



News Release

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03 September 2002

CHILD PROTECTION STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2001

Statistics on child protection covering the year ended 31 March 2001 have been published today. The main points are:

- There were 2,000 children on local child protection registers at 31 March 2001; this is a decrease of 50 on the number one year previously. Of these, just over half were boys and three-quarters were under the age of 11.
- Just over 6,600 children were referred to local authorities for child protection inquiries in 2000-01: 8 per cent lower than the previous year.
- Of those children referred to local authorities, 36 per cent were the subject of an inter-agency case conference.
- In 85 per cent of instances where children were subject to a case conference, the children in question were living at home prior to being referred.
- Of these case conferences, 76 per cent resulted in the child being placed on the local child protection register (1,783 children).
- In over three quarters of all case conferences, the primary source of abuse/risk to the child was known or suspected to be the child's birth parent(s).
- Over two thirds of children placed on the child protection register during the year were identified as being at risk of physical injury or physical neglect.
- Two-thirds of children removed from child protection registers during the year had been on the register for less than a year, with 9 per cent having spent at least 2 years on the register.

The following tables are available:

- Table 1 - Children referred for child protection inquiries: breakdown by gender and age group.
- Table 2 - Children who were subject to a case conference: breakdown by placement of children prior to referral.
- Table 3 - Children who were subject to a case conference: breakdown by child's primary known / suspected abuser.
- Table 4 - Children registered following a case conference : by category of abuse / risk identified by conference.
- Table 5A - Children de-registered: by category of abuse/risk identified at conference.
- Table 5B - Children de-registered: by length of time on child protection register.
- Table 6 - Number of children on child protection registers: By gender and age group.
- Table 7 - Number of children on child protection registers and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15: By local authority area.
- Table 8 - Numbers of children referred, subject to a case conference, registered during the year, and on child protection registers: By local authority area.

NOTES FOR NEWS EDITORS

1. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 places certain duties on local authorities in relation to the wellbeing of children in their area. These include a general duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in need and a specific duty to cause inquiries to be made into the case of a child who may be in need of compulsory measures of supervision due to lack of parental care, abuse or neglect. Arising from these duties, Local Authority Social Work Departments will have received reports about children who may have been abused or who may be at risk of abuse. These children may have been referred by relatives, neighbours, professionals or other sources. In practice there are differences in interpretation between Local Authorities as to what constitutes a referral. For example, an initial observation by a neighbour may not be counted as a referral until after further preliminary investigations have taken place.

2. Social Work Departments decide whether there is a need to initiate child protection inquiries and the subsequent steps to follow. National guidance sets out a framework for collaboration between Social Work Departments and other agencies in child protection cases (Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility : The Scottish Office 1998).

3. At the initial stage of inquiries, practitioners will assess whether the child is at immediate risk of serious harm. If so, they may seek to secure the safety of the child by applying for a child protection order or an exclusion order under the 1995 Act. Inter-agency child protection case conferences may be convened to consider the nature and extent of any future identified or potential risk and to decide what action should be taken to reduce the risk. Interim measures of support, supervision or care (e.g. voluntary social work involvement, placing the child with a foster family) may be put in place in order to alleviate the risk to the child.

4. A case conference will decide whether any child(ren) should be placed on the local child protection register. A child should be registered when his/her safety and welfare is considered to require an inter-agency protection plan. An inter-agency plan provides a framework for inter-agency assessment, case work and review. The purpose of a protection plan is to reduce any perceived risk to the child and to safeguard and promote his/her welfare.

5. If the child is registered, a review case conference will normally be held within three months and at six monthly intervals thereafter. The review conference will review the progress of the inter-agency work to protect the child and consider any continuing risk. The conference will also consider whether there is a need for continued registration or to update the child protection plan.

6. When professionals who are working with the child and family decide that the risk to the child has been eliminated or reduced, the local authority should remove the child's name from the child protection register. This decision should normally be made by a review case conference.

7. The statistics in this News Release have been derived from returns provided by local authorities about children who have been referred to authorities because of concerns that they may have been abused or may be at risk of abuse. For this purpose, abuse is defined under the following categories:

- Physical injury
- Sexual abuse
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect

8. A child may also be referred for child protection inquiries if he or she is the known or suspected perpetrator of abuse.

9. All 32 local authorities were able to provide the Scottish Executive with child protection data. Some authorities were, however, able to produce some but not all of the data requested. Where this was the case, the remaining data was estimated for these authorities and these estimates were then subsequently used in the calculation of Scotland level data.

There may be differences in the recording and interpretation of child protection data across Local Authorities, and so some of the apparent variation between Local Authorities may reflect reporting procedures rather than actual child protection practice.

11. Supporting tables are available on request - and on the Scottish Executive web site (www.scotland.gov.uk).

12. This is a National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

13. Public enquiries (non-media) about the information contained in this News Release should be addressed to Angus MacDonald, Scottish Executive Education Department, Area 1-A, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ. Telephone 0131 244 3551 or e-mail angus.macdonald@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

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TABLE 1
CHILDREN REFERRED FOR CHILD PROTECTION INQUIRIES :
BREAKDOWN BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP

Gender	Age Group	Year Ended 31 March.....			
		2000		2001	
		Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Boys	0-4	1,286	17.9	1,053	15.9
	5-10	1,250	17.4	1,142	17.3
	11-15	907	12.6	1,002	15.1
	16+	34	0.5	41	0.6
	Total boys	3,477	48.3	3,239	48.9
Girls	0-4	1,152	16.0	915	13.8
	5-10	1,216	16.9	1,121	16.9
	11-15	1,313	18.2	1,282	19.4
	16+	43	0.6	62	0.9
	Total girls	3,724	51.7	3,380	51.1
All children	0-4	2,438	33.9	1,968	29.7
	5-10	2,466	34.2	2,263	34.2
	11-15	2,220	30.8	2,284	34.5
	16+	77	1.1	103	1.6
	Total children	7,201	100.0	6,619	100.0

1. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 2
CHILDREN WHO WERE SUBJECT TO A CASE CONFERENCE¹ :
BREAKDOWN BY PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN PRIOR TO REFERRAL

Placement of children prior to referral	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
At home	2,281	88.0	2,006	85.3
With relatives	113	4.4	150	6.4
With foster carers	75	2.9	73	3.1
In a residential establishment	23	0.9	25	1.1
Other placement	100	3.9	98	4.2
Total	2,593	100.0	2,352	100.0

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in the years ended 31 March 2000 & 2001 who were subject to a case conference.

2. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 3
CHILDREN WHO WERE SUBJECT TO A CASE CONFERENCE¹ :
BREAKDOWN BY CHILD'S PRIMARY KNOWN/SUSPECTED ABUSER

Primary known/suspected abuser	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Natural parent	2,034	78.4	1,808	76.9
Step parent	122	4.7	85	3.6
Parent's co-habitee	191	7.4	152	6.5
Other relative (including sibling)	142	5.5	167	7.1
Other person known to child / family	86	3.3	83	3.5
Person unknown to child / family	18	0.7	56	2.4
Total	2,593	100.0	2,352	100.0

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in Scotland in the years ended 31 March 2000 & 2001 who were subject to a case conference.

2. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 4
CHILDREN REGISTERED AS A RESULT OF A CASE CONFERENCE¹ :
BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY OF ABUSE/RISK IDENTIFIED BY CONFERENCE

Category of abuse/risk	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Physical injury	713	37.7	688	38.6
Sexual abuse	286	15.1	256	14.4
Emotional abuse	235	12.4	270	15.1
Physical neglect	639	33.8	558	31.3
Other	18	1.0	11	0.6
Total	1,891	100.0	1,783	100.0

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in the years ended 31 March 2000 & 2001 who were subject to a case conference and were registered as a result of that conference.

2. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 5A
CHILDREN DE-REGISTERED :
BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY OF ABUSE/RISK IDENTIFIED AT CONFERENCE

Category of abuse/risk	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Physical injury	839	39.7	627	37.2
Sexual abuse	358	17.0	300	17.8
Emotional abuse	222	10.5	202	12.0
Physical neglect	673	31.9	513	30.4
Other	19	0.9	44	2.6
Total	2,111	100.0	1,687	100.0

TABLE 5B
CHILDREN DE-REGISTERED :
BREAKDOWN BY LENGTH OF TIME ON CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

Length of time registered	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	716	33.9	570	33.8
6 months to under 1 year	702	33.3	543	32.2
1 year to under 18 months	305	14.4	303	18.0
18 months to under 2 years	163	7.7	127	7.6
2 years or more	226	10.7	144	8.5
Total	2,112	100.0	1,687	100.0

1. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON CHILD PROTECTION REGISTERS :
BREAKDOWN BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP

Gender	Agegroup	Year Ended 31 March.....			
		2000		2001	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Boys	0-4	483	23.6	454	22.7
	5-10	368	18.0	348	17.4
	11-15	217	10.6	224	11.2
	16+	11	0.5	8	0.4
	Total boys	1,080	52.7	1,035	51.8
Girls	0-4	354	17.3	371	18.5
	5-10	351	17.1	344	17.2
	11-15	249	12.1	236	11.8
	16+	17	0.8	15	0.7
	Total girls	970	47.3	965	48.2
All children	0-4	837	40.8	825	41.2
	5-10	718	35.0	693	34.6
	11-15	466	22.7	460	23.0
	16+	28	1.4	23	1.1
	Total children	2,050	100.0	2,000	100.0

1. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON CHILD PROTECTION REGISTERS
AND RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION AGED 0-15 YEARS

Local authority area	As at 31 March.....			
	2000		2001	
	Number on Register	Rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15	Number on Register	Rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15
Aberdeen City	144	3.7	148	3.8
Aberdeenshire	89	1.9	82	1.7
Angus	50	2.3	45	2.1
Argyll & Bute	42	2.7	18	1.1
Clackmannanshire	20	2.0	11	1.1
Dumfries & Galloway	55	2.0	111	4.0
Dundee City	42	1.5	45	1.7
East Ayrshire	14	0.6	10	0.4
East Dunbartonshire	14	0.7	4	0.2
East Lothian	70	3.9	60	3.3
East Renfrewshire	19	1.1	21	1.2
Edinburgh, City of	317	4.1	309	4.0
Eilean Siar	12	2.2	19	3.6
Falkirk	73	2.6	86	3.0
Fife	76	1.1	65	0.9
Glasgow City	325	2.8	305	2.6
Highland	166	3.9	96	2.3
Inverclyde	8	0.5	9	0.5
Midlothian	57	3.5	56	3.4
Moray	22	1.2	30	1.7
North Ayrshire	41	1.5	22	0.8
North Lanarkshire	52	0.8	48	0.7
Orkney Isles	2	0.5	7	1.8
Perth & Kinross	36	1.4	60	2.4
Renfrewshire	51	1.4	78	2.2
Scottish Borders	37	1.8	31	1.5
Shetland	10	2.0	11	2.2
South Ayrshire	7	0.3	13	0.6
South Lanarkshire	67	1.1	71	1.1
Stirling	21	1.3	31	1.9
West Dunbartonshire	21	1.0	14	0.7
West Lothian	90	2.7	84	2.5
SCOTLAND	2,050	2.0	2,000	2.0

1. Due to the inclusion of some estimated (rounded) figures in tables, the sum of component parts may not equal the totals shown.

TABLE 8
NUMBERS OF CHILDREN REFERRED, SUBJECT TO A CASE CONFERENCE, REGISTERED AND ON CHILD PROTECTION REGISTERS

Local authority area	Year Ended 31 March 2001							
	Number Referred	Rate of referrals per 1,000 population aged 0-15	Number Subject to a Case Conference	Rate of conferences per 1,000 population aged 0-15	Number Registered	Rate of registrations per 1,000 population aged 0-15	Number on Register	Rate on register per 1,000 population aged 0-15
Aberdeen City ¹	252	6.5	137	3.6	129	3.3	148	3.8
Aberdeenshire	712	15.0	103	2.2	81	1.7	82	1.7
Angus	152	7.1	78	3.6	54	2.5	45	2.1
Argyll & Bute	106	6.7	33	2.1	17	1.1	18	1.1
Clackmannanshire	111	11.0	32	3.2	19	1.9	11	1.1
Dumfries & Galloway	330	11.8	172	6.2	151	5.4	111	4.0
Dundee City	156	5.7	104	3.8	77	2.8	45	1.7
East Ayrshire	45	1.8	25	1.0	23	0.9	10	0.4
East Dunbartonshire	43	2.1	9	0.4	8	0.4	4	0.2
East Lothian	134	7.4	50	2.8	42	2.3	60	3.3
East Renfrewshire	38	2.1	30	1.7	22	1.2	21	1.2
Edinburgh, City of	614	7.9	251	3.2	214	2.7	309	4.0
Eilean Siar	16	3.0	10	1.9	9	1.7	19	3.6
Falkirk	240	8.5	86	3.0	79	2.8	86	3.0
Fife	546	7.9	109	1.6	62	0.9	65	0.9
Glasgow City	647	5.5	240	2.0	175	1.5	305	2.6
Highland	377	8.9	175	4.1	124	2.9	96	2.3
Inverclyde	85	4.9	27	1.6	11	0.6	9	0.5
Midlothian	123	7.5	46	2.8	46	2.8	56	3.4
Moray	187	10.5	33	1.9	29	1.6	30	1.7
North Ayrshire	80	2.8	51	1.8	31	1.1	22	0.8
North Lanarkshire	179	2.7	112	1.7	71	1.1	48	0.7
Orkney Isles	55	13.9	8	2.0	7	1.8	7	1.8
Perth & Kinross	265	10.5	85	3.4	65	2.6	60	2.4
Renfrewshire	145	4.0	91	2.5	61	1.7	78	2.2
Scottish Borders	240	11.9	29	1.4	20	1.0	31	1.5
Shetland	43	8.5	14	2.8	12	2.4	11	2.2
South Ayrshire	69	3.3	18	0.8	11	0.5	13	0.6
South Lanarkshire	286	4.6	75	1.2	45	0.7	71	1.1
Stirling	107	6.6	27	1.7	17	1.0	31	1.9
West Dunbartonshire	123	6.1	26	1.3	14	0.7	14	0.7
West Lothian	113	3.4	66	2.0	57	1.7	84	2.5
SCOTLAND	6,619	6.6	2,352	2.4	1,783	1.8	2,000	2.0

1. Figure for Aberdeen City for number registered is an estimate.

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