



SAFE CHILDREN • HEALTHY FAMILIES • STRONG COMMUNITIES

Child Abuse and Neglect is Everyone's Concern

2016 Facts About Child Abuse and Neglect in St. Louis

- In the state fiscal year ended June 30, 2014, a total of 14,772 reports of abuse and neglect involving 21,360 children were made in the four Missouri counties of the St. Louis region, according to the Missouri Children's Division. Of these cases, 929 (6%) were substantiated as abused, 7,806 (53%) received family assessments and preventive services, and 4,417 (30%) were unsubstantiated.
- In the three Illinois counties of the St. Louis region, 5,810 children were alleged as abused in FY2014, with 1,178 of these indicated (Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services).
- A total of eight children died from substantiated abuse and neglect in FY2014 in the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, St. Charles County and Jefferson County.
- Statewide in Missouri, 68,234 reports were made and 4,439 cases involving 6,439 children were substantiated in FY2014. There were 32 child deaths from substantiated abuse/neglect.
- The number of substantiated cases in the region has grown steadily since 2008 when there were 846 such cases, increasing to 893 in 2010 and 929 in FY2014. However, these figures still represent a significant drop from 2004 when there were 1,354 substantiated cases.
- Younger children are more likely to be abused. In Missouri, 48% of abused children are age 6 and under (substantiated cases, FY2014).
- In the St. Louis region, the most common form of maltreatment in FY2014 was neglect (52% of substantiated cases), followed by physical abuse (37%) and sexual abuse (29%).

The Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect

- Abusive parents often have experienced abuse during their own childhoods. One study found that girls who experienced childhood physical abuse were 1–7 % more likely to become perpetrators of youth violence and 8–10% more likely to commit interpersonal violence.¹
- Children with disabilities are 1.7 times more likely to be abused.²
- Children who have experienced abuse are nine times more likely to become involved in criminal activities. More than half of youth with reports of maltreatment are at risk of grade repetition, substance abuse, delinquency, truancy, or pregnancy.¹
- Abused children are more likely to smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, or take illicit drugs during their lifetime. Male children with six or more adverse childhood experiences were 40 times more likely to use intravenous drugs later in life.¹
- Each year, child abuse is estimated to cost society over \$80 billion, including direct costs for the child welfare system, hospitalization, juvenile justice, etc., as well as indirect costs such as special education, adult criminal justice, lost productivity and more.²

¹ U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Children's Bureau, "Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse & Neglect."

² Prevent Child Abuse America, "The Estimated Annual Cost of Child Abuse & Neglect," 2016.

What You Can Do to Help

The St. Louis Family & Community Partnership, a coalition of child-serving agencies and interested individuals, urges residents to support the fight against child abuse in these ways:

- Promote healthy relationships and strong families. Be a nurturing parent and let your children know they are special and loved. Offer a helping hand to relatives and friends.
- If a family you know is undergoing stress, encourage them to get help. Use the 2-1-1 Missouri Information & Referral line to connect with services.
- Support community agencies that work to prevent and treat child abuse. Donate much-needed funds or volunteer time to help these agencies fulfill their missions. For names of child-abuse prevention agencies in the St. Louis area, visit the St. Louis Family & Community Partnership Web site, www.stlfamilycommunity.org.
- If you observe child abuse, report it to the Missouri Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-392-3738. Learn the warning signs of child abuse.

The St. Louis Family & Community Partnership works to prevent child abuse and neglect and ensure that more children have safe family environments. It involves over 200 individuals and community volunteers representing more than 100 child-serving agencies, schools, government, police, courts, funders and more. The Partnership is administered by Vision for Children at Risk, a nonprofit agency dedicated to building community action to improve the health and well-being of children.