

Reports can also be made by dialing the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-992-5757 for all areas of the state except Clark and Washoe Counties.

In Clark County, call 702-399-0081. In Washoe County, call 775-785-8600 or call your local sheriff.

The legal responsibility of the professional is to report suspected incidents of child abuse. The person making the report is usually not informed of results of an investigation.

If the person making the report is concerned about the adequacy of the investigation and is not able to remedy the situation with the local agency, contact:

Systems Advocate Unit
Chrystal Main

775-684-4453 E-mail: cmain@dcfs.state.nv.us

FOR EDUCATIONAL HELP, CONTACT:

- University of Nevada Cooperative Extension in Clark County 702-222-3130, Washoe County Cooperative Extension office 775-784-4848, or your local County Cooperative Extension office. They offer free workshops on *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse*. Contact your local Cooperative Extension office for information on online resources, <http://www.unce.unr.edu>

- Prevent Child Abuse Nevada (PCAN) is a chapter of the national organization, Prevent Child Abuse America. They offer services statewide to professionals, children, parents, and the community at large. They provide training on mandated reporting for a nominal fee for continuing education credit for child care providers and educate community members on various issues associated with child abuse and preventing child abuse. They can be contacted at 702-318-8452, outside of Clark County 1-877-318-2432.
- Fact Sheets - University of Nevada Cooperative Extension *Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect* (Fact Sheet-06-XX) contains information on what is considered abuse or neglect and includes a list of physical and behavioral indicators. *When You Feel Like Lashing Out* (99-21) contains information regarding families at risk and sources of help. <http://www.unce.unr.edu>

Both are available at your local Cooperative Extension office.

Nevada Agencies Handling Child Abuse and Neglect Complaints are:

(Be prepared to be put on hold or directed to dial "many numbers." Don't give up; your call is important.)

Nevada Division of Child and Family Services District Offices

Northern Region:
Washoe County Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 11130
Reno, NV 89520-0027
775- 785-8600 775-785-8648 (Fax)

Rural Services Locations:
Carson City Office
1572 E. College Parkway., #161
Carson City, NV 89706
775-687-4943 775-687-4903 (Fax)

Fallon District Office
1735 Kaiser Street
Fallon, NV 89406-3108
775-423-8566 775-423-4800 (Fax)

Southern Region:
Clark County Department of Family Services
Claude I. Howard Children's Center
701 K North Pecos
Las Vegas, NV 89101
702-455-5483 702-385-2999 (Fax)

Elko District Office
3920 Idaho Street
Elko, NV 89801
775-753-1300 775-753-1301 (Fax)

Pahrump Field Office
2280 Calvada, Suite 302
Pahrump, NV 89408-3161
775-727-8497 775-727-7027 (Fax)

References

Administration for Children and Family: Child Maltreatment 2003: National Report. Table 3-1 Children Subjects of a CPS Investigation of Assessment by Disposition, 2004. Available @ http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs.cb/pubs/cm03/table_1.htm

CWLA Fact Sheet: Nevada's Children 2005, Child Welfare League of America, <http://ndas.csla.org>

Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child & Family Services, *Nevada Child Abuse & Neglect Statistics*

Nevada KIDS COUNT, 2004, Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada Las Vegas, <http://kidscount.unlv.edu>

Reports of Abuse or Neglect. Nevada Revised Statutes, 432B.020 - 432B.330

State of Nevada, Division of Child and Family Services: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect. Rev. 02-16-06, http://www.dcfs.state.nv.us/DCFS_childProtSer.htm

State Data Trends for Nevada, Child Welfare League of America, National Data Analysis System, <http://ndas.csla.org>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children, Youth and Families, Child Maltreatment 2004

Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006, <http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/statistics>

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University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension



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Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

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The well-being of children, particularly those who are abused or neglected, has been a long-standing concern. Legislation, which defines child abuse and determines the appropriate role for child welfare agencies, has been a part of state statutes for over 20 years.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Child abuse is defined in the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.020 as follows: "Abuse or neglect of a child means: Physical or mental injury of a non-accidental nature; sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or negligent treatment or maltreatment caused or allowed by the person responsible for his welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm."

Nevada ranks among the highest in the nation in the number of reported cases of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children.

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System reports for 2004 that of the 603,596 children in Nevada, there were 4,377 substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect and 16,399 unsubstantiated cases. (See Table 1.)

Substantiated cases are investigations that conclude that the allegation of maltreatment or risk of maltreatment was supported or founded by state law or state policy.

Unsubstantiated cases are investigations that determine that there is not sufficient evidence under state law to conclude or suspect that the child has been maltreated or is at risk of being maltreated.

Child abuse reports remain high, despite a corresponding decrease in the number of substantiated cases in Nevada. The number of children confirmed to be victims of abuse and neglect continues to number just under 4,500.

The most current county data on the number of child abuse and neglect reports in Nevada by county/region are available in the 2004 Nevada Kids Count Book, pages 77-83 or from Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child & Family Services, Nevada Child Abuse & Neglect Statistics.

The Child Welfare League of America, using State Data Trends for Nevada from the National Data Analysis System reports:

- On September 30, 2003, 3,599 children in Nevada lived apart from their families in out-of-the-home care, compared with 3,291 children on September 3, 2002.

**TABLE 1
TYPES OF MALTREATMENT
NEVADA
2004**

Maltreatment	Number	Percent (%)
Total Victims	4,377	
Physical Abuse	787	18.0%
Neglect	3,600	82.2%
Medical Neglect	83	1.9%
Sexual Abuse	169	3.9%
Psychological Maltreatment	229	5.2%

Note: Reports frequently include multiple types of maltreatment and more than a single incident

- Of all Nevada children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2005, 54.1% were white, 23.5% were Black, 14.7% were Hispanic, 9% were American/Alaskan Native, and 6.9% were of other races and ethnicities.

WHO MUST REPORT?

According to NRS 432.B121(1) any person who has “reasonable cause to believe” child abuse may be occurring or has occurred may report to a Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement agency. Mandated reporters are those persons, who in their professional or occupational capacities, know or have reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected. Mandated reporters include the following:

- a. A physician, dentist, dental hygienist, chiropractor, optometrist, podiatrist, medical examiner, resident, intern, professional or practical nurse, physician’s assistant, psychiatrist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, alcohol or drug abuse counselor, advanced emergency medical technician-ambulance or other person providing medical services licensed or certified in Nevada.
- b. Any personnel of a hospital or similar institution engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of persons.
- c. A coroner.
- d. A clergyman, practitioner of Christian Science or religious healer.
- e. A social worker, administrator, teacher, librarian or counselor of a school.
- f. Any person who maintains or is employed by a facility or establishment that provides care for children, children’s camp or other public or private facility, institution or agency furnishing care to a child.
- g. Any person licensed to conduct a foster home.
- h. Any officer or employee of a law enforcement agency or an adult or juvenile probation officer.

- i. An attorney, unless he has acquired the knowledge of the abuse or neglect from a client who is or may be accused of the abuse or neglect.
- j. Any person who maintains, is employed by or serves as a volunteer for an agency or service that advises persons regarding abuse or neglect of a child and refers them to persons and agencies where their requests and needs can be met.
- k. Any adult person who is employed by an entity that provides organized activities for children.

Anyone required to make a report who knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of NRS432B.121(1) is guilty of a misdemeanor (NRS432.B.240). Persons required to report may not invoke any of the privileges granted under Chapter 49 of NRS relating to patient or client confidentiality.

Effective October 1, 2005, a new section has been added to the list of persons required to report suspected child abuse or neglect (NRS 432.330 (3)). The new section includes “any person who is described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 who delivers or provides medical services to a newborn infant and who, in his professional or occupational capacity, knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the newborn infant has been affected by prenatal illegal substance abuse or has withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure shall, as soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 24 hours after the person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the newborn infant is so affected or has such symptoms, notify an agency which provides child welfare services for the condition of the infant and refer each person who is responsible for the welfare of the infant to an agency which provides child welfare services.”

WHAT TO REPORT

According to NRS432B.230, a child abuse or neglect report may be made verbally by telephone or otherwise.

“The report must contain the following information, if obtainable:

- a. The name, address, age and sex of the child.
- b. The name and address of the child’s parents or other person responsible for his care.
- c. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect of the child; the effect of prenatal illegal substance abuse on the newborn infant or the nature of the withdrawal resulting from prenatal drug exposure of the newborn infant.
- d. Any evidence or previously known or suspected abuse or neglect of the child or the child’s siblings or effects of prenatal illegal substance abuse on or evidence of withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure of the newborn infant.
- e. The name, address and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have abused or neglected the child.
- f. Any other information known to the person making the report that Child Welfare Services considers necessary.”

WHEN AND WHERE TO REPORT

According to Nevada Revised Statute 432B.121(1), persons are required by law to report as soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 24 hours after the person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the child (under 18 years old) has been abused or neglected. Reports should be made to the local office of the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, to any county agency authorized by the juvenile court to receive such reports, or to any police department or sheriff’s office when there is reason to believe that a child under 18 years of age has been maltreated.

Washoe County is required to report within 1 hour.

PERPETRATORS

Most perpetrators of child maltreatment are caregivers who have been found to have abused or neglected a child. In most cases, the perpetrator is a parent who is responsible for the child’s well-being. (See Table 2.)

In 2004, 57.8% of the perpetrators were women and 42.2 percent were men. Female perpetrators were typically younger than male perpetrators. The median age for perpetrators was 31 years for women and 34 years for men.



TABLE 2

Table 2 shows the perpetrator’s relationship to the child for substantiated cases only.

Relationship to Victim	Number	% of Total
Natural Parent	5,046	93.65%
Stepparent	110	2.04%
Adoptive Parent	23	0.43%
Foster Parent	14	0.26%
Parent Teen	0	0.00%
Other Relative	65	1.21%
Boy/Girl Friend	26	0.48%
Institution Staff	0	0.00%
Babysitter	8	0.15%
Other	48	0.89%
Unknown	48	0.89%
TOTAL	5,388	100%

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A REPORT IS RECEIVED?

When Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement agencies receive a report of child abuse or neglect, they must initiate an investigation. If a child is under the age of five, there is a high risk of serious harm or the child is seriously injured, an investigation will begin immediately. If a case is lower risk, an evaluation will be made within three days to determine if a formal investigation is needed.

During an investigation, information is gathered by CPS. Interviews are conducted with the child, the child’s caregiver, parents and/or guardian, and any other person who may have information regarding the child’s situation. The child’s age, development, family history, home environment, and other risk factors are assessed. In lower risk cases, children are allowed to stay in the home and parents or guardians may be offered services. In higher

risk cases, a child may be placed in protective custody. A Protective Custody Hearing is held within 72 hours and a judge determines whether a child will remain in custody. Children requiring longer term care are placed in foster care with either relatives or licensed foster parents.

- On September 30, 2003, there were 3,599 children in foster care in Nevada, compared with 3,291 on September 30, 2002.
- The average age of a child in foster care was 8.7 years, and the average length of stay was 19.9 months.
- There are over 900 foster care homes in Nevada. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the children in foster care reside with their relatives. Of the 3,378 children exiting out-of-home care in 2003, 67.3% were reunited with their parents or other family members.