416) 978-2527, and ask for Barbara Fallon or Bruce MacLaurin**

## **THE CANADIAN INCIDENCE STUDY OF REPORTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Canadian Incidence Study (CIS) is funded by the Child Maltreatment Division, Bureau of Reproductive and Child Health of Health Canada. Additional funding has been provided by the provinces of Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario and British Columbia, in addition to the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the Faculty of Social Work of the University of Toronto.

The CIS Research Team represents researchers from across Canada who have expertise in the areas of child maltreatment, child health and family violence, and have collaborated with provincial child welfare authorities. The project is centrally directed and managed by the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto. Agency/office enlistment and data collection is being conducted through five university-based site offices across Canada (Maritime and Atlantic Provinces, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies Provinces and Northern Territories, and British Columbia).

### **RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

There are no Canadian data to describe the scope of reported child abuse and neglect in this country. As a result, Child Welfare administrators must rely heavily on U.S. data, anecdotal information, and press reports to guide Canadian policy and practice decisions. The development of a consistent data collection system is challenged by several factors.

- ❑ Each province and territory collects different service statistics.
- ❑ Statistics on critical issues (maltreatment substantiation rates, rates of injuries) are not collected on a systematic basis.
- ❑ Some provinces and territories do not track cases of child neglect.
- ❑ Information on the use of, and/or involvement with related services (i.e. health and judicial services), is often not collected.

The ideal strategy for the collection of Canadian national data would be a uniform national case recording system, however it is unlikely that such a system could be developed in Canada during the next five to ten years. A sample survey method was deemed the most feasible approach for data collection during this interim period.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of the CIS is to provide reliable estimates of the scope and characteristics of reported child abuse and neglect in Canada. Specifically, the study is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- ❑ examine rates of reported physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment, as well as multiple forms of maltreatment;
- ❑ monitor forms of reported maltreatment;

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- examine severity of maltreatment in terms of chronicity and evidence of harm/risk;
- examine determinants of health for reported children and their families;
- monitor short-term investigation outcomes, including substantiation rates, placement in care, use of child welfare court and criminal prosecution.

### **SAMPLE**

Thirty Child Welfare Service Areas (CWSA) across Canada were randomly selected from the total number of child welfare offices and agencies offering services. A minimum of one CWSA was chosen from each province and territory. Provinces were allocated additional CWSAs based on the provincial proportion of the Canadian child population. Four provinces provided funds for enriched samples, which will yield provincial estimates of maltreatment. Two agencies were selected from a list of offices or agencies offering mandated child welfare services to families with an aboriginal heritage.

Information will be collected on all cases opened during a three-month period between October 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> 1998 (This date will vary slightly in some provinces).

### **CIS MALTREATMENT ASSESSMENT**

The **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** was designed to collect essential information on child maltreatment. It consists of three yellow legal sized pages with the "Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect: CIS Maltreatment Assessment" clearly marked on the front sheet.

The **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** is made up of: an **Intake Face Sheet**, a **Household Information** sheet and a **Child Information** sheet (Please refer to **Frequently Asked Question # 2**). The form was designed to be completed in five to ten minutes and a brief guide is available to provide definitions and concise explanations (see **Quick Definitions and Procedures**).

The **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** examines a wide range of family, child, and case status variables. This includes household demographics, caregiver profile, source of referral, health determinants, outcome of the investigation on a child-specific basis (including up to three forms of maltreatment), nature of harm, duration of maltreatment, identity of alleged perpetrator, placement in care, child welfare and criminal court involvement, and response to sexual abuse.

### **TRAINING**

Training sessions will be held during September and early October, 1998 for all workers involved in the study. Your Research Associate will visit your agency/office regularly during the data collection period. These on-site visits will allow the Research Associate to collect forms, enter data, answer questions, and resolve any instrumental problems that may arise. If you have any questions about the study, please contact your Research Associate (see contact information on the inside of the front cover of the **CIS Guide Book**).

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## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times during data collection and analysis. To guarantee client confidentiality, all near identifying information (located on the bottom portion of the **Intake Face Sheet**) will be coded at your agency/office. This portion of the **Intake Face Sheet** will be stored in a locked area at your agency/office until the study is completed, and then it will be destroyed.

Near identifying information is data which could potentially identify a family (e.g. agency/office case file number; the first two letters of the family name; and the first names of the children). The data will be kept in a separate database accessible only to Health Canada. This information is required to allow cross-referencing for cases, and potential follow-up research.

All forms will be kept under double lock (a locked RCMP approved filing cabinet in a locked office at the University of Toronto). Access to the forms will be restricted to select research team members authorized by Health Canada.

Published analyses will be conducted at the national level only. If requested by a site, specific data will be made available for an internal summary report; however, this information will not be shared externally. Worker specific data will not be made available to anyone, under any circumstances.

## **COMPLETING THE CIS MALTREATMENT ASSESSMENT**

It is essential that all items on the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** be completed. Use the "Unknown" response if you are unsure, or if a question is not applicable to the case situation. Please be sure that all items are completed. If the categories provided do not adequately describe a case, indicate the specific nature of the case in the available space, or use the additional information section on the **Comments** section located on the back of the **Intake Face Sheet**. If you have any questions during the study you are encouraged to contact your Research Associate. The number is listed on the inside cover of **CIS Guide Book**.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **#1 What cases should I complete a CIS Maltreatment Assessment on?**

You should complete a **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** for all cases opened during the case selection period (October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1998 in most jurisdictions).

### **#2 Should I complete a form on only those cases where abuse is suspected?**

You should complete an **Intake Face Sheet** of the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** for all cases investigated for any suspected abuse or neglect, as well as any other opened cases for service (e.g. pre-natal counseling, child/youth behaviour problems, request for services from another office or agency, and where applicable, screened out cases).

If maltreatment was suspected at any point during the investigation, and the case was opened for assessment investigation (not screened out) then you should complete the remainder of the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** (both **Household Information** and

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**Child Information** sheets). Maltreatment may be alleged by the person(s) making the report, or by any other person(s), including yourself, during the investigation. For example, complete a **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** if a case was initially referred for parent/adolescent conflict, but later had suspicions regarding abuse and maltreatment during the investigation.

**#3 Should I complete a CIS Maltreatment Assessment on screened out cases?**

The procedures for screening cases vary considerably across Canada. While the CIS will not try to capture informally screened out cases, we will gather face sheet information on screened out cases that are formally counted as case openings by your agency/office. If in doubt, please contact your Research Associate.

**#4 When should I complete the CIS Maltreatment Assessment?**

You should complete the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** at the same time that you prepare the assessment/investigation report for your agency or office (usually within the first two months of a case being opened). For some cases, you may find that this does not allow enough time to document the outcome of the full assessment, however, please complete the form to the best of your abilities.

**#5 Who should complete the CIS Maltreatment Assessment if more than one person works on the investigation?**

The **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** should be completed by the worker who conducts the intake assessment and prepares the assessment or investigation report. The worker with primary responsibility for the case should complete the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment**, if several workers investigate a case.

**#6 What should I do if more than one child is investigated?**

The **CIS Maltreatment Assessment** primarily focuses on the household however, the **Child Information** sheet is specific to the individual child being investigated. Complete one child sheet for each investigated child. In jurisdictions where all children are automatically investigated, only include those children for whom maltreatment was actually suspected. Additional pads of **Child Information** sheets are available in your training package.

**#7 Will I receive training for the CIS Maltreatment Assessment?**

All workers who complete investigations in your agency/office will receive training prior to the start of the data collection period. If a worker is unable to attend the training session or is hired after the start of the Canadian Incidence Study, he/she should contact the Research Associate regarding any specific questions about the form. Your Research Associate's name and contact number are on the inside cover of the **CIS Guide Book**.

**#8 What should I do with the completed forms?**

Give the completed **CIS Maltreatment Investigation Form** to your local Agency/Office Contact Person. All forms will be reviewed by the Research Associate during a site visit.

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Your Agency/Office Contact Person is listed inside the **CIS Guide Book** cover.

**#9 Is this information confidential?**

The information you provide is confidential, and no identifying information will leave your agency/office. Your Research Associate will code and enter any near identifying information from the bottom portion of the **Intake Face Sheet** of the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment**, and then destroy that portion of the sheet when the CIS concludes. Please refer to the section on Confidentiality.

## **DEFINITIONS: INTAKE FACE SHEET**

Sections that are shaded (and indicated by an arrow) require the clinical judgement of the investigating worker. Other information may be completed by an agency/office clerical staff or Research Associate if required.

### **DATE THAT REFERRAL WAS RECEIVED**

This date refers to the day that the referral source made initial contact with your agency or office. Check “Yes” or “No” if the case was opened at that time. If case was not opened at that time, please provide the date the case was opened.

### **SOURCE OF ALLEGATION/REFERRAL**

Please check off all sources of referral that are applicable for each case. This refers to separate and independent contacts with the Child Welfare agency or office. For example, when a young person tells a school principal of abuse and the school principal reports this to Child Welfare, this would be coded as a “1” beside “School” only. There was only one contact and referral in this case. If a second source (neighbour) contacted Child Welfare and also reported a form of maltreatment, then this would be coded as “2” beside “Neighbour/friend”. Use numbers to indicate primary and secondary referral sources.

- Custodial Parent:** Includes parent identified in Section (1) of “Caregiver A or B”.
- Non-Custodial Parent:** Contact from an estranged spouse (e.g. individual reporting the parenting practices of her/his spouse).
- Child:** A self-referral by any child listed on the **Intake Face Sheet** of the **CIS Maltreatment Assessment**.
- Relative:** Any relative of the child in question. If child lives with foster parents, and relative of the foster parents report maltreatment, please specify under “Other”.
- Neighbour/Friend:** Includes any neighbour or friend of the children or his/her family.
- Social Assistance Worker:** Refers to a Social Assistance Worker involved with the household.
- Crisis Service/Shelter:** Includes any shelter or crisis service for family violence or homelessness.
- Hospital:** Refers primarily to an emergency room visit or examination, rather than a family physician, or nurse.

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- Public Health Nurse:** Includes nurses involved in services such as family support, family visitation programs and community medical outreach.
- Physician:** A report from any family physician with a single or ongoing contact with the child and/or family.
- School:** Any school personnel, (teacher, principal, teacher's aide, etc.).
- Community/Recreation Centre:** Refers to any form of recreation and community activity programs (e.g. organized sports leagues or Boys and Girls Clubs).
- Mental Health Professional/Agency:** Includes family service agencies, mental health centres (other than hospital psychiatric wards), and private mental health practitioners (psychologists, social workers, other therapists) working outside of a school/hospital/Child Welfare/YOA setting.
- Other Child Welfare Services:** Includes referrals from mandated Child Welfare service providers from other jurisdictions or provinces.
- Day Care Centre:** Refers to a child care or day care provider.
- Police:** Any member of Police Services.
- Community Agency:** Any other community agency or service.
- Anonymous:** A caller who is not identified.
- Other:** Please specify the source of referral in the section provided.

#### **LIST ALL CHILDREN IN THE HOME**

List the first names of all children who are currently living in the home. Include their date of birth, and gender.

#### **SUBJECT OF REFERRAL**

Indicate those children who were a subject of the referral - were they mentioned in the initial referral?

#### **SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION**

Indicate those children who were a subject of child welfare investigation. Given the variety in definition and practice across Canada, rely on your clinical judgement to identify cases where maltreatment was actually suspected.

#### **WAS CHILD MALTREATMENT ALLEGED**

If you or a co-investigating worker suspected child maltreatment at any point during the referral or the investigation please check "Yes". If yes, was the case screened out, or was the case opened for assessment and investigation?

**IF YES, WAS CASE SCREENED OUT**

Jurisdictions use differing protocols and procedures in order to determine if a case is to be screened in or out of child welfare services. If the case was screened out, identify one of the coded reasons for screening out, and complete the remainder of the *Intake Face Sheet* only, and submit this form to your Agency/Office Contact Person for storage.

**IF YES, WAS CASE OPENED FOR ASSESSMENT/INVESTIGATION**

Indicate if the case was opened for assessment/investigation as a result of the alleged child maltreatment. If case was opened for assessment/investigation, please complete the remainder of the *CIS Maltreatment Assessment*. Use a separate Child Information page for each child for whom maltreatment was suspected. Please refer to Frequently Asked Question # 2.

**ASSESSMENT WORKER'S NAME**

This refers to the person completing the form. When more than one individual is involved in the investigation, the individual with overall case responsibility should complete the *CIS Maltreatment Assessment*.

**FAMILY CODE**

Use the reference name used for your agency/office filing system. In most cases this will be the primary caretaker's last name. If another name is used in the agency/office, please include it under "Alternate Surname". For example, if a parent's surname is "Thompson", and the two children have the surname of "Smith", then put "TH" and "SM". Use the first two letters of the family name only. Never fill in the complete name.

**CASE NUMBER**

This refers to the case number used by your agency/office.

**POSTAL CODE OR ADDRESS**

Although this information may be difficult to find, this is vital information as it allows us to examine critical community level characteristics. If it is not available, please provide the current address for the family. The Research Associate will look up the postal code, and will then destroy the address. The address will not leave your office/agency.

**REASON FOR REFERRAL / SCREENING OUT**

Provide a short description of the events that led up to the referral for this family (presenting concerns, environmental factors, past involvement with Child Welfare, etc.). If this case was screened out prior to opening, please indicate other reasons in this space.

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### NAME AND POSITION OF OTHER WRITERS

If any other individual(s) completed demographic information on the *Intake Face Sheet*, please identify name and position.

## DEFINITIONS: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION SHEET

### SECTION (1) IDENTITY OF CAREGIVER (A) AND CAREGIVER (B)

For the purpose of brevity, the *Household Information* sheet will focus on the immediate household of the child(ren) who have been referred to child welfare. This household is made up of all adults and children living at the address of the investigation. Provide information for Caregiver (A) and Caregiver (B) for sections 1-5 if there are two adults/caregivers living in the household. Complete information on Caregiver (A) if there is only one caregiver in the household.

In the event that there is only one caregiver residing in the household, and there is another significant caregiver residing outside of the home, then check "Other Adult (not in household)" and complete Caregiver (B) information on that individual.

If you have a unique circumstance that does not seem to fit the categories provided, please write a note in the Comment section on the back of the *Intake Face Sheet*.

- Relationship to Child:** Choose one category only. Identify the relationship between the caregiver and the children in the home. If a caregiver is both a biological and step-parent for different children in the household, please check "Step-Parent" only.
- Gender:** Identify gender for each caregiver in the household.
- Age:** Indicate the caregiver's approximate age. If you are not certain of an individual's age, please provide your best estimate.

### SECTION (2) PRIMARY INCOME SOURCE

We are interested in estimating the primary source of the caregiver's income. Please choose the category that best describes the caregiver's source of income.

- Full Time:** Individual is employed in a permanent, full-time position.
- Part Time (Less than 30 hours/week):** Refers to a single part time position.
- Multiple Jobs:** Caregiver has more than one part-time or temporary position.
- Seasonal:** This indicates that the caregiver works at either full or part time positions for temporary periods of the year.
- Unemployment Insurance:** Caregiver is temporarily unemployed and receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits.
- Social Assistance:** Caregiver receives Social Assistance benefits at this point in time.
- Other Benefits or Pensions:** Refers to other forms of benefits or pensions (e.g., family benefits, long term disability insurance, child support payments).
- No Reliable Source:** Caregiver works at temporary jobs that are not predictable and cannot be relied on for financial budgeting.

### **SECTION (3) EDUCATIONAL LEVEL**

Select the category that best describes the caregiver's education level. Use provincial or territorial definitions for elementary and secondary levels.

- Elementary or Less:** Caregiver attended some or all of Elementary School.
- Secondary or Less:** Please check this category if caregiver attended or completed high school.
- College/University:** Caregiver attended College or University, and has partially or totally completed a degree or diploma.
- Unknown:** Check if you cannot estimate the educational level of the caregiver.

### **SECTION (4) ETHNO-RACIAL GROUP**

Examining the ethno-racial background can provide valuable information regarding differential access to child welfare services. Given the sensitivity of this question, this information will not be published out of context. This section uses a checklist of ethno-racial categories used by Statistics Canada in the 1996 Census (Long Questionnaire).

Please check the ethno-racial category that best describes the Caregiver and identify the primary language spoken at home by that individual. Select "Other" if you wish to identify two ethno-racial groups, and specify. If caregiver is of aboriginal heritage, please note the categories that best describe the caregiver.

### **SECTION (5) CONTACT WITH CAREGIVER**

Would you describe the caregiver as being cooperative or non-cooperative with the child welfare investigation? Please check "No Contact" in the case that you had no contact with the caregiver.

### **SECTION (6) HISTORY OF ABUSE**

Indicate whether the caregiver suffered maltreatment as a child. Please check "Confirmed" if a history of abuse was disclosed by the caregiver, or known to your agency/office. Use the "Suspected" category if you suspect a history of abuse but are not able to confirm. Check "No/Unknown" if you are unsure, or unaware of history of abuse.

Indicate whether the caregiver is in a violent relationship, and whether this individual was the victim or perpetrator of violence. Please check "Confirmed" if violence was disclosed by the caregiver, or known to your agency/office. Use "Suspected" if you suspect a violent relationship, but cannot verify this information. Check "No/Unknown" if you are not sure, or are not aware of a violent relationship.

### **SECTION (7) OTHER ADULTS**

Please check all categories that describe individuals (excluding caregivers described in Section 1-6) who lived in the house at the time of the referral to child welfare. If recent changes in household, describe the situation at the time of the referral.

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Also identify any other caregivers living outside of the home who are involved with any of the children in the household.

Specify if there is an ongoing child custody dispute at this time.

### SECTION (8) FAMILY INCOME

Please provide an estimate of the family income. This is critical information to examine the effects of child poverty. Use the “Unknown” category only if you cannot provide any estimate of this figure.

### SECTION (9) HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS

These questions address the housing accommodations and conditions related to household (e.g. safety of housing and frequency of moves).

- Type of Housing:** Indicate the housing category that best describes the living situation of this household.

**Public Housing:** A public rental housing complex (i.e. rent subsidized, government owned housing).

**Rental Apartment:** A private rental apartment.

**Rental Townhouse:** A private rental townhouse.

**Rental House:** A private rental house.

**Purchased Home:** A purchased house, condominium, or townhouse.

**Shelter/Hotel:** A homeless or family shelter, SRO hotel (single room occupancy), or motel accommodations.

**Unknown:** Housing accommodation is unknown.

**Other:** Specify any other form of shelter.

- Unsafe Housing:** In your opinion, are children at risk for injury or impairment in this living situation (e.g. broken windows, insufficient heat, parents and children sharing single room)? Please check “Unknown” only if you have not been to the home or residence.
- Does Family Share a Home:** Indicate if household is made up of multiple families.
- Moved Within Last 6 Months:** Indicate the number of family moves within the past six months.

### SECTION (10) CAREGIVER FUNCTIONING

These questions pertain to the caregivers identified in Section 1, and are to be rated as “Confirmed” or “Suspected”. Please check “Confirmed” if problem has been diagnosed, observed by you or another worker, or disclosed by the caregiver. Use the “Suspected” category if your suspicions are sufficient to include in a written assessment of the household or a transfer summary to a colleague. Where applicable, use the past six months as a reference point.

Check the “No Issues” box if you have no concerns about caregiver functioning at this time.

- Alcohol Abuse:** Use of alcohol poses a problem for household.
- Drug Abuse:** Abuse of prescription drugs, illegal drugs, or other substances.
- Criminal Activity:** Absent due to incarceration, or caregivers allow or condone criminal acts to be committed with the children's knowledge?
- Cognitive Impairment:** Cognitive ability of caregiver(s) has an impact on the quality of care giving provided in the household.
- Mental Health Problems:** Any mental health diagnosis or problem.
- Physical Health Issues:** Chronic illness, frequent hospitalizations, or physical disability.
- Few Social Supports:** Social isolation or lack of social supports.
- Other:** Identify other issues/concerns that describe caregiver functioning.

#### **SECTION (11) CASE STATUS INFORMATION**

Describe case status at the time that you are completing the form.

- Will the Case Stay Open for Ongoing Child Welfare Services:** At the time you are completing the *CIS Maltreatment Investigation Form*, do you intend to keep the case open to allow ongoing child welfare services?
- Was the Case Previously Opened?** Has this family previously had an open file with Child Welfare? Please respond if there is documentation, or if you are aware that there have been previous openings. Please estimate the number of previous openings. This would relate to case openings for any of the children identified as living in the home (listed on the **Intake Face Sheet**).
- If Case Previously Opened, How Long Was It Closed Prior to Current Opening?** How many months between the time the case was last closed and this current opening?

#### **SECTION (12) REFERRAL TO ANOTHER AGENCY OR SERVICE**

Indicate formal referrals that have been made to programs designed to offer services beyond the parameters of "ongoing child welfare services". Choose all that apply under the "Family Focus" and "Child Focus" columns. Include referrals made internally to a special program provided by your agency/office as well as referrals made externally to other agencies/services. Note whether a referral was made, not whether the young person or family has actually started to receive services. Specify other child or family referrals in the "Other Child/Family Referral" box.

- Family Preservation/Reunification Program:** Family or home based support services designed to support families, reduce risk of out-of-home placement, or reunify children in care with their family (e.g. Family Preservation, Home Builders).
- Parent Support Program:** Any group program designed to offer support or education (e.g. Parent's Anonymous, Parenting Instruction Course, Parent Support Association).
- Other Family Counseling:** Include programs for family therapy/counseling or couple counseling (e.g. family service bureau, mental health centre).

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- Drug/Alcohol Counseling:** Addiction program (any substance) for caregiver(s).
- Welfare/Social Assistance:** Referral for social assistance to address financial concerns of the household.
- Food Bank:** Referral to any food bank.
- Shelter Services:** Regarding family violence or homelessness.
- Domestic Violence Counseling:** Referral for counseling regarding domestic violence, abusive relationships, or the effects of witnessing violence.
- Psychiatric/Psychological Services:** Child referral to psychological or psychiatric services (trauma, high risk behaviour, or intervention).
- Special Education Referral:** Any specialized school program to meet a child's educational, emotional, or behavioural needs.
- Recreational Program:** Referral to a community recreational program (e.g. organized sports leagues, community recreation, Boy's and Girl's Club).
- Victim Support Program:** Child focused support program related to victim support.
- Medical/Dental Services:** Any specialized service to address the child's immediate medical or dental health needs.
- Other Child Counseling:** Any other child focused counseling service (e.g. counseling centre, mental health centre, family service bureaus, drug or alcohol counseling).
- Other Child/Family Referral:** Please indicate and specify any other child or family focused referral.

## DEFINITIONS: CHILD INFORMATION SHEET

### SECTION (13) CHILD FUNCTIONING

This section focuses on issues related to a child's level of functioning. Please check "Confirmed" if problem has been diagnosed, observed by you or another worker, or disclosed by the parent or child. Suspected means that, in your clinical opinion, there is reason to suspect that the conditions may be present, but they have not been diagnosed, observed or disclosed. Where appropriate, use the past six months as a reference point. Please remember to check the "no issues" box if you have no concerns about the child's functioning at this time.

- Developmental Delay**
- Physical/Developmental Disability**
- Other Health Condition:** Ongoing physical health condition (e.g. chronic disease, frequent hospitalizations).
- Substance Abuse Related Birth Defects:** Birth defects related to substance abuse of the biological parent (e.g. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)/Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE), cocaine addiction, solvent use).
- Depression or Anxiety**

- Self-Harming Behaviour:** Include high risk or life threatening behaviour, suicide attempts, and physical mutilation or cutting.
- Negative Peer Involvement:** High risk peer activities (gang activities, graffiti vandalism).
- Substance Abuse:** Any form of substance (prescription drugs, alcohol, illegal drugs, solvents).
- Behaviour Problems in the Home/Community:** Significant behavioural problems in the home/community (e.g. school refusal, aggression, violence, gang involvement).
- Violence to Others:** Aggression and violence to other children, adults or property in the home, school, or community.
- Running (one incident):** Has run away from home (or other residence) on one occasion, for at least one overnight period.
- Running (multiple incidents):** Has run away from home (or other residence) on multiple occasions for at least one overnight period.
- Involvement in Prostitution:** Any involvement in prostitution or sex trades.
- Age-Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour:** Child involved in age-inappropriate sexual behaviour with friends, or with family members.
- Psychiatric Disorder:** Diagnosed with psychiatric disorder by a Psychiatrist (e.g. conduct disorder, anxiety disorder).
- Criminal/YOA Involvement:** Charges, incarceration or alternative measures with the Young Offenders system.
- Specialized Education Class:** Any special education program for learning disability, special needs, or behaviour problems.
- Irregular School Attendance:** Irregular attendance and truancy (+5 days/month).
- Other:** Specify any other conditions related to child functioning.

#### **SECTION (14) FORMS OF MALTREATMENT**

Select the applicable maltreatment codes from the list provided (1-23), and write these numbers clearly in the boxes beside Section (14) Maltreatment Codes. The primary form of maltreatment is entered first.

The maltreatment typology developed here uses four key categories of child abuse and neglect: **Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Neglect/Failure to Provide, and Emotional Maltreatment**. These categories are comparable those used in the Ontario Incidence Study, and the U.S. National Incidence Study.

Because there is significant variation in provincial and territorial child welfare statutes, we are using a broad typology. Please rate cases on the basis of your clinical opinion, not on provincial, territorial or agency/office specific definitions.

When considering forms of maltreatment, it is critical that you consider the major categories of maltreatment, rather than focus on multiple sub-types of one category. Please code the most acute sub-type of a maltreatment category, rather than repeated multiple sub-types, as sub-types may occur simultaneously. For example, identifying a

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“sexual abuse” code in addition to “failure to supervise” (leading to sexual abuse), and “emotional abuse” would provide further clarity and context than using three sub-types of sexual abuse (touching/fondling genitals; exposure of genitals; and sexual activity attempted or completed”).

All major forms of alleged, suspected or investigated maltreatment should be noted in the maltreatment code box regardless of the outcome of the investigation, and regardless of the actual harm done to the child. For example, a three year old repeatedly found playing on a busy street is considered to be neglected even if harm has not yet occurred. The “first form” or “major form” in the first column should be the form that best characterizes the investigation (e.g. a physical abuse complaint which reveals sexual abuse should be coded as a sexual abuse investigation first, and a physical abuse investigation second).

#### **A. PHYSICAL ABUSE**

The child has suffered, or is at substantial risk of suffering physical harm, at the hands of the child's caretaker, by shaken baby syndrome, inappropriate punishment, or other forms of physical abuse.

- ❑ **Physical Abuse: Shaken Baby Syndrome:** Brain or neck injuries resulting from the infant being shaken.
- ❑ **Physical Abuse: Inappropriate Punishment:** Child abuse has occurred as a result of inappropriate punishment. Include inappropriate use of corporal punishment, as well as other forms of punishment that have led to physical harm, or put the child at substantial risk of harm.
- ❑ **Physical Abuse: Other Physical Abuse:** Include any other form of physical abuse.

#### **B. SEXUAL ABUSE**

The child has been, or is at substantial risk of being sexually molested or sexually exploited. This includes oral, vaginal or anal sexual activity, attempted sexual activity, sexual touching/fondling, exposure of genitals, voyeurism, involvement in prostitution or pornography, and sexual harassment. If several types of sexual activity are involved, please identify the most intrusive code. Include both intra-familial and extra-familial sexual abuse, as well as sexual abuse involving an older child or youth perpetrator.

- ❑ **Sexual Activity Completed:** Include oral, vaginal or anal sexual activities.
- ❑ **Sexual Activity Attempted:** Include attempts to have oral, vaginal or anal sex.
- ❑ **Touching/Fondling Genitals**
- ❑ **Adult Exposing Genitals To Child**
- ❑ **Voyeurism:** Includes activities where a child is encouraged to exhibit himself/herself for the sexual gratification of the alleged perpetrator. Use the “Pornography” code if voyeurism includes pornographic activities.
- ❑ **Sexual Exploitation: Involved in Prostitution or Pornography:** Include situations where an adult sexually exploits a child for purposes of financial gain or other profit.
- ❑ **Sexual Harassment:** Include proposition, encouragement, or suggestion of a sexual nature.

### C. NEGLECT/FAILURE TO PROTECT

The child has suffered harm or the child's safety or development has been endangered as a result of the caregiver(s)' failure to provide for or protect the child. Please note that the term "neglect" is not used in some provincial/territorial statutes, but interchangeable concepts include: failure to care and provide or supervise and protect; does not provide, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to treatment.

- **Failure to Supervise or Protect Leading to Physical Harm:** The child suffered or is at substantial risk of suffering physical harm because of the caretaker's failure to supervise and protect child adequately. Failure to protect includes situations where a child is harmed or endangered as a result of a caregiver's actions (e.g. drunk driving with a child, or engaging in dangerous criminal activities with a child).
- **Failure to Supervise or Protect Leading to Sexual Abuse:** The child has been, or is at substantial risk of being sexually molested or sexually exploited, and the caretaker knows or should have known of the possibility of sexual molestation and failed to protect the child adequately.
- **Physical Neglect:** The child has suffered or is at substantial risk of suffering physical harm caused by the caretaker(s)' failure to care and provide for the child adequately This includes inadequate nutrition/clothing, and unhygienic dangerous living conditions. There must be evidence or suspicion that the caretaker is at least partially responsible for the situation.
- **Medical Neglect:** The child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child's caretaker does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to the treatment.
- **Failure to Provide Treatment for Mental or Emotional or Developmental Problem:** The child is at substantial risk of suffering from either emotional harm demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self-destructive or aggressive behaviour; or a mental emotional or developmental condition that could seriously impair the child's development. The child's caretaker does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm. This category includes failing to provide treatment for school related problems such as learning and behaviour problems, as well as treatment for infant development problems such as non-organic failure to thrive. This category does not include failure to provide treatment for criminal behaviour (see Permitting Maladaptive/Criminal Behaviour).
- **Permitting Maladaptive/Criminal Behaviour:** A child has committed a criminal offence with the encouragement of the child's caretaker, or because of the caretaker's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately. Alternatively, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's caretaker does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to those services or treatment. There is some overlap between this category and the failure to supervise as well as the failure to provide treatment category, if a situation involves both criminal activity as well as some form of harm or substantial risk of harm to the child include both forms of maltreatment.
- **Abandonment/Refusal of Custody:** The child's parent has died or is unable to exercise custodial rights and has not made adequate provisions for care and custody, or child is in a placement and parent refuses/unable to take custody. .

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- **Educational Neglect:** Caretakers knowingly permit chronic truancy (5+ days a month), or fail to enroll the child, or repeatedly keep the child at home. If child is experiencing mental, emotional, or developmental problems associated with school, and treatment is offered but caretakers do not cooperate with treatment, classify the case under failure to provide treatment as well.

#### **D. EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT**

- **Emotional Abuse:** The child has suffered or is at substantial risk of suffering from mental, emotional or developmental problems caused by overtly hostile or punitive treatment, or habitual or extreme verbal abuse (e.g. threatening, belittling). If treatment is offered but caretakers do not cooperate, classify case under failure to provide treatment as well.
- **Emotional Neglect:** The child has suffered or is at substantial risk of suffering from mental, emotional or developmental problems caused by inadequate nurturing or affection. If treatment is being offered but caretakers are not cooperating, classify case under failure to provide treatment as well.
- **Non-organic Failure to Thrive:** A child under three, who has suffered a marked retardation or cessation of growth for which no organic reasons can be identified. Failure to thrive cases where inadequate nutrition is the identified cause should be classified as physical neglect. Non-organic Failure to Thrive is generally considered to be a form of psychological maltreatment, however it has been classified as a separate category because of its particular characteristics.
- **Exposed to Family Violence:** A child has been a witness to, or involved with family violence within his/her home environment. This would include situations where the child indirectly witnessed the violence (e.g. saw the physical injuries on his/her parent/caregiver the next day).

#### **E. OTHER MALTREATMENT**

- Specify any other form of maltreatment (Physical, Sexual, Neglect, or Emotional).

#### **SECTION (15) ALLEGED PERPETRATOR**

This section relates to the individual who is alleged, suspected or guilty of maltreatment towards the young person in question. Adoptive or foster parents and common-law partners should be listed under "Other" and be specified. For each form of maltreatment indicate the person(s) responsible for maltreatment. Note that different people can be responsible for different forms of maltreatment (e.g. common-law partner abuses child, but other parent could possibly have prevented the abuse). If you responded with "Other", please specify relationship to child (e.g. brother, uncle, grandmother, teacher, doctor, stranger, classmate, neighbour, family friend). Identify the alleged perpetrator, regardless of the level of substantiation at this point of the investigation.

### SECTION (16) SUBSTANTIATION

Indicate the level of substantiation at this point in your investigation.

- Unfounded:** A case is “Unfounded” if you are convinced that the child has not been maltreated.
- Suspected:** A case is “Suspected” if you do not have enough evidence to substantiate maltreatment, but you also are not sure that maltreatment can be ruled out.
- Substantiated:** A case is considered “Substantiated” if the balance of evidence indicates that abuse or neglect has occurred.
- If Unfounded, Was Report a Malicious Referral?** Identify if this case was intentionally reported while knowing the allegation was unfounded. This could apply to conflictual relationships (e.g. custody dispute between parents, disagreements between relatives, disputes between neighbours).

### SECTION (17) DURATION OF MALTREATMENT

Check the duration of maltreatment, as it is known at this point of time in your investigation. This can include a single incident, multiple incidents for less than six months in duration, or multiple incidents longer than six months in duration. If this case is unsubstantiated, then the duration needs to be listed as “Not Applicable (Maltreatment Unfounded)”.

### SECTION (18) PHYSICAL HARM

Describe the physical harm suspected, or known to have been caused by the investigated maltreatment. Please include harm ratings even in accidental injury cases where maltreatment is unfounded, but the injury triggered the investigation.

- No Harm:** There is no apparent evidence of physical harm to the child as a result of maltreatment.
- Bruises/Cuts/Scrapes:** The child suffered various physical hurts visible for at least 48 hours.
- Burns and Scalds:** The child suffered burns and scalds visible for at least 48 hours.
- Broken Bones:** The child suffered fractured bones.
- Head Trauma:** The child was a victim of head trauma.
- Other Health Conditions:** Other physical health conditions, such as untreated asthma or failure to thrive.
- Death:** Child has died, maltreatment was suspected during the investigation as the cause of death. Include cases where maltreatment was eventually unfounded.

In order to help us rate the severity of any documented physical harm, please indicate whether medical treatment was required as a result of the injury or harm.

In cases of “suspected” or “substantiated” maltreatment indicate whether the child’s health or safety were endangered to the extent that the child could have suffered life

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threatening or permanent harm (e.g.: three year old child wandering on busy street, child found playing with dangerous chemicals or drugs).

Indicate whether the investigation revealed a history of previously undetected or misdiagnosed injuries.

#### **SECTION (19) MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL HARM**

Describe the mental or emotional harm or trauma that was suspected or known to have been caused by the investigated maltreatment. This question requires evidence that the harm was likely caused by the suspected or substantiated maltreatment, as opposed to questions in Section 13 (Child Functioning). Include changes in the child's development (regression, withdrawal), self-regulation (sleep patterns, elimination); or emotions (child is crying, clinging, or anxious), that are apparent for at least 48 hours and are suspected to have been caused by the investigated maltreatment.

In order to help us rate the severity of mental emotional harm, please indicate whether therapeutic intervention is required as a result of the mental or emotional distress shown by the child.

In cases of suspected or substantiated maltreatment, indicate whether, given the severe nature of the maltreatment, it is probable that the child's mental or emotional health or capabilities have been significantly impaired. Evidence or current harm is not required in order to give a rating of probable future harm.

#### **SECTION (20) OUT OF HOME PLACEMENT**

Check one category related to the placement of the child. If the child is already living in an alternative living situation (emergency foster home, receiving home), please indicate the setting status at this time.

- No Placement Required:** No placement is required following the investigation.
- Placement Is Being Considered:** At this point of the investigation, an out-of-home placement is still being considered.
- Informal Placement:** An informal placement has been arranged within the family support network (kinship care, extended family).
- Foster Placement:** Include foster care assessment and receiving, general, and treatment foster care placements. Select this category if family member has been made a provisional foster parent.
- Group Home Placement:** Out of home placement required in a structured group living setting.
- Residential/Secure Treatment Centre:** Placement required in a therapeutic residential treatment centre to address the needs of the child.

#### **SECTION (21) CHILD WELFARE COURT**

There are three categories to describe the current status of child welfare court at this time in the investigation. Select one category. If investigation is not completed, please answer to the best of your knowledge at this time.

### **SECTION (22) PREVIOUS REPORTS**

This section collects information on previous reports to Child Welfare for the individual child in question. Please report if the child has been previously reported to Child Welfare authorities for maltreatment. Please use "Unknown" if you are aware of information but cannot confirm this report.

### **SECTION (23) CRIMINAL COURT**

Was there a Police Investigation regarding the alleged child maltreatment? If yes, indicate if criminal charges were laid, considered, or not laid.

### **SECTION (24) ALLEGED PERPETRATOR DESCRIPTION**

If the alleged perpetrator is not described as either Caregiver (A) or Caregiver (B) in Sections 1-5 of this instrument, please describe the gender and age of this individual. Age is essential information used to distinguish between child, youth and adult perpetrators. If there are multiple alleged perpetrators, please describe the perpetrator associated with the primary form of maltreatment.

### **SECTION (25) RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ABUSE**

For cases of suspected or substantiated sexual abuse, please describe the response of the non-offending caregiver/caregivers to the allegations of abuse.

- Indicate if the non-offending caregiver believed the report of the child's sexual abuse, or was the allegation discounted.
- Indicate if the non-offending caregiver provide emotional support to the child following the report and during the investigation.
- Identify if the non-offending caregiver demonstrated the ability to prevent further incidents of sexual abuse.

For cases of suspected or substantiated sexual abuse, please describe the response to the alleged perpetrator.

- Is alleged perpetrator a known offender? Has this individual been previously reported to Child Welfare or to the Police for sexual abuse in the past?
- Was the alleged perpetrator living in the child's home prior to the report to Child Welfare? If he/she was a common-law partner who spent several nights in the home each week, then mark "Yes". If the alleged perpetrator was a parent who had access to the child, mark "No" and provide details on this in the "Comments" section on the back of the *Intake Face Sheet*.
- Is the alleged perpetrator still living in the child's home? If there is a question that the perpetrator may be spending some days or nights there against the direction of Child Welfare, please respond "Yes".

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND INTEREST  
IN THE CANADIAN INCIDENCE STUDY

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## APPENDIX F

### Case Vignettes

The following are the case vignettes used during training sessions to ensure that workers understood how to complete the Maltreatment Assessment Form.

#### Intake Assessment: Vignette – Rebecca

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b><u>File Number:</u></b> 2345-234 G                          |  |
| <b><u>Referring Source:</u></b> School Vice-Principal          | <b><u>Date of Referral:</u></b> October 6            |
| <b><u>Family Name:</u></b> Smith                               |  |
| <b><u>Mother's Name:</u></b> Betsy Smith                       | <b><u>Father's Name:</u></b> Barry Smith             |
| <b><u>Children in the Family Home:</u></b><br>Rebecca<br>Sarah | <b><u>Date of Birth:</u></b><br>02/02/87<br>03/27/89 |
| <b><u>Address at Time of Referral:</u></b>                     | 222 Apple Street<br>Vancouver, Ontario<br>D3E F4G    |

#### *Referral Summary:*

**Date: 06/10/98** Vice Principal Q called the office about an alleged sexual abuse involving a student at his school; Rebecca. Rebecca had disclosed to her mother that her father had inappropriately touched her and requested her to touch him. Upon calling the mother the vice-principal learned that there were two alleged incidents of sexual abuse.

The parents are separated. The two girls live with their mother in the family home. Mother, age 28, works full time as a grocery store clerk, father, age 32, is currently unemployed but has worked as a computer software salesperson in the past. The girls visit their father every other weekend, Friday to Sunday, at his apartment. There is also a Thursday evening visit.

#### *Action Taken:*

**Date: 06/10/98** The police and Mrs Smith (Betsy) were contacted and arrangements were made to interview Rebecca in the CAS office on Friday, October 7.

**Date: 07/10/98** Constable J. of the Youth Bureau, Mrs Smith, Rebecca and Sarah were seen. The mother explained the custody arrangement that she has with the girl's father. The father has been in Toronto only one year; prior to that he was living in Calgary. Betsy has recently disclosed her own childhood abuse, by her father, and is seeing a therapist in this regard.

During Rebecca's interview both the police and I were present. The interview was videotaped. Rebecca stated that the first incident occurred a few months ago when she and her sister were sleeping over at their father's. When visiting Mr Smith the girls share the same bed. Rebecca reported that her father came into the bedroom, bent over the bed and touched her breasts under her pyjamas, rubbing them with his fingers. Her father didn't say anything.

Rebecca reported that the second incident occurred on the next visit. Her father came into her bedroom reached for her hand and had her touch his penis. Both times Sarah was asleep and not aware of what was happening.

Rebecca stated that she is scared and afraid that something else will happen. Rebecca was very clear in reporting that what was reported was credible. Sarah was also interviewed and stated that nothing had happened between her and her father.

The police officer talked with Rebecca and her mother about charging her father. Both were in favour of this. The officer also advised that access between the girls and their father be stopped and that Betsy should tell Barry why. (Worker to do abuse report after the police charge the father). Both Rebecca and her mother are accepting the referral to a crisis group.

**Date:** 10/11/98 A message was left for Betsy Smith's therapist to call me.

A referral was made to the Disclosure Group. Contact person for the Disclosure Group is M.

***Investigation Conclusions:***

**Date:** 11/11/98 This case involves the sexual abuse of Rebecca by her father; Barry, who is currently separated from her mother; Betsy. The mother presents as a concerned and supportive parent. Rebecca was very clear and credible when she was interviewed and the police are likely to lay charges. Rebecca felt relieved after she had made the disclosure.

***Investigation Recommendations:***

- Ongoing support to both mother and father
- To support and encourage both mother and daughter to attend the Disclosure Group
- Preparation for court as may be required

**Outcome:** Case to be transferred to Family Services



## Intake Assessment: Vignette – Peter

**File Number:** 1234-567A

**Referring Source:** Tom B - School Principal      **Date of Referral:** September 21

**Family Name:** Nyugen

**Mother's Name:** Marla Nyugen

**Father's Name:** Martin Nyugen

**Children in the Family Home:**

Peter

Sean

**Date of Birth:**

28/02/93

5/03/95

**Address at Time of Referral:**

111 Anystreet, Apartment #1

Barrie, Ontario

A1B C2D

**Language Spoken:** Chinese/Vietnamese (limited English)

### ***Referral Summary:***

**Date: 21/09/98** Peter (5 years) came to school complaining that his father hit him with a shoe. He pointed to his groin area. The school principal said that Peter stated earlier in the year that his father hits him on the bottom. School stated Peter goes home from school with grade 5 and 6 students; D and N. D and N reported having seen Peter's father hit him outside of the family's store.

D and N say Peter is hard to control on the daily walk home from school and see him as aggressive with his peers. Peter's teacher (L) reports that Peter regularly displays behaviour problems and that he misses approximately 3 days of school each month.

### ***Action Taken:***

**Date: 22/09/98** Peter was in attendance at school and, in the presence of his teacher L, was interviewed with regard to the above referral report. Peter spoke with ease and explained that his father hit him with a shoe when he ran out of the family's store. Peter indicated that the shoe hit him on his right inner thigh near the groin. Peter openly stated that his father hits him with his hand and a stick. The child did not appear to be saddened or feel it was out of the norm. He did not appear frightened by his parents and was willing to have us talk with his father. The boy jumped around much in the conversation and had a difficult time concentrating on the questions he was asked.

Upon examination there was no bruising on the child's body.

Peter told us that his father had been in jail for fighting with some neighbourhood youth. He went into much detail about the fighting.

I called Peter's father and requested an interview. Mr Nyugen agreed and directed me to the family's apartment. He said that his wife would also be available to talk with me.

I contacted the 1001 Division Youth Bureau to consult about this case. The possibility of over-discipline, possibly cultural, was discussed. During this consultation the police verified that Mr Nyugen had recently been jailed on a warrant, which originated from a charge of "uttering death threats". The details of the charge were not available.

**Date: 23/09/98** Mother and father appeared calm and pleasant. Mother is in her early 30s, father is approximately 10 years older. The apartment appeared neat and orderly. Mr Nyugen described Peter as hard to manage and as a result he was primarily responsible for the child care for Peter. Peter is always asking for money from the till. I believe this may be attention seeking and parents might not have much time to spend with the boy if they are running the store. The store is not doing very well, which is an added stressor on the family. The father says he has never hit the boy and explains how much he values him, especially being the oldest male.

Father was willing for ongoing support from the agency and assured me he does not use physical discipline. Peter and his father appeared to have a warm relationship.

***Investigation Conclusions:***

**Date: 24/09/98** The Nyugen family uses physical discipline in my opinion, and I have difficulty with the father's denial in this regard. I do not believe it is abusive but could lean towards over-discipline. The father's recent charge of "Uttering Death Threats" is of concern.

Further assessment needs to be done around gathering information on family history, family dynamics, etc. These assessments should be completed in the family's primary language.

I believe that this family could benefit from some child management training. Supervision of both children should also be explored.

***Investigation Recommendations:***

Further assessment

Child management

***Protection Concerns:***

Child's behaviour

Parent's disciplinary measures  
Possible supervision difficulties  
Cultural differences

**Outcome: Case to be transferred to Family Services**

## APPENDIX G

### Worker Information Form

The following is the information form completed by the investigating workers.

| <b>WORKER INFORMATION FORM</b>  |   |   |                              |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| <p>Thank you for taking the time to complete this Worker Information Form for the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect. This information is confidential and will not be identified in the report, or within your work place. If you have any questions about completing this form, please contact your assigned Research Associate: _____, Tel: (____)____-_____</p> |   |   |                              |
| <b>A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION</b>  |   |   |                              |
| Date: ____/____/____  |   |   |                              |
| 1. Name: _____  | dy mo yr<br> _ _  CIS OFFICE USE ONLY   |   |                              |
| 2. Age: _____   | 3. Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female                        |   |                              |
| 4. Ethno-racial Group (Based on Statistics Canada 1996 Census)  |   |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White  | <input type="checkbox"/> Latin American   |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab/West Asian (e.g. Armenian, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Moroccan) |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese  | <input type="checkbox"/> South Asian (e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan)         |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino   | <input type="checkbox"/> South East Asian (e.g. Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Vietnamese)     |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korean   | <input type="checkbox"/> Black (e.g. African, Haitian, Jamaican)                                |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____   |   |                              |
| 5. Primary Language <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____  |   |   |                              |
| 6. Agency: _____  | _ _  CIS OFFICE USE ONLY  |   |                              |
| 7. Team/Branch: _____   |   |   |                              |
| 8. Which category best describes your current position?   |   |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intake Worker (primarily investigations & referrals)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Combination of Intake & Ongoing Service                                |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Service Worker (primarily ongoing cases)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____   |   |                              |
| <b>B. CASELOAD INFORMATION</b>  |   |   |                              |
| 9. What is your current caseload? (# of open cases at this time) _____  |   |   |                              |
| 10. What is the average size of your caseload? _____  |   |   |                              |
| <b>C. EDUCATION</b>   |   |   |                              |
| 11. Please check all diplomas or degrees that you have obtained:  |   |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College Diploma  | <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BSc   | <input type="checkbox"/> BSW                              | <input type="checkbox"/> MSc |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MSW  | <input type="checkbox"/> PhD  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____           |                              |
| <b>D. EXPERIENCE</b>  |   |   |                              |
| 12. Total years you have worked as a social worker? _____   |   |   |                              |
| 13. How many years of this total were spent in child protection? _____  |   |   |                              |
| <b>E. CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING</b>   |   |   |                              |
| 14. Please check off all specific training that you have received:  |   |   |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General child abuse  | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk assessment  | <input type="checkbox"/> Child development                |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse training  | <input type="checkbox"/> Solution focused interventions   | <input type="checkbox"/> Family preservation intervention |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse training  | <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect assessment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural sensitivity training    |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis intervention  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____  |   |                              |

## APPENDIX H

### Variance Estimates and Confidence Intervals

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The following is a description of the method employed to develop the sampling error estimation for the CIS as well as the variance estimates and confidence intervals for the CIS estimates. Variance estimates are provided for the statistics in the “total” column for each table in the Final Report.

#### Sampling Error Estimation<sup>1</sup>

The CIS uses a random sample survey method to estimate the incidence and characteristics of cases of reported child abuse and neglect. The study estimates are based on the CIS sample of 7,672 child investigations drawn from a total population of 5,449 family cases open for services in Canada.

The size of this sample ensures that estimates for figures such as the overall rate of reported maltreatment, substantiation rate, and major categories of maltreatment have a reasonable margin of error. However, the margin of error increases for estimates involving less frequent events, such as the number of reported cases of medical neglect or the number of children under four placed in the care of child welfare services. For extremely rare events, such as Shaken Baby Syndrome, the margin of error is very large, and such estimates should be interpreted as providing a rough idea of the relative scope of the problem rather than a precise number of cases.

Table 2-2 provides the margin of error for selected CIS estimates. For example, the estimated number of substantiated child maltreatment investigations is 56,543.13. The lower 95% confidence interval is 44,501.35 investigations and the upper confidence interval is 68,584.91 child investigations. This means

that there is a 95% chance that the true incidence of substantiated maltreatment is between 44,501 and 68,584. In contrast, the estimated number of Shaken Baby Syndrome cases is 509.98, but the 95% confidence interval is between 192.82 and 827.14 child investigations. The estimate of 509.98 is unlikely to be exactly correct; however, we can be reasonably sure that the actual number of shaken baby cases investigated by child welfare services in Canada is in the range of 192 to 827 investigations.

The error estimates do not account for any errors in determining the annual and regional weights. Nor do they account for any other non-sampling errors that may occur, such as inconsistency or inadequacies in administrative procedures from site to site. The error estimates also cannot account for any variations due to seasonal effects. The accuracy of these annual estimates depends on the extent to which the sampling period is representative of the whole year.

To assess the precision of the CIS estimates, sampling errors were calculated from the sample with reference to the fact that the survey population had been stratified and that a single cluster (or site) had been selected randomly from each stratum. From the selected cluster all cases in the three-month period were sampled. In a few situations, a shorter period of time was sampled or every second case was sampled. An annualization weight was used to weight the survey data to represent annual cases. A regionalization weight was used to weight the survey data so that data from sites represented regions or strata.

Sampling errors were calculated by determining the sampling variance and then taking the square root of

---

<sup>1</sup> Statistical consultation and sampling error estimation were provided by Statistics Canada, Social Survey Method Division, Jane Mulvihill, Senior Methodologist.

this variance. The sampling variability that was calculated was the variability due to the randomness of the cluster selected. Had a different cluster been selected, then a different estimate would have been obtained. The sampling variance and sampling error calculated are an attempt to measure this variability. Thus, the measured variability is due to the cluster. We did not measure the variability, however, because only three months were sampled, not a full year, and in some situations only every second case was sampled.

To calculate the variance, the stratified design allowed us to assume that the variability between strata was zero and that the total variance at the Canadian level was the sum of the variance for each stratum.

Calculating the variance for each stratum was a problem, because only one cluster had been chosen in each. To overcome this problem we used the approach given in Rust and Kalton.<sup>2</sup>

This approach involved collapsing strata into groups (collapsed strata); the variability among the clusters within the group was then used to derive a variance estimate. Collapsing of strata was done to maintain homogeneity as much as possible.

The estimated population of incidences ( $\hat{\tau}$ ) with the characteristic of interest is:

$$\hat{\tau} = \sum_{b=1}^H \hat{\tau}_b$$

where:

$\hat{\tau}_b$  is the population of incidences with the characteristic of interest for the  $b^{\text{th}}$  stratum.

$$\hat{\tau}_b = \sum_i w_b y_{bi}$$

where:

$w_b$  is the weight for the  $b^{\text{th}}$  stratum

$y_{bi}$  is 1 if the  $i^{\text{th}}$  unit (case) in stratum  $b$  has the characteristic of interest, is 0 if the  $i^{\text{th}}$  unit (case) in stratum  $b$  does not have the characteristic of interest, and we sum over all the  $i$  units (cases) in the  $b^{\text{th}}$  stratum.

For our study the  $H$  strata were partitioned into  $J$  groups of strata, known as collapsed strata, and there were  $H_j \geq 2$  strata in the collapsed stratum  $j$ . Stratum  $b$  within collapsed stratum  $j$  is denoted by  $b(j)$ . The collapsed strata estimator of the variance  $\hat{\tau}$  is

$$\text{var}(\hat{\tau}) = \sum_j \frac{H_j}{(H_j - 1)} \sum_b \left[ \hat{\tau}_{b(j)} - \frac{\hat{\tau}_j}{H_j} \right]^2$$

where  $\hat{\tau}_{b(j)}$  denotes the unbiased estimator of  $\tau_{b(j)}$ , the parameter value for stratum  $b$  in collapsed stratum  $j$ , and

$$\hat{\tau}_j = \sum_b \hat{\tau}_{b(j)}$$

The following are the variance estimates and confidence intervals for CIS variables of interest. The tables are presented to correspond with the tables in the chapters of the Final Report. Each table reports the estimate, standard error, coefficient of variation, lower and upper confidence interval.

<sup>2</sup> Rust K, Kalton G. Strategies for collapsing strata for variance estimation. *Journal of Official Statistics* 1987;3(1): 69-81.

**Appendix H, Table 3-1**  
**Estimate of Child Investigations in Canada in 1998**

| Variable               | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                        |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Child Investigations   | 135,573  | 13,710         | 10.1%                    | 108,701             | 162,445 |
| Incidence Per Thousand | 21.52    | 2.18           | 10.1%                    | 17.26               | 25.78   |

**Appendix H, Table 3-2**  
**Estimate of Family Investigations in Canada in 1998**

| Variable              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Family Investigations | 96,014   | 9,991          | 10.4%                    | 76,432              | 115,596 |

**Appendix H, Table 3-3**  
**Categories of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Investigation Classification Level and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                               | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|  |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Physical Abuse: Primary/Second         | 46,745   | 4,134          | 8.8%                     | 38,642              | 54,848 |
| Incidence per Thousand                 | 7.42     | 0.66           | 8.8%                     | 6.13                | 8.71   |
| Sexual Abuse: Primary/Second           | 15,614   | 1,827          | 11.7%                    | 12,032              | 19,196 |
| Incidence per Thousand                 | 2.48     | 0.29           | 11.7%                    | 1.91                | 3.05   |
| Neglect: Primary/Second                | 63,954   | 6,629          | 10.4%                    | 50,961              | 76,947 |
| Incidence per Thousand                 | 10.15    | 1.05           | 10.4%                    | 8.09                | 12.21  |
| Emotional Maltreatment: Primary/Second | 44,465   | 5,630          | 12.7%                    | 33,431              | 55,499 |
| Incidence per Thousand                 | 7.06     | 0.89           | 12.7%                    | 5.31                | 8.81   |

**Appendix H, Table 3-5**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Physical Abuse in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                             | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                      |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Shaken Baby Syndrome                 | 598      | 188            | 31.4%                    | 229                 | 967    |
| Incidence per Thousand               | 0.09     | 0.03           | 31.4%                    | 0.03                | 0.15   |
| Inappropriate Punishment             | 28,643   | 3,088          | 10.8%                    | 22,590              | 34,696 |
| Incidence per Thousand               | 4.55     | 0.49           | 10.8%                    | 3.59                | 5.51   |
| Other Physical Abuse                 | 18,336   | 2,718          | 14.8%                    | 13,009              | 23,663 |
| Incidence per Thousand               | 2.91     | 0.43           | 14.8%                    | 2.06                | 3.76   |
| Physical Abuse: Primary or Secondary | 46,745   | 4,134          | 8.8%                     | 38,642              | 54,848 |
| Incidence per Thousand               | 7.42     | 0.66           | 8.8%                     | 6.13                | 8.71   |
| Physical Abuse: Primary              | 41,551   | 3,854          | 9.3%                     | 33,998              | 49,104 |
| Incidence per Thousand               | 6.59     | 0.61           | 9.3%                     | 5.39                | 7.79   |

**Appendix H, Table 3-6**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Sexual Abuse in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                           | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                    |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Sexual Activity Completed          | 2,742    | 373            | 13.6%                    | 2,011               | 3,473  |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.44     | 0.06           | 13.6%                    | 0.32                | 0.55   |
| Sexual Activity Attempted          | 3,994    | 625            | 15.6%                    | 2,770               | 5,218  |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.63     | 0.10           | 15.6%                    | 0.44                | 0.83   |
| Touching/Fondling Genitals         | 7,728    | 1,326          | 17.2%                    | 5,129               | 10,327 |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 1.23     | 0.21           | 17.2%                    | 0.81                | 1.64   |
| Exposure of Genitals               | 1,654    | 324            | 19.6%                    | 1,020               | 2,289  |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.26     | 0.05           | 19.6%                    | 0.16                | 0.36   |
| Exploitation/Pornography           | 1,094    | 713            | 65.2%                    | (303)               | 2,491  |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.17     | 0.11           | 65.2%                    | (0.05)              | 0.40   |
| Sexual Harassment                  | 497      | 183            | 36.7%                    | 139                 | 855    |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.08     | 0.03           | 36.7%                    | 0.02                | 0.14   |
| Voyeurism                          | 50       | 33             | 66.3%                    | (15)                | 115    |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 0.01     | 0.01           | 66.3%                    | (0.00)              | 0.02   |
| Sexual Abuse: Primary or Secondary | 15,614   | 1,827          | 11.7%                    | 12,032              | 19,196 |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 2.48     | 0.29           | 11.7%                    | 1.91                | 3.05   |
| Sexual Abuse: Primary              | 14,406   | 1,770          | 12.3%                    | 10,937              | 17,875 |
| Incidence per Thousand             | 2.29     | 0.28           | 12.3%                    | 1.74                | 2.84   |

**Appendix H, Table 3-7**  
**Primary or Secondary Forms of Neglect in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in**  
**Canada in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Failure to Supervise or Protect From Physical Abuse | 34,366   | 5,381          | 15.7%                    | 23,819              | 44,913 |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 5.45     | 0.85           | 15.7%                    | 3.78                | 7.12   |
| Failure to Supervise or Protect From Sexual Abuse   | 4,176    | 712            | 17.0%                    | 2,781               | 5,571  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 0.66     | 0.11           | 17.0%                    | 0.44                | 0.88   |
| Physical Neglect                                    | 15,978   | 1,566          | 9.8%                     | 12,908              | 19,048 |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 2.54     | 0.25           | 9.8%                     | 2.05                | 3.03   |
| Medical Neglect                                     | 4,950    | 774            | 15.6%                    | 3,432               | 6,468  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 0.79     | 0.12           | 15.6%                    | 0.55                | 1.03   |
| Failure to Provide Treatment                        | 1,312    | 263            | 20.1%                    | 796                 | 1,828  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 0.21     | 0.04           | 20.1%                    | 0.13                | 0.29   |
| Permitting Maladaptive or Criminal Behaviour        | 6,421    | 997            | 15.5%                    | 4,466               | 8,376  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 1.02     | 0.16           | 15.5%                    | 0.71                | 1.33   |
| Abandonment   | 5,196    | 804            | 15.5%                    | 3,619               | 6,773  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 0.83     | 0.13           | 15.5%                    | 0.58                | 1.08   |
| Educational Neglect                                 | 4,876    | 481            | 9.9%                     | 3,933               | 5,819  |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 0.78     | 0.08           | 9.9%                     | 0.63                | 0.93   |
| Neglect: Primary or Secondary                       | 63,954   | 6,629          | 10.4%                    | 50,961              | 76,947 |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 10.15    | 1.05           | 10.4%                    | 8.09                | 12.21  |
| Neglect: Primary                                    | 53,922   | 6,458          | 12.0%                    | 41,264              | 66,580 |
| Incidence per Thousand                              | 8.56     | 1.02           | 12.0%                    | 6.55                | 10.57  |



**Appendix H, Table 3-8**

**Primary or Secondary Forms of Emotional Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                                     | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|  |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Emotional Abuse                              | 20,224   | 3,010          | 14.9%                    | 14,325              | 26,123 |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 3.22     | 0.48           | 14.9%                    | 2.28                | 4.16   |
| Non-organic Failure to Thrive                | 81       | 25             | 31.5%                    | 31                  | 130    |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 0.01     | 0.00           | 31.5%                    | 0.00                | 0.02   |
| Emotional Neglect                            | 8,084    | 1,172          | 14.5%                    | 5,786               | 10,382 |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 1.29     | 0.19           | 14.5%                    | 0.93                | 1.65   |
| Exposure to Family Violence                  | 21,132   | 3,984          | 18.8%                    | 13,324              | 28,940 |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 3.35     | 0.63           | 18.8%                    | 2.11                | 4.59   |
| Emotional Maltreatment: Primary or Secondary | 44,465   | 5,630          | 12.7%                    | 33,431              | 55,499 |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 7.06     | 0.89           | 12.7%                    | 5.31                | 8.81   |
| Emotional Maltreatment: Primary              | 25,694   | 4,258          | 16.6%                    | 17,348              | 34,041 |
| Incidence per Thousand                       | 4.08     | 0.68           | 16.6%                    | 2.76                | 5.40   |

**Appendix H, Table 4-1(a)**

**Physical Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                             | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                      |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| No Physical Harm                     | 118,017  | 12,589         | 10.7%                    | 93,343              | 142,691 |
| Physical Harm: No Treatment Required | 13,313   | 980            | 7.4%                     | 11,393              | 15,233  |
| Physical Harm: Treatment Required    | 4,197    | 841            | 20.0%                    | 2,548               | 5,846   |

**Appendix H, Table 4-1(b)**

**Nature of Physical Harm in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                           |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Bruises, Cuts, or Scrapes | 12,100   | 947            | 7.8%                     | 10,245              | 13,955 |
| Burns or Scalds           | 758      | 180            | 23.7%                    | 406                 | 1,110  |
| Broken Bones              | 511      | 122            | 23.9%                    | 272                 | 751    |
| Head Trauma               | 791      | 125            | 15.8%                    | 546                 | 1,036  |
| Other Health Conditions   | 4,257    | 538            | 12.6%                    | 3,203               | 5,311  |

**Appendix H, Table 4-1(c)**

**Medical Treatment Required in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Nature of Physical Harm in Canada in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Medical Treatment Not Required: Bruises, Cuts, or Scrapes | 10,449   | 819            | 7.8%                     | 8,844               | 12,054 |
| Medical Treatment Required: Bruises, Cuts, or Scrapes     | 1,618    | 302            | 18.7%                    | 1,026               | 2,210  |
| Medical Treatment Not Required: Burns or Scalds           | 389      | 65             | 16.7%                    | 261                 | 517    |
| Medical Treatment Required: Burns or Scalds               | 369      | 135            | 36.6%                    | 104                 | 634    |
| Medical Treatment Not Required: Broken Bones              | 33       | 8              | 23.6%                    | 18                  | 49     |
| Medical Treatment Required: Broken Bones                  | 478      | 123            | 25.8%                    | 237                 | 719    |
| Medical Treatment Not Required: Head Trauma               | 252      | 92             | 36.6%                    | 71                  | 432    |
| Medical Treatment Required: Head Trauma                   | 537      | 83             | 15.4%                    | 375                 | 699    |
| Medical Treatment Not Required: Other Health              | 2,413    | 220            | 9.1%                     | 1,981               | 2,845  |
| Medical Treatment Required: Other Health                  | 1,829    | 457            | 25.0%                    | 933                 | 2,725  |

**Appendix H, Table 4-2**

**Emotional Harm in Child Maltreatment by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| No Emotional Harm                     | 101,302  | 12,620         | 12.5%                    | 76,568              | 126,036 |
| Emotional Harm: No Treatment Required | 12,746   | 1,254          | 9.8%                     | 10,289              | 15,204  |
| Emotional Harm: Treatment Required    | 19,585   | 1,607          | 8.2%                     | 16,436              | 22,734  |

**Appendix H, Table 4-3**

**Duration of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigation by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation (Substantiated and Suspected Only) in Canada in 1998**

| Variable              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Single Incident       | 19,929   | 2053           | 10.3%                    | 15,906              | 23,952 |
| Less than 6 Months    | 14,991   | 1642           | 11.0%                    | 11,773              | 18,209 |
| Greater than 6 Months | 34,045   | 3320           | 9.8%                     | 27,538              | 40,552 |
| Unknown               | 17,641   | 1850           | 10.5%                    | 14,014              | 21,268 |

**Appendix H, Table 4-4**  
**Alleged Perpetrator in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Biological Mother                     | 82,168   | 8,081          | 9.8%                     | 66,329              | 98,007  |
| Biological Father                     | 51,635   | 6,788          | 13.1%                    | 38,330              | 64,940  |
| Step-father                           | 11,817   | 1,212          | 10.3%                    | 9,441               | 14,193  |
| Step-mother                           | 3,825    | 418            | 10.9%                    | 3,005               | 4,645   |
| Foster Family or Adoptive Parents     | 1,083    | 366            | 33.8%                    | 365                 | 1,801   |
| Other Relatives                       | 9,742    | 1,259          | 12.9%                    | 7,275               | 12,209  |
| At Least One Relative Perpetrator     | 126,413  | 12,541         | 9.9%                     | 101,832             | 150,994 |
| Family Friend                         | 1,156    | 286            | 24.7%                    | 595                 | 1,717   |
| Parent's Boyfriend or Girlfriend      | 1,765    | 345            | 19.6%                    | 1,088               | 2,441   |
| Child's Friend (Peer)                 | 900      | 260            | 28.9%                    | 390                 | 1,410   |
| Babysitter                            | 1,622    | 385            | 23.7%                    | 868                 | 2,376   |
| Teacher                               | 987      | 543            | 55.1%                    | (78)                | 2,052   |
| Other Professional                    | 442      | 152            | 34.5%                    | 144                 | 740     |
| Other Acquaintance                    | 897      | 249            | 27.7%                    | 409                 | 1,384   |
| Stranger                              | 343      | 98             | 28.7%                    | 151                 | 535     |
| At Least One Non-Relative Perpetrator | 8,102    | 1,277          | 15.8%                    | 5,599               | 10,605  |

**Appendix H, Table 5-1**  
**Ongoing Child Welfare Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable          | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|-------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Case to be Closed | 85,325   | 11,103         | 13.0%                    | 63,563              | 107,087 |
| Case to Stay Open | 45,934   | 3,394          | 7.4%                     | 39,282              | 52,586  |
| Other             | 3,025    | 1,035          | 34.2%                    | 995                 | 5,054   |

**Appendix H, Table 5-2**  
**Referrals to Other Services in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                                | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Family Preservation/Reunification       | 4,701    | 1,805          | 38.4%                    | 1,164               | 8,238  |
| Parent Support Program                  | 28,824   | 1,891          | 6.6%                     | 25,118              | 32,530 |
| Other Family/Parent Counseling          | 37,801   | 2,235          | 5.9%                     | 33,420              | 42,182 |
| Drug/Alcohol Counseling                 | 13,358   | 1,382          | 10.3%                    | 10,850              | 16,266 |
| Welfare/Social Assistance               | 3,191    | 726            | 22.8%                    | 1,768               | 4,614  |
| Food Bank                               | 4,000    | 594            | 14.8%                    | 2,836               | 5,164  |
| Shelter Services                        | 3,896    | 907            | 23.3%                    | 2,118               | 5,674  |
| Domestic Violence Counseling            | 8,419    | 1,485          | 17.6%                    | 5,507               | 11,331 |
| Minimum of One Family Referral          | 64,369   | 4,903          | 7.6%                     | 54,758              | 73,980 |
| Psychiatric/Psychological               | 20,792   | 1,962          | 9.4%                     | 16,946              | 24,638 |
| Special Education Referral              | 4,586    | 552            | 12.0%                    | 3,504               | 5,668  |
| Recreational Program                    | 7,246    | 1,013          | 14.0%                    | 5,261               | 9,231  |
| Victim Support Program                  | 4,352    | 856            | 19.7%                    | 2,674               | 6,030  |
| Medical/Dental Services                 | 5,980    | 505            | 8.4%                     | 4,991               | 6,969  |
| Other Child or Family Referral          | 21,033   | 1,868          | 10.2%                    | 17,373              | 24,693 |
| Minimum of One Child Referral           | 45,325   | 3,006          | 6.6%                     | 39,433              | 51,217 |
| Minimum of One Child or Family Referral | 18,244   | 6,516          | 8.0%                     | 5,473               | 31,015 |

**Appendix H, Table 5-3**

**Out-of-Home Placement in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| No Placement Required                                   | 113,231  | 12,275         | 10.8%                    | 89,172              | 137,290 |
| Placement Considered                                    | 4,732    | 468            | 9.9%                     | 3,816               | 5,648   |
| Informal Placement                                      | 5,852    | 711            | 12.2%                    | 4,457               | 7,245   |
| Placement in Foster Care or Other Child Welfare Setting | 11,058   | 1,279          | 11.6%                    | 8,551               | 13,565  |

**Appendix H, Table 5-4**

**Applications to Child Welfare Court in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable               | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                        |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| No Court Considered    | 105,337  | 12,667         | 12.0%                    | 80,511              | 130,163 |
| Application Considered | 7,256    | 630            | 8.7%                     | 6,021               | 8,491   |
| Application Made       | 5,595    | 954            | 17.1%                    | 3,725               | 7,465   |

**Appendix H, Table 5-5**

**Police Investigations and Charges Laid in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| No Police Investigation               | 101,547  | 11,172         | 11.0%                    | 79,650              | 123,444 |
| Police Investigation: No Charges Laid | 14,456   | 1,655          | 11.4%                    | 11,212              | 17,700  |
| Police Investigation: Charges Laid    | 13,343   | 2,119          | 15.9%                    | 9,189               | 17,497  |

**Appendix H, Table 6-1**  
**Child Age and Sex in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Incidence of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable            | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                     |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| 0-15 years Males    | 68,725   | 7,584          | 11.0%                    | 53,860              | 83,590 |
| 0-15 years Females  | 66,449   | 6,337          | 9.5%                     | 54,028              | 78,870 |
| 0-3 years Males     | 16,971   | 2,090          | 12.3%                    | 12,874              | 21,068 |
| 0-3 years Females   | 13,980   | 967            | 6.9%                     | 12,084              | 15,876 |
| 4-7 years Males     | 19,449   | 2,355          | 12.1%                    | 14,833              | 24,065 |
| 4-7 years Females   | 17,170   | 2,176          | 12.7%                    | 12,906              | 21,434 |
| 8-11 years Males    | 17,169   | 1,791          | 10.4%                    | 13,659              | 20,680 |
| 8-11 years Females  | 15,856   | 1,806          | 11.4%                    | 12,317              | 19,395 |
| 12-15 years Males   | 15,136   | 1,926          | 12.7%                    | 11,362              | 18,910 |
| 12-15 years Females | 19,443   | 2,106          | 10.8%                    | 15,315              | 23,571 |

**Appendix H, Table 6-3**  
**Age and Sex of Children in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable            | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                     |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| 0-3 years Males     | 16,968   | 2,090          | 12.3%                    | 12,871              | 21,065 |
| 0-3 years Females   | 13,981   | 967            | 6.9%                     | 12,085              | 15,877 |
| 4-7 years Males     | 19,447   | 2,355          | 12.1%                    | 14,831              | 24,063 |
| 4-7 years Females   | 17,169   | 2,176          | 12.7%                    | 12,905              | 21,433 |
| 8-11 years Males    | 17,171   | 1,791          | 10.4%                    | 13,660              | 20,682 |
| 8-11 years Females  | 15,856   | 1,806          | 11.4%                    | 12,317              | 19,395 |
| 12-15 years Males   | 15,136   | 1,926          | 12.7%                    | 11,362              | 18,910 |
| 12-15 years Females | 19,441   | 2,106          | 10.8%                    | 15,313              | 23,569 |

**Appendix H, Table 6-4**  
**Child Functioning in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Developmental Delay                               | 11,470   | 1,246          | 10.9%                    | 9,027               | 13,913 |
| Physical or Developmental Disability              | 4,791    | 684            | 14.3%                    | 3,451               | 6,131  |
| Substance Abuse Related Birth Defect              | 2,984    | 1,251          | 42.0%                    | 532                 | 5,436  |
| Other Health Condition                            | 5,168    | 613            | 11.9%                    | 3,968               | 6,369  |
| Specialized Education Class                       | 6,299    | 1,040          | 16.5%                    | 4,261               | 8,336  |
| Depression or Anxiety                             | 14,403   | 1,965          | 13.6%                    | 10,551              | 18,255 |
| Self-Harming Behaviour                            | 5,365    | 1,390          | 25.9%                    | 2,639               | 8,090  |
| Psychiatric Disorder                              | 2,770    | 448            | 16.2%                    | 1,891               | 3,649  |
| Any Physical, Emotional or Cognitive Health Issue | 35,173   | 4,373          | 12.4%                    | 26,602              | 43,744 |
| Behaviour Problem                                 | 32,690   | 3,909          | 12.0%                    | 25,029              | 40,351 |
| Negative Peer Involvement                         | 14,035   | 3,231          | 23.0%                    | 7,702               | 20,368 |
| Substance Abuse                                   | 6,630    | 1,688          | 25.5%                    | 3,322               | 9,939  |
| Violence to Others                                | 8,528    | 1,451          | 17.0%                    | 5,685               | 11,371 |
| Running Away                                      | 7,473    | 1,378          | 18.4%                    | 4,772               | 10,174 |
| Irregular School Attendance                       | 12,795   | 2,543          | 19.9%                    | 7,810               | 17,780 |
| Involvement in Prostitution                       | 143      | 61             | 43.1%                    | 23                  | 263    |
| Age-inappropriate Sexual Behaviour                | 5,470    | 805            | 14.7%                    | 3,892               | 7,048  |
| Criminal/YO Involvement                           | 3,447    | 700            | 20.3%                    | 2,074               | 4,820  |
| Any Behavioural Problems                          | 44,862   | 4,532          | 10.1%                    | 35,979              | 53,745 |

**Appendix H, Table 7-1**  
**Household Structure in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Categories of Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Two-Parent Biological                 | 39,424   | 5,083          | 12.9%                    | 29,461              | 49,387 |
| Two-Parent Blended                    | 23,613   | 2,507          | 10.6%                    | 18,700              | 28,526 |
| Biological Parent and Other Caregiver | 3,108    | 353            | 11.4%                    | 2,416               | 3,800  |
| Female-Parent                         | 53,675   | 5,387          | 10.0%                    | 43,117              | 64,233 |
| Male-Parent                           | 8,005    | 947            | 11.8%                    | 6,150               | 9,860  |
| Other                                 | 7,153    | 1,192          | 16.7%                    | 4,817               | 9,489  |

**Appendix H, Table 7-2**  
**Age of Mothers and Age of Fathers in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable             | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|----------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                      |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Mother less than 19  | 2,116    | 284            | 13.4%                    | 1,560               | 2,672  |
| 19-21                | 5,387    | 728            | 13.5%                    | 3,961               | 6,813  |
| 22-25                | 12,726   | 1,461          | 11.5%                    | 9,863               | 15,589 |
| 26-30                | 27,055   | 2,705          | 10.0%                    | 21,753              | 32,357 |
| 31-40                | 58,341   | 7,307          | 12.5%                    | 44,019              | 72,663 |
| Over 40              | 16,006   | 1,806          | 11.3%                    | 12,467              | 19,545 |
| Fathers less than 19 | 253      | 32             | 12.6%                    | 191                 | 315    |
| 19-21                | 1,592    | 352            | 22.1%                    | 902                 | 2,282  |
| 22-25                | 5,490    | 699            | 12.7%                    | 4,120               | 6,860  |
| 26-30                | 10,786   | 1,099          | 10.2%                    | 8,631               | 12,941 |
| 31-40                | 36,387   | 4,578          | 12.6%                    | 27,414              | 45,360 |
| Over 40              | 16,813   | 2,060          | 12.3%                    | 12,775              | 20,851 |

**Appendix H, Table 7-3**  
**Siblings of Children in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| No Sibling            | 36,521   | 3,954          | 10.8%                    | 28,771              | 44,271 |
| One Sibling           | 51,178   | 5,846          | 11.4%                    | 39,720              | 62,636 |
| Two Siblings          | 29,185   | 2,436          | 8.3%                     | 24,410              | 33,960 |
| Three Siblings        | 12,891   | 1,733          | 13.4%                    | 9,494               | 16,288 |
| Four or More Siblings | 5,798    | 1,373          | 23.7%                    | 3,108               | 8,488  |



**Appendix H, Table 7-4**  
**Investigated Siblings in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                                | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| No Siblings                             | 36,105   | 3,965          | 11.0%                    | 28,333              | 43,877 |
| One Sibling, Not Investigated           | 19,572   | 2,163          | 11.0%                    | 15,333              | 23,811 |
| One Sibling, Investigated               | 30,815   | 3,349          | 10.9%                    | 24,251              | 37,379 |
| Two Siblings, None Investigated         | 12,944   | 1,217          | 9.4%                     | 10,558              | 15,330 |
| Two Siblings, at Least One Investigated | 34,941   | 3,382          | 9.7%                     | 28,313              | 41,569 |

**Appendix H, Table 7-6**  
**Housing Type in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Rental Unit in Public Housing Complex | 12,709   | 2,325          | 18.3%                    | 8,151               | 17,267 |
| Private Rental Accommodation          | 63,246   | 6,530          | 10.3%                    | 50,447              | 76,045 |
| Purchased Home                        | 34,574   | 4,138          | 12.0%                    | 26,463              | 42,685 |
| Shelter/Hotel                         | 1,904    | 423            | 22.2%                    | 1,074               | 2,734  |
| Other                                 | 8,667    | 2,551          | 29.4%                    | 3,666               | 13,668 |
| Unknown                               | 13,078   | 2,974          | 22.7%                    | 7,249               | 18,907 |

**Appendix H, Table 7-7**  
**Housing Conditions in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable         | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                  |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Safe Condition   | 94,662   | 12,278         | 13.0%                    | 70,597              | 118,727 |
| Unsafe Condition | 18,622   | 1,253          | 6.7%                     | 16,165              | 21,079  |
| Unknown          | 20,578   | 2,075          | 10.1%                    | 16,512              | 24,644  |

**Appendix H, Table 7-8**

**Family Moves Within the Last Six Months in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable                  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                           |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| No Moves in Past 6 months | 59,034   | 7,871          | 13.3%                    | 43,606              | 74,462 |
| One Move                  | 19,279   | 2,386          | 12.4%                    | 14,602              | 23,956 |
| Two or More Moves         | 8,489    | 1,148          | 13.5%                    | 6,239               | 10,739 |
| Unknown                   | 31,080   | 3,484          | 11.2%                    | 24,252              | 37,908 |

**Appendix H, Table 7-9**

**Aboriginal Heritage of Parents in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                             | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                      |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Neither Parent of Aboriginal Descent | 114,471  | 12,613         | 11.0%                    | 89,750              | 139,192 |
| Aboriginal Parent Living Off-Reserve | 10,281   | 3,202          | 31.2%                    | 4,006               | 16,556  |
| Aboriginal Parent Living On-Reserve  | 6,250    | 3,922          | 62.8%                    | (1,437)             | 13,937  |
| Unknown                              | 4,571    | 1,408          | 30.8%                    | 1,812               | 7,330   |

**Appendix H, Table 7-10**

**Caregiver Functioning and Other Family Stressors in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                              | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                       |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Alcohol or Drug Use                   | 45,591   | 5,491          | 12.0%                    | 34,830              | 56,352  |
| Criminal Activity                     | 14,245   | 1,210          | 8.5%                     | 11,874              | 16,616  |
| Cognitive Impairment                  | 7,948    | 1,654          | 20.8%                    | 4,706               | 11,190  |
| Mental Health Problems                | 32,610   | 3,455          | 10.6%                    | 25,838              | 39,382  |
| Physical Health Issues                | 10,442   | 1,191          | 11.4%                    | 8,107               | 12,777  |
| Lack of Social Support                | 39,201   | 4,087          | 10.4%                    | 31,190              | 47,212  |
| Childhood History of Abuse            | 42,096   | 5,403          | 12.8%                    | 31,507              | 52,685  |
| Spousal Violence                      | 31,264   | 4,647          | 14.9%                    | 22,156              | 40,372  |
| Custody Dispute                       | 15,484   | 2,270          | 14.7%                    | 11,034              | 19,934  |
| Other Concerns                        | 5,987    | 979            | 16.4%                    | 4,067               | 7,907   |
| Minimum of One Parent/Family Stressor | 98,412   | 10,030         | 10.2%                    | 78,753              | 118,071 |

**Appendix H, Table 8-1**  
**All Referral Sources in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                         | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                  |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Parent                           | 21,212   | 2,336          | 11.0%                    | 16,634              | 25,790 |
| Child                            | 2,557    | 541            | 21.1%                    | 1,497               | 3,617  |
| Relative                         | 11,039   | 1,260          | 11.4%                    | 8,570               | 13,508 |
| Neighbour/Friend                 | 11,812   | 1,037          | 8.8%                     | 9,780               | 13,844 |
| Anonymous                        | 5,698    | 1,279          | 22.4%                    | 3,192               | 8,204  |
| Police                           | 16,698   | 3,157          | 18.9%                    | 10,511              | 22,886 |
| School Personnel                 | 29,040   | 3,270          | 11.3%                    | 22,632              | 35,449 |
| Health Professional              | 6,760    | 988            | 14.6%                    | 4,824               | 8,696  |
| Mental Health Professional       | 5,162    | 433            | 8.4%                     | 4,313               | 6,011  |
| Other Child Welfare Professional | 8,119    | 1,941          | 23.9%                    | 4,315               | 11,923 |
| Community Agency                 | 7,972    | 909            | 11.4%                    | 6,190               | 9,754  |
| Other Referral Sources           | 9,447    | 1,001          | 10.6%                    | 7,485               | 11,409 |

**Appendix H, Table 8-2(a)**  
**Unsubstantiated and Malicious Reports of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment in Canada in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Substantiated Reports                             | 56,547   | 6,144          | 10.9%                    | 44,505              | 68,589 |
| Suspected Reports                                 | 31,158   | 3,017          | 9.7%                     | 25,244              | 37,072 |
| Unsubstantiated Non-Malicious Reports             | 36,185   | 5,564          | 15.4%                    | 25,280              | 47,090 |
| Unsubstantiated Malicious Reports                 | 5,322    | 776            | 14.6%                    | 3,801               | 6,843  |
| Unsubstantiated Reports, Malicious Intent Unknown | 6,361    | 679            | 10.7%                    | 5,029               | 7,693  |

**Appendix H, Table 8-3**

**Previous Investigations in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable  | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|   |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Child Previously Investigated                           | 58,289   | 9,391          | 16.1%                    | 39,883              | 76,695 |
| Child Not Previously Investigated, Family Serviced Once | 7,563    | 477            | 6.3%                     | 6,627               | 8,499  |
| Child Not Investigated, Family Serviced More Than Once  | 5,541    | 645            | 11.6%                    | 4,278               | 6,804  |
| No Previous Record of Service                           | 39,271   | 4,937          | 12.6%                    | 29,594              | 48,948 |
| Unknown   | 3,990    | 1,066          | 26.7%                    | 1,900               | 6,080  |

**Appendix H, Table 8-4**

**Time Since Case Was Last Closed in Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable                                   | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|  |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Case Not Opened                            | 44,612   | 5,162          | 11.6%                    | 34,494              | 54,730 |
| Case Previously Opened/Closed < 3 months   | 19,552   | 4,003          | 20.5%                    | 11,705              | 27,399 |
| Case Previously Opened/Closed 3-6 months   | 12,768   | 1,433          | 11.2%                    | 9,959               | 15,577 |
| Case Previously Opened/Closed 7-12 months  | 12,736   | 1,780          | 14.0%                    | 9,246               | 16,226 |
| Case Previously Opened/Closed 13-24 months | 10,260   | 2,245          | 21.9%                    | 5,861               | 14,659 |
| Case Closed > 24 months                    | 13,204   | 1,933          | 14.6%                    | 9,415               | 16,993 |
| Unknown                                    | 5,423    | 741            | 13.7%                    | 3,970               | 6,876  |

**Appendix H, Table 8-5**

**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Relative Size of Child Welfare Agency/Office by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                    | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |         |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                             |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper   |
| Less than 350 Openings/Year | 17,364   | 4,201          | 24.2%                    | 9,130               | 25,598  |
| 350-950 Per Year            | 43,805   | 6,788          | 15.5%                    | 30,501              | 57,109  |
| > 950 Per Year              | 74,404   | 13,129         | 17.6%                    | 48,672              | 100,136 |

**Appendix H, Table 8-6**

**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Urban/Rural Location of Child Welfare Agency/Office by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in Canada in 1998**

| Variable                        | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                 |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Large Metropolitan Service Area | 40,861   | 20,387         | 49.9%                    | 903                 | 80,819 |
| Mixed Urban and Rural           | 62,676   | 11,103         | 17.7%                    | 40,914              | 84,438 |
| Rural Area                      | 32,036   | 10,569         | 33.0%                    | 11,322              | 52,750 |

**Appendix H, Table 8-7**

**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Job Position of Investigating Worker by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable                             | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                      |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| Intake and Investigation Specialists | 53,098   | 17,693         | 33.3%                    | 18,420              | 87,776 |
| Generalists, Mixed                   | 43,932   | 7,756          | 17.7%                    | 28,730              | 59,134 |
| Other                                | 3,708    | 1,689          | 45.6%                    | 397                 | 7,019  |

**Appendix H, Table 8-8**

**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Years of Child Welfare Experience for Investigating Worker by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable      | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|---------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|               |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| ≤ 6 Months    | 14,966   | 5,198          | 34.7%                    | 4,777               | 25,155 |
| > 6-12 Months | 8,037    | 3,783          | 47.1%                    | 623                 | 15,451 |
| > 1-2 Years   | 9,999    | 3,086          | 30.9%                    | 3,951               | 16,047 |
| > 2-4 Years   | 17,498   | 3,765          | 21.5%                    | 10,119              | 24,877 |
| > 4-6 Years   | 15,005   | 2,705          | 18.0%                    | 9,703               | 20,307 |
| > 6 Years     | 32,772   | 5,026          | 15.3%                    | 22,921              | 42,623 |

**Appendix H, Table 8-9**  
**Child Maltreatment Investigations by Highest Completed University Degree for Investigating Worker by Primary Category of Investigated Maltreatment and by Level of Substantiation in a Non-representative Sample of Canadian Jurisdictions in 1998**

| Variable                            | Estimate | Standard Error | Coefficient of Variation | Confidence Interval |        |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                     |          |                |                          | Lower               | Upper  |
| MSW                                 | 11,741   | 1,746          | 14.9%                    | 8,319               | 15,163 |
| BSW                                 | 60,266   | 14,624         | 24.3%                    | 31,604              | 88,928 |
| Related Master's                    | 1,149    | 561            | 48.8%                    | 50                  | 2,248  |
| Related Bachelor's                  | 17,936   | 3,615          | 20.2%                    | 10,851              | 25,021 |
| Related College Diploma/Certificate | 8,602    | 3,716          | 43.2%                    | 1,319               | 15,885 |
| Other                               | 1,010    | 560            | 55.4%                    | (87)                | 2,107  |

## APPENDIX I

### Supporting Data for Additional Report Findings

The following are the data tables for the special variables mentioned throughout the Final Report for the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

**Appendix I, Table 1(a)**  
**Mean Number of Children Under 19 per Household in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

| Children Under 19 Per Household Per Child Investigation   | Child Investigations |
|---|----------------------|
| One Child   | 36,101               |
| Two Children  | 50,579               |
| Three Children  | 29,643               |
| Four Children   | 13,078               |
| Five Children   | 4,262                |
| Six Children  | 1,342                |
| Seven Children  | 187                  |
| Eight Children  | 381                  |
| <b>Total Child Investigations</b>   | <b>135,573</b>       |
| <b>Mean Number of Children Under 19 Per Household in Child Maltreatment Investigations</b>  | <b>2.3</b>           |
| * The mean number of children was calculated by dividing the number of children under 19 living in the households of the total child investigations by the of total number of child investigations (135,573). |                      |

**Appendix I, Table 1(b)**  
**Mean Number of Investigated Children per Household in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

| Investigated Children Per Household Per Child Investigation  | Child Investigations |
|--|----------------------|
| One Child  | 95,125               |
| Two Children   | 27,855               |
| Three Children   | 9,172                |
| Four Children  | 2,576                |
| Five Children  | 575                  |
| Six Children   | 155                  |
| Seven Children   | 67                   |
| Eight Children   | 48                   |
| <b>Total Child Investigations</b>  | <b>135,573</b>       |
| <b>Mean Number of Investigated Children Per Household in Child Maltreatment Investigations</b>   | <b>1.43</b>          |
| * The mean number of investigated children was calculated by dividing the total number of children investigated in the total child investigations by the total number of child investigations. |                      |

**Appendix I, Table 2**  
**Investigated Children Under One Year of Age by Head Trauma Injuries in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|                                  | Head Trauma | No Head Trauma | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Number of Children Less Than One | 319         | 5,998          | 6,317 |
| Percentage                       | 5%          | 95%            | 100%  |

**Appendix I, Table 3**  
**Single and Multiple Alleged Perpetrators by Primary Category of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|                                   | Child Investigations | Percentage  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Multiple Perpetrators *           | 32,820               | 24%         |
| Two Biological Parents            | 23,878               | 18%         |
| Biological Parent and Step-Parent | 7,410                | 5%          |
| Biological Parent and Other       | 1,224                | 1%          |
| Other Multiple Perpetrators       | 308                  | 0%          |
| Single Perpetrators               | 102,753              | 76%         |
| <b>Total Child Investigations</b> | <b>135,573</b>       | <b>100%</b> |

\* Numbers listed below Multiple Perpetrators are a sub-set of Multiple Perpetrators. Total Child Investigations is the sum of Single Perpetrators and Multiple Perpetrators

**Appendix I, Table 4**  
**Parents Involved as Alleged Perpetrators by Primary Category of Maltreatment in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|  | Child Investigations | Percentage  |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Either Parent Involved as Alleged Perpetrator  | 117,508              | 87%         |
| Neither Parent Involved as Alleged Perpetrator | 18,065               | 13%         |
| <b>Total Child Investigations</b>              | <b>135,573</b>       | <b>100%</b> |

**Appendix I, Table 5**  
**Parents as Alleged Perpetrators of Physical Abuse for Two-Parent Families in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|  | Physical Abuse Investigations | Percentage |
|--|-------------------------------|------------|
| Mother as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families | 9,181                         | 43%        |
| Father as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families | 15,252                        | 71%        |
| <b>Total Two-Parent Families*</b>                    | <b>21,599</b>                 |            |

\* The rows in this table are not additive; child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to add the rows will double count some child investigations.



**Appendix I, Table 6**  
**Parents as Alleged Perpetrators of Neglect for Two-Parent Families in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|  | Neglect Investigations | Percentage |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| Mother as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families   | 18,074                 | 92%        |
| Father as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families   | 13,281                 | 67%        |
| <b>Total Two-Parent Families*</b>  | <b>19,759</b>          |            |
| * The rows in this table are not additive; child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to add the rows will double count some child investigations. |                        |            |

**Appendix I, Table 7**  
**Parents as Alleged Perpetrators of Multiple Categories of Maltreatment for Two-Parent Families in Child Maltreatment Investigations in Canada in 1998**

|  | Multiple Category Investigations | Percentage |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|
| Mother as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families   | 8,922                            | 61%        |
| Father as Alleged Perpetrator in Two-Parent Families   | 9,401                            | 65%        |
| <b>Total Two-Parent Families*</b>  | <b>14,521</b>                    |            |
| * The rows in this table are not additive; child investigations were classified in each category that was applicable to them, so attempts to add the rows will double count some child investigations. |                                  |            |

**Appendix I, Table 8**  
**Family Structure of Households with All Children 17 Years of Age and Under for Canada in 1996 Census**

| Household Structure       | Number           | Percentage of Family Households |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total Two Parent Families | 2,598,010        | 80%                             |
| Lone Male                 | 96,775           | 3%                              |
| Lone Female               | 553,305          | 17%                             |
| <b>Total Households</b>   | <b>3,248,090</b> | <b>100%</b>                     |

**Appendix I, Table 9**  
**Age Groups of Primary Household Maintainer with the Youngest Child 14 Years Old and Under for Canada in 1996 Census**

| <b>Age Group of Household Maintainer</b> | <b>Number</b>    | <b>Percentage of Family Households</b> |
|--|------------------|--|
| Under 25 Years                           | 116,720          | 3%                                     |
| 25 - 34 Years                            | 976,365          | 28%                                    |
| 35-44 Years                              | 1,569,995        | 45%                                    |
| 45-54 Years                              | 607,430          | 17%                                    |
| 55 - 64 Years                            | 125,195          | 4%                                     |
| 65 - 74 Years                            | 72,755           | 2%                                     |
| 75 Years and Over                        | 46,560           | 1%                                     |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>3,515,020</b> | <b>100%</b>                            |

**Appendix I, Table 10**  
**Housing Accommodation for Census Families for Canada in 1996 Census**

| <b>Type of Housing Accommodation</b> | <b>Number</b>    | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Purchased Dwelling                   | 3,838,040        | 73%               |
| Rented Dwelling                      | 1,414,740        | 27%               |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>5,252,780</b> | <b>100%</b>       |