



## **News Release**

05 November 2002

### **CHILD PROTECTION STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2002**

Statistics on child protection covering the year ended 31 March 2002 have been published today. The main points are:

- There were 2,018 children on local child protection registers at 31 March 2002; this is an increase of 18 on the number one year previously. Of these, just over half were boys and eight in ten were under the age of 11.
- Just under 7,200 children were referred to local authorities for child protection inquiries in 2001-02: 8 per cent higher than the previous year.
- Of those children referred to local authorities, 40 per cent were the subject of an inter-agency case conference.
- In 84 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, almost 70 per cent resulted in the child being placed on the local child protection register (1,979 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).
- Almost three quarters of children placed on the child protection register during the year were identified as being at risk of physical injury or physical neglect.
- 70 per cent of children removed from child protection registers during the year had been on the register for less than a year, with 7 per cent having spent at least 2 years on the register.

**The following tables are available:**

- Table 1 - Children referred for child protection inquiries: gender and age group.
- Table 2 - Children who were subject to a case conference: placement of children prior to referral.
- Table 3 - Children who were subject to a case conference: 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](http://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](mailto:angus.macdonald@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

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

Gender	Age Group	Year Ended 31 March.....			
		2001		2002	
		Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Boys	0-4	1,053	15.9	1,023	14.3
	5-10	1,142	17.3	1,267	17.7
	11-15	1,002	15.1	1,003	14.0
	16+	41	0.6	53	0.7
	Total boys	3,239	48.9	3,345	46.6
Girls	0-4	915	13.8	1,035	14.4
	5-10	1,121	16.9	1,215	16.9
	11-15	1,282	19.4	1,496	20.9
	16+	62	0.9	81	1.1
	Total girls	3,380	51.1	3,827	53.4
All children	0-4	1,968	29.7	2,058	28.7
	5-10	2,263	34.2	2,482	34.6
	11-15	2,284	34.5	2,498	34.8
	16+	103	1.6	134	1.9
	Total children	6,619	100.0	7,172	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 CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup> :**  
**PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN PRIOR TO REFERRAL**

Placement of children prior to referral	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
At home	2,006	85.3	2,382	83.5
With relatives	150	6.4	170	6.0
With foster carers	73	3.1	210	7.4
In a residential establishment	25	1.1	27	1.0
Other placement	98	4.2	62	2.2
Total	2,352	100.0	2,851	100.0

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in the years ended 31 March 2001 & 2002 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 CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup> :**  
**CHILD'S PRIMARY KNOWN/SUSPECTED ABUSER**

Primary known/suspected abuser	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Natural mother	1,128	48.0	1,325	46.5
Natural father	680	28.9	829	29.1
Step parent	85	3.6	100	3.5
Parent's co-habitee	152	6.5	255	8.9
Other relative (including sibling)	167	7.1	172	6.0
Other person known to child / family	83	3.5	105	3.7
Person unknown to child / family	56	2.4	64	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,352</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,851</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in Scotland in the years ended 31 March 2001 & 2002

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 FOLLOWING A CASE CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup> :**  
**CATEGORY OF ABUSE/RISK IDENTIFIED BY CONFERENCE**

Category of abuse/risk	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total
Physical injury	688	38.6	644	32.5
Sexual abuse	256	14.4	249	12.6
Emotional abuse	270	15.1	264	13.3
Physical neglect	558	31.3	809	40.9
Other	11	0.6	13	0.7
Total	1,783	100.0	1,979	100.0

1. Children referred for child protection inquiries in the years ended 31 March 2001 & 2002 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 :**  
**CATEGORY OF ABUSE/RISK IDENTIFIED AT CONFERENCE**

Category of abuse/risk	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Physical injury	627	37.2	758	34.2
Sexual abuse	300	17.8	296	13.4
Emotional abuse	202	12.0	319	14.4
Physical neglect	513	30.4	825	37.2
Other	44	2.6	18	0.8
Total	1,687	100.0	2,216	100.0

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

Length of time registered	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	570	33.8	815	36.8
6 months to under 1 year	543	32.2	729	32.9
1 year to under 18 months	303	18.0	328	14.8
18 months to under 2 years	127	7.6	185	8.3
2 years or more	144	8.5	159	7.2
Total	1,687	100.0	2,216	100.0

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

Gender	Agegroup	Year Ended 31 March.....			
		2001		2002	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Boys	0-4	454	22.7	476	23.6
	5-10	348	17.4	354	17.6
	11-15	224	11.2	179	8.9
	16+	8	0.4	4	0.2
	Total boys	1,035	51.8	1,013	50.2
Girls	0-4	371	18.5	458	22.7
	5-10	344	17.2	327	16.2
	11-15	236	11.8	208	10.3
	16+	15	0.7	12	0.6
	Total girls	965	48.2	1,005	49.8
All children	0-4	825	41.2	933	46.3
	5-10	693	34.6	681	33.8
	11-15	460	23.0	387	19.2
	16+	23	1.1	16	0.8
	Total children	2,000	100.0	2,018	100.0

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

Local authority area	Year Ended 31 March.....			
	2001		2002	
	Number on Register	Rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15	Number on Register	Rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15
Aberdeen City	148	3.8	176	5.1
Aberdeenshire	82	1.7	113	2.4
Angus	45	2.1	45	2.2
Argyll & Bute	18	1.1	25	1.5
Clackmannanshire	11	1.1	17	1.7
Dumfries & Galloway	111	4.0	59	2.1
Dundee City	45	1.7	50	1.9
East Ayrshire	10	0.4	27	1.1
East Dunbartonshire	4	0.2	10	0.5
East Lothian	60	3.3	49	2.6
East Renfrewshire	21	1.2	18	0.9
Edinburgh, City of	309	4.0	315	4.3
Eilean Siar	19	3.6	11	2.2
Falkirk	86	3.0	63	2.2
Fife	65	0.9	83	1.2
Glasgow City	305	2.6	242	2.3
Highland	96	2.3	112	2.7
Inverclyde	9	0.5	20	1.2
Midlothian	56	3.4	62	3.6
Moray	30	1.7	28	1.6
North Ayrshire	22	0.8	10	0.4
North Lanarkshire	48	0.7	68	1.0
Orkney Isles	7	1.8	2	0.5
Perth & Kinross	60	2.4	52	2.0
Renfrewshire	78	2.2	71	2.1
Scottish Borders	31	1.5	37	1.8
Shetland	11	2.2	12	2.5
South Ayrshire	13	0.6	5	0.2
South Lanarkshire	71	1.1	86	1.4
Stirling	31	1.9	35	2.1
West Dunbartonshire	14	0.7	25	1.3
West Lothian	84	2.5	90	2.6
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2,018</b>	<b>2.1</b>

<sup>1</sup> Population data are mid-year estimates obtained from the General Register Office (Scotland)

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

Local authority area	Year Ended 31 March 2002							
	Number Referred	Rate of referrals per 1,000 population aged 0-15 <sup>1</sup>	Number Subject to a Case Conference	Rate of conferences per 1,000 population aged 0-15 <sup>1</sup>	Number Registered	Rate of registrations per 1,000 population aged 0-15 <sup>1</sup>	Number on Register	Rate on register per 1,000 population aged 0-15 <sup>1</sup>
Aberdeen City	383	11.0	189	5.4	172	5.0	176	5.1
Aberdeenshire	540	11.4	157	3.3	104	2.2	113	2.4
Angus	161	7.9	72	3.5	58	2.8	45	2.2
Argyll & Bute	114	6.7	44	2.6	31	1.8	25	1.5
Clackmannanshire	99	9.9	42	4.2	24	2.4	17	1.7
Dumfries & Galloway	364	13.1	164	5.9	106	3.8	59	2.1
Dundee City	133	5.2	87	3.4	79	3.1	50	1.9
East Ayrshire	132	5.5	68	2.8	42	1.8	27	1.1
East Dunbartonshire	78	3.6	16	0.7	12	0.5	10	0.5
East Lothian	176	9.4	51	2.7	37	2.0	49	2.6
East Renfrewshire	52	2.7	31	1.6	20	1.0	18	0.9
Edinburgh, City of	632	8.6	221	3.0	193	2.6	315	4.3
Eilean Siar	29	5.9	20	4.0	18	3.6	11	2.2
Falkirk	218	7.7	24	0.8	14	0.5	63	2.2
Fife	491	7.2	117	1.7	23	0.3	83	1.2
Glasgow City	669	6.3	394	3.7	240	2.3	242	2.3
Highland	550	13.5	137	3.4	132	3.2	112	2.7
Inverclyde	52	3.2	19	1.2	15	0.9	20	1.2
Midlothian	155	9.1	73	4.3	61	3.6	62	3.6
Moray	153	8.7	45	2.6	33	1.9	28	1.6
North Ayrshire	90	3.3	46	1.7	14	0.5	10	0.4
North Lanarkshire	270	4.1	204	3.1	133	2.0	68	1.0
Orkney Isles	65	17.0	16	4.2	9	2.4	2	0.5
Perth & Kinross	166	6.5	67	2.6	59	2.3	52	2.0
Renfrewshire	228	6.8	180	5.4	92	2.7	71	2.1
Scottish Borders	233	11.5	58	2.9	40	2.0	37	1.8
Shetland	99	20.7	16	3.3	14	2.9	12	2.5
South Ayrshire	71	3.5	12	0.6	2	0.1	5	0.2
South Lanarkshire	287	4.8	119	2.0	74	1.2	86	1.4
Stirling	119	7.2	43	2.6	34	2.0	35	2.1
West Dunbartonshire	140	7.5	50	2.7	31	1.7	25	1.3
West Lothian	223	6.4	69	2.0	63	1.8	90	2.6
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>7,172</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>2,851</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2,018</b>	<b>2.1</b>

<sup>1</sup> Population data are mid-year estimates obtained from the General Register Office (Scotland)