

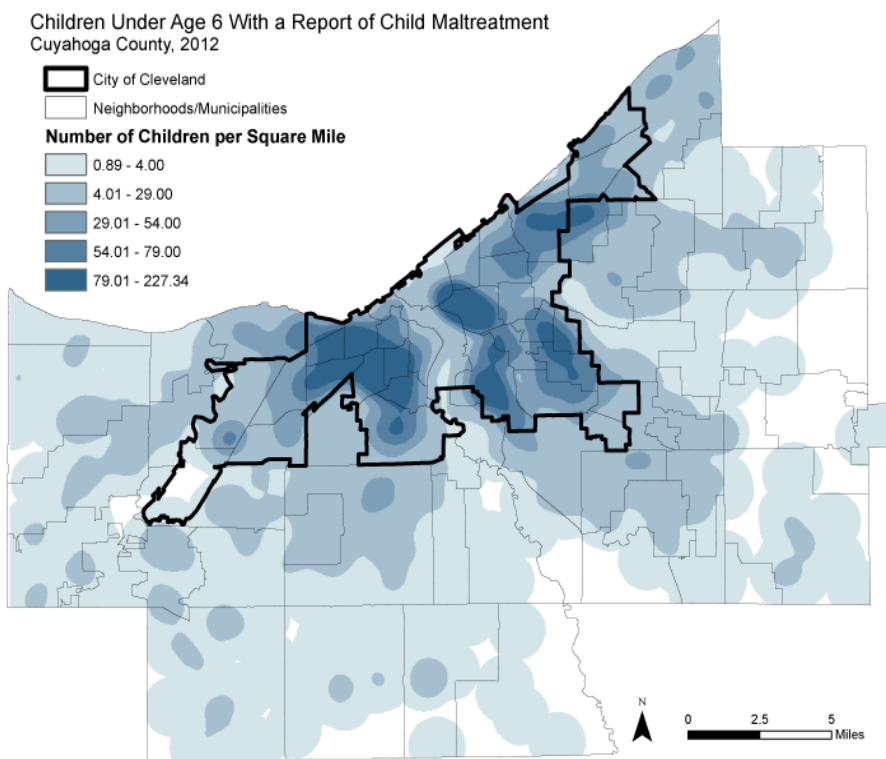
Child maltreatment includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a person in a custodial role¹. In the United States, child maltreatment is a significant public health problem¹. The long-term outcomes of child maltreatment are persistent and pervasive, affecting the physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive domains of an individual's life². The fiscal effects of child maltreatment are substantial, with one study estimating the economic burden of a single year of confirmed child maltreatment cases approximating \$124 billion¹.

In Cuyahoga County, instances of suspected child maltreatment are reported

to the County Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS); the agency then determines whether each report warrants investigation. Investigated claims are subsequently classified as substantiated (clear evidence of abuse/neglect), indicated (a lower level of evidence), or unsubstantiated. The agency then makes a determination as to whether the case should be referred to ongoing services, which include protective services and referral to community resources.

Young children, especially infants, are particularly vulnerable to child maltreatment, demonstrating victimization rates two to three times higher than older children^{3,4}. In Cuyahoga County in 2012, 15,536 children under the age of 18 were investigated for abuse or neglect. Nearly 40% of all allegations involved children under the age of 6 (see Table 1 on p. 2). In 2012, 9 children (4 of whom were under the age of 4) died as a result of abuse or neglect⁵.

The percentage of all children under age 6 in the county investigated for maltreatment gradually increased from 2000 to 2008. The rate of reporting declined in 2009, but increased again by 2012 (see graph above). Similarly, the rate of substantiated abuse and neglect cases declined from 2000 to 2009. As with the rate of reporting, substantiated/indicated reports are increasing, reaching 1.6% in 2012. Anecdotal information suggests rather than reflecting fewer children at risk,



Data source: Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services.



Child Maltreatment

Table 1. Cuyahoga County Child Population Under the Age of 6 Involved with DCFS

	Population	# of Children involved with DCFS		%	
		All Reports	Substantiated/Indicated Reports	All Reports	Substantiated/Indicated Reports
2000	110,056	7,163	3,573	6.5%	3.2%
2001	108,029	7,233	3,821	6.7%	3.5%
2002	106,002	7,324	3,589	6.9%	3.4%
2003 ¹	103,974	6,925	2,869	6.7%	2.8%
2004	101,947	7,033	2,005	6.9%	2.0%
2005	99,920	7,060	1,566	7.1%	1.6%
2006	97,893	7,155	1,323	7.3%	1.4%
2007	95,866	7,403	1,092	7.7%	1.1%
2008	93,838	7,202	1,119	7.7%	1.2%
2009 ²	91,811	5,255	962	5.7%	1.0%
2010	89,784	5,588	1,196	6.2%	1.3%
2011	88,455	6,141	1,297	6.9%	1.5%
2012	88,902	6,134	1,423	6.9%	1.6%

¹Declines in substantiated/indicated cases beginning in 2003 reflect changing administrative practices.

²The drop in reported cases in 2009 may in part reflect change to a new data system by the agency.

declining rates from 2000 to 2009 were primarily the result of changes in definitions, agency policies, and the implementation of a new data system. As for geographic variance of maltreatment, as shown in the Map on p. 1, maltreatment reports are prevalent across the inner-ring suburbs; however, there is considerable concentration of child maltreatment reports within the City of Cleveland. In fact, an analysis that tracked children’s cumulative risk of maltreatment in Cuyahoga County found that children residing within the city are between two and three times more likely than suburban children to be investigated for child maltreatment each year⁶.

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014). <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/childmaltreatment/>

²Wang, C. and Holton, J. (2007) Total estimated cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States. http://www.preventchildabuse.org/about_us/media_releases/pcaa_pew_economic_impact_study_final.pdf

³Goldman, J., Salus, M. K., Wolcott, D., & Kennedy, K. Y. (2003). A coordinated response to abuse and neglect: The foundation for practice (Child Abuse and Neglect User Manual Series). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information.

⁴Boller, K., Daro, D., Del Grosso, P., Cole, R., Paulsell, D., Hart, B., Coffee-Borden, B., Strong, D., Zaveri, H., & Hargreaves, M. “Making Replication Work: Building Infrastructure to Implement, Scale-up, and Sustain Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs with Fidelity.” Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. January 2014. Contract No.: GS-10F-0050L/ HHSP233201200516G. Available from Mathematica Policy Research, Princeton, NJ

⁵The Cuyahoga County Child Fatality Review Committee. (2012). *Protecting our future: The Cuyahoga County child fatality report, 16th ed.* Available at protectingourfuture.cuyahogacounty.us.

⁶Sabol, Coulton, and Polousky. (2004) Measuring child maltreatment risk in communities: a life table approach. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 28, 967-983.