

# Massachusetts

## CHILD MALTREATMENT

Child neglect and abuse—also known as maltreatment—is a grave concern; it is associated with many negative outcomes, including physical injuries, psychological problems, and (in extreme cases) death. After receiving referrals, child protective services agencies investigate to determine whether children are at risk of maltreatment, if maltreatment occurred, and if services are needed. Children and families may receive a variety of services, including foster care, family preservation, mental health supports, and substance abuse treatment.

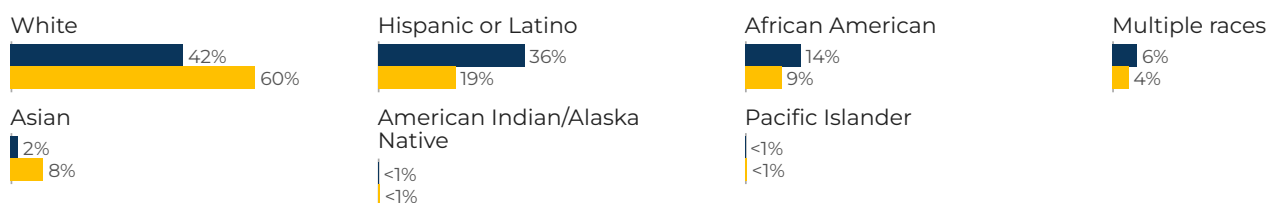
Child abuse and neglect referrals <sup>1</sup>	Massachusetts	United States
Number of referrals made to the child welfare agency	71,818	3,643,232
Rate of referrals made per 1,000 children in the population	53.5	NR
Percent of referrals that met the criteria for an investigation or assessment	52%	NR

Child abuse and neglect investigations <sup>2</sup>	Massachusetts	United States
Number of children who received an investigation or assessment for abuse or neglect	62,829	3,144,644
Rate of investigations or assessments per 1,000 children in the population	46.8	42.9
Average response time (in hours) from report to investigation	NR	62 hours

Victims of child maltreatment <sup>3</sup>	Massachusetts	United States
Number of children found to be victims of maltreatment	22,538	618,399
Rate of victims per 1,000 children in the population	16.8	8.4
Percent of children investigated/assessed who were found to be victims of maltreatment	36%	20%
Rate of first-time victims per 1,000 children in the population	9.3	5.9

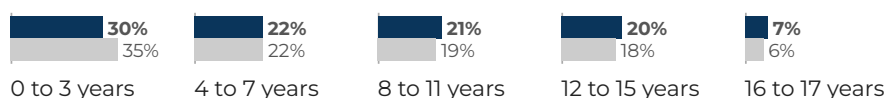
### Race and ethnicity of maltreatment victims in Massachusetts<sup>4</sup>

■ Maltreatment victims ■ General child population



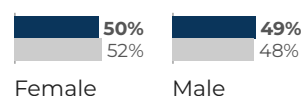
### Age distribution of maltreatment victims<sup>5</sup>

■ Massachusetts ■ United States



### Gender of maltreatment victims

■ Massachusetts ■ United States



## Maltreatment types<sup>6</sup>

■ Massachusetts ■ United States

### Medical neglect

NR  
2%

### Neglect

94%  
76%

### Physical abuse

8%  
17%

### Psychological maltreatment

NR  
6%

### Sexual abuse

3%  
9%

### Other maltreatment

1%  
6%

## Child fatalities attributed to maltreatment

	Massachusetts	United States
Number of child fatalities attributed to maltreatment	NR	1,713
Rate of maltreatment fatalities per 100,000 children in the population	NR	2.4

## Child maltreatment perpetrators<sup>7</sup>

	Massachusetts	United States
Parent of the child	80%	77%
Non-parent or of unknown relationship to the child <sup>8</sup>	20%	23%

## Postresponse services<sup>9</sup>

	Massachusetts	United States
Percent of victims who received post-response services	92%	60%
Percent of non-victims who received post-response services	62%	27%
Percent of victims who received foster care services <sup>10</sup>	15%	22%
Percent of non-victims who received foster care services	2%	2%
Average time (in days) from report receipt to service initiation	14 days	33 days

**Source, unless specified otherwise:** This information is from the federal National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and represents the federal fiscal year 2020 reporting period (October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020). Data are publicly available in *Child Maltreatment 2020*, available from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/report/child-maltreatment-2020>.

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Referrals can include more than one child. Fields with “NR” signify that the data was not reported or available in the 2020 Child Maltreatment Report. See Appendix D of the report for more detailed information by state.

<sup>2</sup>This reflects “children (unique count) who received a CPS response in the form of an investigation or alternative response” (i.e., a child who had at least one maltreatment report investigated/assessed was counted once, regardless of how many investigations/assessments they had).

<sup>3</sup>Unless noted otherwise, data on victims represent “unique victims” (i.e., a child is counted once regardless of how many times s/he was determined to be a victim of maltreatment). “First-time victims” are those with no previous findings of maltreatment.

<sup>4</sup>If a child is determined to be of Hispanic origin, they are only counted as Hispanic and are not included in any other racial/ethnic categories. Data for the general child population under age 18 in 2020 are from the U. S. Census Bureau and are publicly available from the Kids Count Data Center.

<sup>5</sup>Percentages for those unknown, unborn, or 18-21 years old are not presented here as they represent a very small percentage of the overall total.

<sup>6</sup>Total may exceed 100 percent. Children who experienced more than one type of maltreatment were counted in each applicable category. The “neglect” category includes fetal alcohol syndrome, prenatal substance abuse exposure, abandonment, and educational neglect. The “other maltreatment” category includes sex trafficking and unknown.

<sup>7</sup>Perpetrators and relationships are only counted once regardless of the number of times the perpetrator was reported.

<sup>8</sup>Child daycare provider, foster parent, friends or neighbors, legal guardian, other, other professional, other relative, group home and residential facility staff, unmarried partner of parent, multiple relationships, or unknown.

<sup>9</sup>The numbers of victims and non-victims are duplicate counts; a child is counted each time that a CPS response is completed and services are provided. NCANDS collects data for 26 types of services, including but not limited to adoption, foster care, family preservation, mental health, and substance abuse.

<sup>10</sup>Foster care services are defined as activities associated with 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State Title IV-B/IV-E agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision. Only children who were removed from their home after the report date are counted.