

The cover features a white background with several maple leaves in various shades of green and grey. A grid pattern is visible in the lower right quadrant, overlaid on a large green leaf. The title is in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect – 2003

MAJOR FINDINGS

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TABLE 9-2 Investigated Families Compared to Investigated Children, in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 1998 and 2003

	1998*	2003**	Significance Level
	Number of Investigations	Number of Investigations	
Investigated Families	83,976	130,594	p<.05
Investigated Children	118,552	217,319	p<.01
Average Number of Investigated Children per Family	1.41	1.66	

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* Based on a sample of 3,800 family maltreatment investigations in 1998.

** Based on a sample of 6,948 family maltreatment investigations in 2003.

Variations by Category of Maltreatment

Table 9-3 indicates some factors underlying the increase in the rate of substantiated maltreatment. The increase is driven primarily by increases in two categories of substantiated maltreatment: exposure to domestic violence and emotional maltreatment. The rate of exposure to domestic violence increased by 259%, from 1.72 to 6.17 cases of substantiated maltreatment per 1,000, and the rate of emotional

maltreatment increased by 276%, from 0.86 to 3.23 cases of substantiated maltreatment per 1,000 children. In 1998 these two forms of maltreatment accounted for 27% of cases of substantiated maltreatment; by 2003 they accounted for 43%. These increases reflect a change in awareness, and in some cases a change in legislation, regarding the impact of emotional maltreatment and exposure to domestic violence.

From 1998 to 2003, rates of physical abuse and neglect increased much less; cases of substantiated physical abuse increased by 107%, from 2.56 cases per 1,000 to 5.31, and neglect increased by 78%, from 3.58 to 6.38 per 1,000. In contrast to all other forms of maltreatment, cases of substantiated sexual abuse decreased by nearly a third (30%), dropping from 0.89 substantiated cases per 1,000 children to 0.62. However, this decrease was not statistically significant.

Rates of Substantiated Maltreatment by Age Group

Table 9-4 examines the increase in substantiated maltreatment by victim age group. The largest increase in substantiated child maltreatment occurred in the category of children under one year of age. In 1998, 6.37 per 1,000 children (1,791 investigations) were victims of maltreatment; in 2003 the incidence of substantiated maltreatment increased to 28.22 per 1,000 children (6,989 investigations), more than four times the rate of victimization identified in 1998. The rate of increase was also more pronounced for 8 to 11 year olds.

TABLE 9-3 Substantiated Child Maltreatment Investigations by Primary Category of Maltreatment, in Canada, Excluding Quebec, in 1998 and 2003

	1998*			2003**			Significance Level
	Number of Investigations	Incidence per 1,000 Children	% of Substantiated Investigations	Number of Investigations	Incidence per 1,000 Children	% of Substantiated Investigations	
Physical Abuse	12,353	2.56	27%	25,257	5.31	24%	p<.01
Sexual Abuse	4,322	0.89	9%	2,935	0.62	3%	ns
Neglect	17,292	3.58	37%	30,366	6.38	29%	p<.01
Emotional Maltreatment	4,137	0.86	9%	15,369	3.23	15%	p<.001
Exposure to Domestic Violence	8,284	1.72	18%	29,370	6.17	28%	p<.001
Total	46,388	9.60	100%	103,297	21.71	100%	p<.001

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* Based on a sample of 2,046 substantiated investigations with information on maltreatment category. Columns may add up to 99% or 101% because of rounding.

** Based on a sample of 5,660 substantiated investigations.