

# Incidence of Child Sexual Abuse in Maryland

## Introduction

- According to the United States Census Bureau, **22.1%** of individuals living in Maryland are children.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2020, the total population of children in Maryland was **1,365,166**.<sup>1</sup>
- The Maryland Department of Human Resources, Child Protective Services (CPS), receives reports of “sexual abuse of minors.” **Sexual abuse** cases involve perpetrators who are family or household members, or someone with care, custody, or supervision of a minor child.<sup>2</sup>
  - Cases where the perpetrator is not a family or household member, or someone with care, custody, or supervision of a minor child, are categorized as general sex crimes such as *rape* or *sexual offense*, and are investigated by law enforcement without involving CPS.<sup>2</sup>

## Maryland Statistics

- In 2020, there were 1,365,166 children in Maryland.<sup>1</sup> Of those children, **7,242** were victims of child abuse or neglect.<sup>3</sup>
  - **28.4%** of the child abuse or neglect that occurred in Maryland in 2020 was sexual abuse, meaning **2,059** Maryland children experienced sexual abuse.<sup>3</sup> This is an increase of **3.4%** from 2019.
- The percentage of victims of child sexual abuse in Maryland is **significantly higher** than the national average of **9%**.<sup>3</sup>

## U.S. Statistics

- Only about **one third** of child sexual abuse incidents are identified, and even fewer are reported.<sup>4</sup>
- About **38%** of child victims disclose the fact that they have been sexually abused.<sup>5</sup> Some, almost **60%**, never disclose.<sup>6</sup>
- Of those who do disclose, **40%** tell a close friend, rather than an adult or person in a position of authority.<sup>6</sup>
- **93%** of children who are victims of child sexual abuse know their abuser.<sup>7</sup>
- In general, **1 in 10** children will be sexually abused before the age of 18.<sup>8</sup>
- Of all children who are sexually abused, **20%** are abused before the age of 8.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Maryland. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MD/POP010220>

<sup>2</sup> MD Crim Law Code § 3-602 (2013)

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Children's Bureau. (2020) *Child maltreatment 2020*. Retrieved from: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/cm2020.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Darkness to Light. (2015, December 14). Child Sexual Abuse Statistics: Reporting Abuse. Retrieved from [https://www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statistics\\_6\\_Reporting.pdf](https://www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statistics_6_Reporting.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ullman, S.E. (2007). Relationship to perpetrator, disclosure, social reactions, and PTSD symptoms in child sexual abuse survivors. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 16(1), 19-36.

<sup>6</sup> Broman-Fulks, J. J., Ruggiero, K. J., Hanson, R. F., Smith, D. W., Resnick, H.S., Kilpatrick, D. G. & Saunders, B. E. (2007). Sexual assault disclosure in relation to adolescent mental health: Results from the National Survey of Adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*(36), 260- 266.

<sup>7</sup> Child Sexual Abuse Statistics. (2015). Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), <https://www.rainn.org/articles/child-sexual-abuse>

<sup>8</sup> Townsend, C. & Rheingold, A. A. (2013). *Estimating a child sexual abuse prevalence rate for practitioners: A review of child sexual abuse prevalence studies*. Charleston, S.C., Darkness to Light. Retrieved from [www.d2l.org/1in10](http://www.d2l.org/1in10).

<sup>9</sup> Darkness to Light. (2015, December 22). Child sexual abuse statistics: The magnitude of the program. Retrieved from: [http://www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statistics\\_1\\_Magnitude.pdf](http://www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statistics_1_Magnitude.pdf)