

**National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April** is dedicated to raising awareness and preventing child abuse.

Approximately 2 million children received prevention services in 2020.

During Federal fiscal year 2020, fewer than one-quarter (21.8 percent) of confirmed maltreatment victims were removed from their homes because of an investigation or alternative response.



**Physical abuse** is the intentional use of physical force that can result in physical injury. Examples include hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other shows of force against a child.

**Sexual abuse** involves pressuring or forcing a child to engage in sexual acts. It includes behaviors such as fondling, penetration, and exposing a child to other sexual activities.

**Emotional abuse** refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name-calling, shaming, rejection, withholding love, and threatening. Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, and access to medical care.



How big is the problem?

Child abuse and neglect are common. At least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past. In 2019, 1,840 children died of abuse and neglect in the United States.

Children living in poverty experience more abuse and neglect. Rates of child abuse and neglect are 5 times higher for children in families with low socioeconomic status compared to children in families with higher socioeconomic status.

### **Duty to Report Suspected Child Abuse in the State of Texas**

Texas law requires anyone with knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect to **\*\*report it to the appropriate authorities. This mandatory reporting applies to all individuals.** Those who work for an agency or facility licensed or certified by the state and have contact with children as a result of their normal duties, such as teachers, nurses, doctors, and day-care employees, must report the abuse or neglect within 48 hours.

**\*\*The report may be made to any local or state law enforcement agency; or the Department of Family and Protective Services.**

## Protective Factors

Protective factors are conditions when present in families and communities, increase the well-being of children and families and reduce the likelihood of maltreatment.

Identifying protective factors helps parents find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively—even under stress. There are 6 protective factors:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents
- Social and emotional competence of children
- For more information about protective factors, see Protective Factors to Promote Well-Being.

## Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs are traumatic events that occur before a child reaches the age of 18.

ACEs include:

- All types of abuse and neglect
- Parental substance use or mental illness
- Parental incarceration
- Domestic violence
- Divorce

