



[| Child Abuse Annual Report Contents |](#) [Back](#) | [Forward](#) |

[Home](#) | [DCFS Library](#) | [Statistics](#) |

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics**

### **Annual Report—Fiscal Year 1997**

#### **Child Fatalities**

The greatest tragedy is when a child dies from abuse and neglect. Child welfare agencies often review and study these situations to determine if such occurrences can be prevented in the future. Most often, however, child welfare authorities' first knowledge of the victims and the perpetrators is at the time the child's death is reported. The number of child abuse/neglect deaths may vary widely across fiscal years. The number of indicated child abuse/neglect deaths in a given fiscal year may be disproportionately high due to a single tragic incident where multiple children may have died. In Illinois during Fiscal Year 1995, for example, eight (8) children died in a house fire when they had been left unattended. In Fiscal Year 1997, seven (7) children died in two separate house fires.

It is also difficult to draw conclusions from child fatality comparisons among various states. Some states record child deaths from abuse/neglect only if the case is reported to the child welfare agency. Others track child deaths only from abuse and not from neglect.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has made tremendous strides in the past two years toward keeping children safe once they have been reported to the Department. In 1995, it worked with a multi-disciplinary task force and the American Humane Association to develop a *Child Endangerment Risk Assessment Protocol (CERAP)*. This task force included representatives from many groups, including: State's Attorneys, law enforcement, drug and alcohol treatment programs, domestic violence centers, specialists in working with mentally ill parents, and many others. This protocol was designed to help child protection staff make the best possible decisions regarding the immediate safety of children being investigated or served by DCFS. More than 6,000 DCFS and private agency workers and supervisors were trained in the protocol. These staff then had to pass a rigorous certification test in order to maintain positions that involved making decisions regarding the safety of children. In the first year following implementation of this protocol, there was a 23.8% decrease in the number of children reported as seriously reinjured within 60 days of the initial report. Several other states have requested information and training of CERAP, and its design and results have been presented at three national conferences dealing with child safety.

Since Fiscal Year 1996, child death review teams have existed throughout the state. The teams, appointed by the DCFS Director, consist of professionals from disciplines related to child welfare. The teams are mandated to review all deaths of children who were wards of the Department, subjects of an open service case, subjects of pending abuse or neglect reports, or subjects of a report in the year prior to their death. The team reviews the thoroughness of the investigation, clarify the cause of death, identifies potential preventive measures, and locates gaps in services to children and families. In addition, the DCFS Inspector General investigates child deaths when there has been prior Department

involvement.

Data on the children who died from abuse/neglect in Illinois during Fiscal Year 1997 is presented in Tables 19 through 21. Although children of all ages may be fatalities of abuse/neglect, nearly 65% of child deaths from abuse/neglect in FY97 involved children under age 3.

Table 19					
Indicated Death Reports by Region					
Fiscal Years 1993 through 1997					
	FY	FY	FY	FY	FY
Region	93	94	95	96	97
Northern	22	15	15	22	13
Central	11	9	14	12	12
Southern	6	7	16	8	19
Cook North	8	17	15	8	12
Cook Central	15	15	17	13	20
Cook South	16	20	20	19	14
<b>State</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>90</b>

Table 20		
Types of Indicated Death Reports		
Fiscal Year 1997		
Type	Number	Percent
Abuse Deaths	47	52.2%
Neglect Deaths	43	47.8%

<b>Total</b>	90	100%

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Table 21</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Characteristics of Indicated Abuse/Neglect Deaths</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fiscal Year 1997</b></p>							
Age of Child	Number Indicated	Number Males	Number Females	Number White	Number Black	Number Hispanic	Number Other
00	38	21	17	7	22	6	3
01	10	3	7	3	7	0	0
02	10	6	4	6	3	1	0
03	5	4	1	2	3	0	0
04	8	4	4	2	6	0	0
05	6	5	1	0	5	1	0
06-17	9	5	4	5	3	0	1
Not Reported	4	0	4	2	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	90	48	42	27	50	8	5