



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN VIRGINIA

SFY 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020)

How many children were reported as victims of abuse or neglect in Virginia?

During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020, there were **33,880** completed reports of child abuse or neglect accepted by Virginia’s city and county departments of social services. There were **52,554** children involved as possible victims in those completed reports. There were **1,294** reports of substance-exposed infants. There were **25** Human Trafficking Assessments conducted.

Who reported suspicions of abuse or neglect to departments of social services?

In SFY 2020, **83,131** persons reported suspected child abuse or neglect to local and state departments of social services*. They included: educators (**20.6 %**); law enforcement/legal/courts (**18.6%**); relatives/parents (**13.4%**); anonymous (**11.2%**); mental health professionals (**10.9%**); other categories (**10.6%**); medical community (**7.8%**); social services staff (**4.2%**); and child care providers (**.7%**).

**In SFY2020, the sources of reports were affected by the COVID19 pandemic as seen by a decline of almost 4% of calls by educators, and a slight 1% increase by law enforcement.*

What were the outcomes of these reports?

There were **5,792** children in founded investigations. “Founded” means that a review of the facts gathered during an investigation met the “preponderance of the evidence” standard.

There were **7,777** children involved in unfounded investigations. “Unfounded” means that a review of the facts gathered during an investigation did not meet the “preponderance of the evidence” standard.

There were **38,985** children involved in valid reports that received a family assessment. A family assessment is an alternative response which includes engaging with the family to assess the strengths and needs of the children and families. No determination of “founded” or “unfounded” is made in a family assessment.

There were **25** children involved in **25** Human Trafficking Assessments. A Human Trafficking Assessment is required when a report alleges a child is a victim of human trafficking, including sex trafficking or labor trafficking, and does not meet the validity criteria for an investigation or family assessment.

Completed Reports- SFY 2017 to SFY 2020

Fiscal Year	Founded Investigations	Unfounded Investigations	Family Assessments	Total Completed CPS Reports
2020	3,789	6,265	23,826	33,380
2019	4,211	9,961	26,187	37,359
2018	4,154	6,836	25,867	36,857
2017	4,230	6,817	25,847	36,894

What were the types of maltreatment in *founded* investigations?

In some reports, more than one type of maltreatment may have occurred. Of all the instances of maltreatment in completed founded investigations, at least one allegation was substantiated for:

- 57.9% of the maltreatment was due to physical neglect.
- 25.8% of the maltreatment was due to physical abuse.
- 9.5% of the maltreatment was due to sexual abuse.
- 3.3% of the maltreatment was due to mental abuse/neglect.
- 2.1% of the maltreatment was due to medical neglect.

Children in Completed Reports- SFY 2017 to SFY 2020

Fiscal Year	Founded	Unfounded	Family Assessment	Total
2020	5,792	7,777	38,985	52,554
2019	6,413	8,874	42,947	58,234
2018	6,485	9,723	39,047	55,255
2017	6,947	9,796	38,515	55,258

How old were the children in *founded* investigations?

AGE**

- **33.2%** of all victims were children 3 years and younger
- **40.3%** of all victims were children aged 4-11
- **23.2%** of all victims were children aged 12-17

**The age of 3.3% of the victims was unknown.

What was the race of children in investigations with a *founded* disposition compared to all investigations?

Race***	Children in <i>founded</i> investigations	Children in all investigations
White	69.6%	67.9%
Black	31.1%	31.3%
Asian	1.5%	1.7%
American Indian, Native Hawaiian	.2%	.2%
Unknown	5.2%	6.5%

*** This category allows for multiple responses per child and thus may exceed 100%.

How many valid reports with allegations of abuse or neglect involving a child death were reported?

- There were 136 valid reports of a child death suspected of being caused by abuse or neglect.
- As of 12-14-2020, twenty-nine (29) children died as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Thirty-two (32) investigations were pending the final disposition as of 12-14-20.

Child Fatalities- SFY 2017 to SFY 2020¹

Fiscal Year	Founded Fatalities	Unfounded Fatalities	Other (pending or appealed)	Total
2020	29	75	32	136
2019	51*	89*	4*	144*
2018	43	74	1	118
2017	47	71	5	123

¹ Data collected from Local Departments of Social Services as of 12-14-2020; *previous year updated.