

VALID CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION ALLEGATIONS

DEFINITION: Total number of valid Child Protection Investigation allegations, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, maltreatment, death, and “other” in State Fiscal Year 2007 (July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007), disaggregated by race. Note that percentages reflect the percentage of allegations that involved children of a given race.

SIGNIFICANCE

Louisiana law defines child abuse as “any of the following acts which seriously endanger the physical, mental, or emotional health and safety of the child:

- The infliction, attempted infliction, or as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of the infliction or attempted infliction of physical or mental injury upon the child by a parent or any other person.
- The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.
- The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or the caretaker of the child’s sexual involvement with any other person or of the child’s involvement in pornographic displays, or any other involvement of a child in sexual activity constituting a crime under the laws of this state.”¹

Louisiana defines neglect as “the unreasonable refusal or failure of a parent or caretaker to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, care, treatment, or counseling for injury, illness, or condition of the child, as a result of which the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health and safety is substantially threatened or impaired....Neglect includes prenatal neglect. It is the unlawful use by a mother during pregnancy of a controlled dangerous substance that results in symptoms of withdrawal in the infant or the presence of a controlled substance in the infant’s body.”²

In Louisiana, people employed in certain occupations are “mandatory reporters,” which means they are legally required to report a suspected case of abuse or neglect. Mandatory reporters include teachers, child care workers, health practitioners, members of the clergy, police officers, mental health and social service practitioners, film and photographic film processors, mediators, CASA volunteers and parent coordinators.³ Nationally, more than half (57.7%) of all reports of child maltreatment come from professionals, such as educational personnel (17.0%), legal or law enforcement (16.3%) and social services

personnel (10.2%). Non-professional sources (parents, relatives, neighbors, victims, etc.) submitted 26.8% of all reports. An additional 15.7% of reports came from unknown or other sources.⁴

The number of valid abuse and neglect allegations increased by 3,099 between FY 2005 and 2007, from 13,999 to 17,098. Nearly all of the increase is attributable to a rise in valid neglect allegations, which increased by 3,093 during this period.

DISPROPORTIONALITY

In FY 2007, there was virtually no disproportionality in terms of the percentage of black children in the population versus the percentage of valid allegations involving black children. While this measure is imperfect because it concerns the number of allegations (not the actual number of children), child-level data was not available at the time of publication. In FY 2007, 39% of valid allegations involved a black child and black children made up approximately 39% of the child population. During the same year, 58% of valid allegations involved white children, while white children made up 56% of the child population. In FY 2005, valid allegations were somewhat less proportional--45% of valid allegations involved black children, but black children made up 40% of the child population. Disproportionality decreased between 2005 and 2007 primarily because the number of valid allegations involving white children increased by 33% (from 7,424 in FY 2005 to 9,862 in FY 2007), while the number of allegations that involved black children increased by just 6% (from 6,236 in FY 2005 to 6,588 in FY 2007).

RATE CALCULATION

$100 * (\text{number of valid abuse \& neglect allegations involving black children} \div \text{total number of valid abuse \& neglect allegations})$

$100 * (\text{number of valid abuse \& neglect allegations involving white children} \div \text{total number of valid abuse \& neglect allegations})$

DATA SOURCE

Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services, by special request.

¹ Louisiana Children’s Code, Article 603, Section 1

² Louisiana Children’s Code, Article 603, Section 16

³ Louisiana Children’s Code, Article 603, Section 15

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, *Child Maltreatment 2007* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009), 9.

VALID CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION ALLEGATIONS

FY 2007	TOTAL		BLACK		WHITE	
	No.	No.	%	No.	%	
LOUISIANA	17,098	6,588	39	9,862	58	
Acadia	287	62	22	217	76	
Allen	172	55	32	115	67	
Ascension	208	72	35	136	65	
Assumption	<i>see Lafourche Parish</i>					
Avoyelles	101	18	18	60	59	
Beauregard	160	23	14	134	84	
Bienville	<i>see Webster Parish</i>					
Bossier	815	287	35	495	61	
Caddo	823	531	65	257	31	
Calcasieu	1,688	543	32	1,079	64	
Cameron	<i>see Ouachita Parish</i>					
Caldwell	<i>see Calcasieu Parish</i>					
Catahoula						
La Salle	127	46	36	80	63	
Claiborne	<i>see Webster Parish</i>					
Concordia	137	36	26	101	74	
De Soto	324	115	35	209	65	
East Baton Rouge	645	518	80	106	16	
East Carroll	50	21	42	28	56	
East Feliciana	76	38	50	37	49	
West Feliciana						
Evangeline	132	67	51	65	49	
Franklin	11	8	73	<5	LNE	
Grant	248	80	32	164	66	
Iberia	236	116	49	116	49	
Iberville	162	78	48	80	49	
West Baton Rouge	<i>see Webster Parish</i>					
Jackson						
Jefferson	745	310	42	397	53	
Jefferson Davis	128	14	11	109	85	
Lafayette	567	305	54	248	44	
Lafourche						
Assumption	203	43	21	156	77	
La Salle	<i>see Catahoula Parish</i>					
Lincoln	75	27	36	41	55	
Livingston	1,594	141	9	1,349	85	
Madison	63	57	90	6	10	
Morehouse	248	159	64	86	35	
Natchitoches						
Red River	228	144	63	83	36	
Orleans	396	336	85	46	12	
Ouachita	796	414	52	368	46	
Caldwell						
Plaquemines	0					
Pointe Coupee	78	31	40	43	55	
Rapides	535	321	60	190	36	
Red River	<i>see Natchitoches Parish</i>					
Richland	119	52	44	49	41	
Sabine	80	11	14	69	86	
St. Bernard	146	13	9	117	80	
St. Charles	<i>see St. John the Baptist Parish</i>					
St. Helena	<i>see Tangipahoa Parish</i>					
St. James	<i>see St. John the Baptist Parish</i>					
St. John the Baptist						
St. Charles	196	127	65	59	30	
St. James						
St. Landry	435	178	41	247	57	
St. Martin	124	52	42	69	56	
St. Mary	199	72	36	120	60	
St. Tammany	1,100	218	20	830	75	
Tangipahoa						
St. Helena	455	194	43	245	54	
Tensas	0	0		0		
Terrebonne	159	65	41	74	47	
Union	74	40	54	33	45	
Vermilion	424	75	18	337	79	
Vernon	481	88	18	362	75	
Washington	560	163	29	388	69	
Webster						
Bienville						
Claiborne	414	184	44	225	54	
Jackson						
West Baton Rouge	<i>see Iberville Parish</i>					
West Carroll	0	0		0		
West Feliciana	<i>see East Feliciana Parish</i>					
Winn	74	40	54	34	46	

* Percentages do not total 100 because there is an additional "Other" category that is not reported here. Additionally, parish totals do not equal the statewide total because a small number of cases are handled directly by the state office.