

17,662 CHILDREN

were in founded investigations of child abuse and neglect.

48%

were 0-5 years old

36%

were 6-12 years old

16%

were 13-17 years old

9,634 INVESTIGATIONS

with founded cases of child abuse and neglect.

60%

of cases were neglect

55%

of cases were physical abuse

4%

of cases were sexual abuse

Data Collection

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) collects data referrals for child protective services. Understanding the numbers helps us to best identify prevention programs and resources.

According to DSS, abuse can be physical like hitting too hard, or it can be mental, like saying mean things to your child all the time. Indicators of physical abuse human bite marks, lacerations or abrasions and other significant, unexplained marks or bruises. Sexual contact with a child is abuse, and indicators could include difficulty walking or sitting, torn or stained underclothing, pain or swelling or other signs of trauma in the genital area.

Neglect is when you do not give your child enough food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care or supervision, and you either have the money or are given the money to do so. Indicators of neglect include underweight, poor growth pattern and a failure to thrive. Children may be consistently hungry and have poor hygiene. There also may be persistent lack of supervision as well as physical and medical problems that don't receive the proper attention.