

FACTS

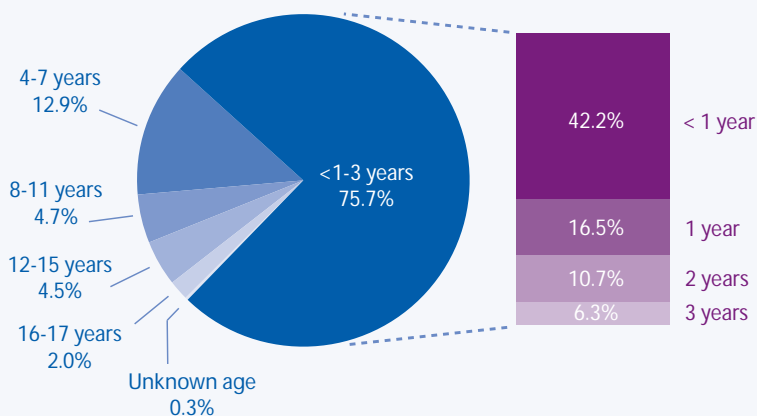
preventing child maltreatment

THE REALITY

- > Child maltreatment includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect.
- > In 2007, more than 1,700 children died because of abuse or neglect in the United States.
- > It is reported that more than 1 in 8 children between the ages of 2 and 17 in the United States are victims of maltreatment. However, most cases are not reported to police or social services.
- > Children of all ages can be victims of maltreatment. However, children younger than 4 years of age are at greatest risk of death from child maltreatment, with infants under age 1 accounting for 42%.



CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS (2007)



Note: % ages are based on data from 48 reporting states.
Source: National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and Administration for Children & Families (ACF).

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

- > Child maltreatment has a negative effect on physical health. Short-term injuries include cuts, bruises, burns, and broken bones. Abuse can also lead to permanent disabilities including visual, motor, and cognitive impairments.
- > Prolonged maltreatment causes extreme or "toxic" stress that can disrupt early brain development. Extreme stress can harm the development of the nervous and immune systems, leaving children vulnerable to chronic diseases later in life. Maltreatment, for example, has been associated with heart, lung, and liver disease in adulthood.
- > Child maltreatment is also linked to negative health behaviors later in life. Victims may smoke, abuse alcohol, use illicit drugs, and engage in risky sexual behavior. Maltreatment has also been associated with unintentional pregnancy.
- > Not all injuries are visible. Child maltreatment can have a lasting emotional impact as well. Victims may suffer from anxiety or depression. They may be wary, distrustful of others, and have difficulty establishing relationships. Some even think about or attempt suicide.
- > Abused and neglected children may suffer low academic achievement and be more likely to drop out prior to high school graduation.

FACT FACT

Early childhood home visitation can prevent child maltreatment in high-risk families. A systematic review of published studies found that home visitations resulted in a 40% reduction in child maltreatment episodes. Home visitation programs have also been shown to have an average return on investment of \$3 to \$6 for every dollar spent on programming.



