

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE – IN THE NUMBERS**

Compiled by the Children's Assessment Center \* [www.cac-kent.org](http://www.cac-kent.org)

### Kent County, MI

- Because child sexual abuse is grossly underreported, it is a realistic assumption that there are between 6,000 and 8,000 child victims of sexual abuse in Kent County . . . *each year*.<sup>1</sup>
  
- Each year, nearly 1,000 children receive services from the Children's Assessment Center:
  - Gender:*
    - 62% Female
    - 38% Male
  
  - Age*
    - 15% 13-19 years old
    - 35% 7-12 years old
    - 49% 6 years old or younger  
(less than 1% did not specify age)
  
  - Ethnic Background*
    - 18% African/African American
    - <1% Asian
    - 59% Caucasian
    - 8% Hispanic
    - <1% Native American
    - 13% Other (includes biracial children and those who did not specify ethnicity)

### How prevalent is child sexual abuse?

- One child under the age of 18 is sexually assaulted every 3.9 minutes; one child under the age of 12 is sexually assaulted every 7.7 minutes. Since estimates suggest that only 12% of sexual abuse cases are reported, actual assaults could be as high as 1 every 28 seconds for all children and 1 every 55 seconds for those under age 12.<sup>1</sup>
  
- Some estimates suggest that only 1-10% of child molestation cases are ever reported.<sup>2</sup>
  
- As many as one in three girls and one in seven boys will be sexually abused at some point in their childhood.<sup>3</sup>

### Who are the abusers?

- Up to 50% of those who sexually abuse children are under 18, and 40-80% of adolescents who have sexually abused children were themselves victims of sexual abuse.<sup>4</sup>

- In more than 90% of sexual abuse cases, the child and the child's family know and trust the abuser. 30-40% of children are abused by a family member, while 60% are abused by a trusted friend of the family.<sup>5</sup>
- The average serial child molester has between 360-380 victims in his or her lifetime.<sup>6</sup>

#### What are the long-term effects of untreated sexual abuse?

- 52% of children whose sexual abuse is not treated at the time of the disclosure are referred to the juvenile justice system.<sup>7</sup>
- Victims of child sexual abuse experience more physical health problems (e.g. headaches), are more likely to experience major depression as adults, and report more substance abuse problems.<sup>8</sup>
- A 1996 National Institute of Justice study estimated that each year child sexual abuse in America costs the nation \$23 billion.
- More than 75% of teenage prostitutes have been sexually abused.<sup>9</sup>
- 70-80% of serial rapists report that they were sexually abused as children.<sup>10</sup>
- Among male survivors, more than 70% seek psychological treatment for issues such as substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, and attempted suicide.<sup>11</sup>

#### Does a child advocacy center really make a difference in cases?<sup>12</sup>

In short, YES!

- Police in CAC communities were involved in 81% of CPS investigations of sexual abuse compared to only 52% of cases in comparison communities. A team interview was given 28% of the time as opposed only 6% without a CAC.
- 48% of the children in CAC samples received a forensic medical exam versus 21% of the children in non-CAC communities.
- 60% of the children in CAC communities received referral for mental health services versus 22% of the children in non-CAC communities. Additionally, in a CAC community, 31% of the children received on-site counseling.
- According to research children's advocacy centers are viewed as leaders in the community and experts in child abuse.
- Only CACs with strong involvement from law enforcement and district attorneys' offices showed an impact on criminal justice outcomes.

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> 2006 CAC-Kent County Statistics

RAINN calculation based upon USDOJ NCVS data for 2004-2005

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<sup>2</sup> FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin

<sup>3</sup> Briere, J., Eliot, D.M. Prevalence and Psychological Sequence of Self-Reported Childhood Physical and Sexual Abuse in General Population: *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 2003, 27 10.

<sup>4</sup> Hunter, J.A., Figueredo, A.I., Malamurth, N.M., & Becker, J.V. (2003). Juvenile sex offenders: Toward the Development of a Typology. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, (2003) Volume 15, No. 1.

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<sup>5</sup> Abel, G. & Harlow, N. (2001). Stop child molestation book. Abel and Harlow.

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<sup>6</sup> South Carolina Forcible Sex Crimes. (1999). Summary, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Columbia, SC.

<sup>7</sup>National Children’s Alliance

<sup>8</sup> Hammond, R.W. (2003). Public health and child maltreatment prevention: The role of the centers for disease control and prevention. *Child Maltreatment*, 8, 81-83.

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<sup>9</sup> Zierler, S., Feingold, L., Laufer, D., Velentgas, P., Kantrowitz-Gordon, I., & Mayer, K. (1991). Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and subsequent risk of HIV infection. *American Journal of Public Health*, 81, 572-575.

<sup>10</sup> Elliot, M., Browne, KI, & Kilcoyne, J. (1995). Child sexual abuse prevention: What offenders tell us. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 5, 579-594.

<sup>11</sup> Walrath, C., Ybarra, M., Holden, W., Liao, Q., Santiago, R., & Leaf, P. (2003). Children with reported histories of sexual abuse: Utilizing multiple perspectives to understand clinical and psychological profiles. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27, 509-524.

<sup>12</sup> Source: "Executive Summary: Findings from the UNH Multi-Site Evaluation of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs)"; Ted Cross, PhD., and Lisa Jones, PhD.; Crimes Against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire; 2006.