



# Ontario incidence studies of reported child abuse and neglect 1998/2003: Outcomes of investigations<sup>1</sup>

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The Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (OIS-2003)<sup>2</sup> is the third provincial study to examine the incidence of reported child maltreatment and the characteristics of children and families investigated by Ontario child welfare services. In each of the three cycles, child welfare workers were asked to complete a standardized three-page data collection form at the conclusion of a maltreatment investigation. Weighted provincial annual estimates were derived based on these investigations. This information sheet examines changes in short-term service outcomes using data from the *OIS-1998*<sup>3</sup> and the *OIS-2003*. Data presented in this fact sheet examine:

- 1) the provision of ongoing child welfare services;
- 2) the placement of children in out-of-home care; and
- 3) the use of child welfare court.

The data presented here should be interpreted with care as they only reflect case events that occurred during the initial child welfare investigation. Additional referrals for services and admissions to out-of-home care could occur after the initial investigation.

## Provision of ongoing services

The decision to provide ongoing child welfare services was made in 10,324 substantiated child maltreatment investigations, a rate of 4.83 per 1,000 children in 1998 (Table 1). In 2003, ongoing child welfare services were provided to over twice as many children with 23,012 substantiated maltreatment investigations receiving ongoing services, a rate of 9.63 per 1,000 children. However, since the increase in the total number of substantiated investigations was even greater, the proportion of substantiated cases being kept open for ongoing services dropped from 45% in 1998 to 39% in 2003 (see Figure 1).

**Table 1: Outcomes for substantiated child maltreatment investigations in Ontario, 1998/2003**

Child Welfare Interventions	1998*			2003**			Significance Level
	Number of Child Investigations	Rate per 1,000 Children	% of substantiated investigations	Number of Child Investigations	Rate per 1,000 Children	% of substantiated investigations	
Case to Stay Open for Ongoing Services	10,324	4.38	45%	23,012	9.63	39%	p<.001
Child Welfare Placement	2,144	0.91	9%	3,453	1.44	6%	ns
Child Welfare Court Application	1,987	0.84	9%	3,357	1.40	6%	ns
<b>Total Substantiated Investigations</b>	<b>23,145</b>	<b>9.82</b>		<b>58,425</b>	<b>24.44</b>		

\* Based on a sample of 1,055 substantiated investigations. \*\* Based on a sample of 3,193 substantiated investigations. Source: *OIS-2003 Major Findings Report*, Table 9-6.

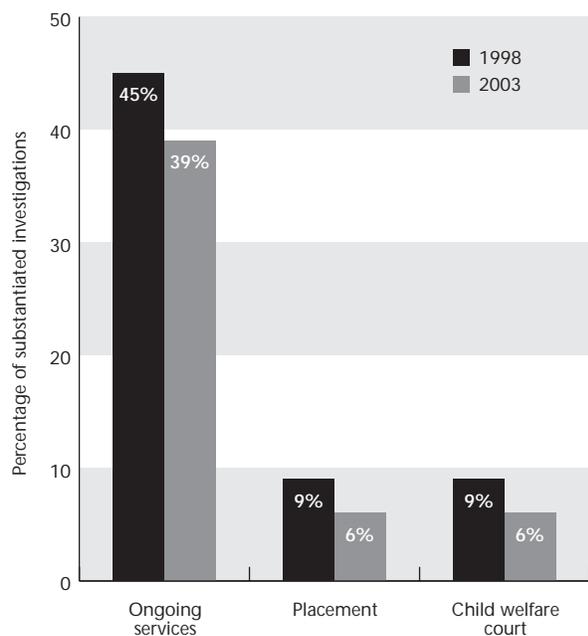
## Placement

In 1998, 2,144 substantiated investigations (0.91 per 1,000 children) resulted in a child welfare placement. In 2003, 3,453 substantiated investigations (1.44 per thousand children) resulted in a child welfare placement. The rate of increase in placements was, however, less pronounced than the overall increase in substantiated cases and was statistically insignificant. As a result, the proportion of maltreated children who experienced some type of placement during the investigation decreased from 9% in 1998 to 6% in 2003.

## Child welfare court

A similar trend was apparent in the use of child welfare courts. The number of maltreatment investigations that involved an application to child welfare court increased from 1,987 (0.84 per 1,000 children) in 1998 to 3,357 (1.40 per 1,000 children) in 2003, an increase that was not statistically significant. The proportion of substantiated cases brought to court dropped from 9% in 1998 to 6% in 2003.

Figure 1: Percentage of substantiated investigations



Source: OIS-2003 Major Findings Report, Table 9-6.

- 1 This information sheet is based on the following report: Fallon, B., Trocmé, N., MacLaurin, B., Knoke, D., Black, T., Daciuk, J., & Felstiner, C. (2005). *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect, OIS-2003: Major Findings Report*. Toronto, ON: Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare. Retrieved August 28, 2008 from: [http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home\\_e.html](http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home_e.html)
- 2 Fallon, B., Trocmé, N., MacLaurin, B., Knoke, D., Black, T., Daciuk, J., & Felstiner, C. (2005). *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect, OIS-2003: Major Findings Report*. Toronto, ON: Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare. Retrieved August 28, 2008 from: [http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home\\_e.html](http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home_e.html)
- 3 Trocmé, N., Fallon, B., MacLaurin, B., Daciuk, J., Bartholomew, S., Ortiz, J., Thompson, et al. (2002). *Ontario incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect (OIS-1998)*. Toronto, ON: Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare. Retrieved August 28, 2008 from: [http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home\\_e.html](http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/home_e.html)

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