

**MALE PERPETRATORS OF CHILD MALTREATMENT:
FINDINGS FROM NCANDS**

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation**

January 2005

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	v
Introduction	1
Methodology	3
Findings	7
Summary and Conclusions	22
References	25
Appendix A. Supporting Data Tables	27
Table A-1 Male Perpetrators	27
Table A-2 Age of Male and Female Perpetrators	27
Table A-3 Race of Perpetrators	28
Table A-4 Perpetrators as Caregivers	28
Table A-5 Perpetrators by Number of Child Victims	29
Table A-6 Perpetrators by Age of Child Victims	29
Table A-7 Perpetrators by Sex of Child Victim	30
Table A-8 Maltreatment by Male and Female Perpetrators	30
Table A-9 Drug and Alcohol Use of Caregiver Perpetrators	31
Table A-10 Family Violence of Caregiver Perpetrators	31
Table A-11 Services Received by Categories of Perpetrators	31
Table A-12 Recidivism of Categories of Male Perpetrators	32
Table A-13 Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victims	32
Table A-14 Services Received by Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Mothers	33
Table A-15 Recidivism of Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Others	33

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1	Demographic Information in 18 States in Perpetrator Database Compared with National Data	4
Table 2	Age Distributions of Male Perpetrator Categories	9
Table 3	Perpetrator Categories by Type of Maltreatment	13
Table 4	Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Age of Victims	18
Table 5	Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Type of Maltreatment	20

Figures

Figure 1	Construction of the Unique Perpetrator Data Set	5
Figure 2	Male Perpetrators	8
Figure 3	Age of Male and Female Perpetrators	8
Figure 4	Distribution of Perpetrators by Age of Victims	11
Figure 5	Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victim	12
Figure 6	Maltreatment by Male and Female Perpetrators	13
Figure 7	Drug and Alcohol Abuse Among Male Caregiver Perpetrators	14
Figure 8	Family Violence Among Male Caregiver Perpetrators	15
Figure 9	Services Received by Categories of Male Perpetrators	16
Figure 10	Recidivism of Categories of Male Perpetrators	17
Figure 11	Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victims	19
Figure 12	Services Received by Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Mothers	20
Figure 13	Recidivism of Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Others	21

MALE PERPETRATORS OF CHILD MALTREATMENT: FINDINGS FROM NCANDS

Executive Summary

Using the case-level data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect System (NCANDS) for 2002, analyses of the characteristics of male perpetrators of maltreatment were conducted. The study utilized an 18-State data set of 192,392 perpetrators identified by the child protective services (CPS) system during 2002. The relationship of the perpetrators to the child victims, as well as whether the perpetrator acted alone or with another person, was considered along with demographic characteristics of both perpetrators and victims, and circumstances of the maltreatment. Research questions and key findings are as follows:

What are the characteristics of male perpetrators of child maltreatment?

- Of all reported cases in the 18-State data set, slightly less than one-half of all perpetrators were male. Of these, about one-half (51%) were biological fathers, an additional one-fifth occupied some other parental role (adoptive fathers, stepfathers, mothers' boyfriends), and about one-quarter were in nonparental relationships (including relatives, foster parents, day care providers, or friends) to their victims. In comparison, among female perpetrators, 86 percent were biological mothers.
- Male and female perpetrators were similar in terms of race. Males were slightly older than females, with an age difference of about 5 years, and men were substantially less likely to be in a caregiver status to the child than were women (60% compared with 87%).

What specific patterns of child maltreatment are associated with male perpetrators?

- Male perpetrators were associated more often than female perpetrators with older victims and with female victims. This is consistent with the finding that male perpetrators were more likely than female perpetrators to be involved in sexual abuse.
- There are differences in the patterns of maltreatment among categories of fathers, in that biological fathers more likely to maltreat young children, more likely to maltreat both girls and boys, more likely to be involved in neglect cases and less likely than other male perpetrators to be involved in sexual abuse. These findings suggest that in comparison to other male perpetrators, the circumstances associated with biological fathers are more similar to biological mothers.
- Nonparent male perpetrators were much more likely than other males to be involved in sexual abuse cases.

What outcomes are associated with male perpetrators of child maltreatment?

- Postinvestigation services were provided more often with female perpetrators than with male perpetrators.
- Recidivism rates were highest for biological fathers, mother's boyfriends, and nonparents, and lowest for adoptive fathers and stepfathers. The impact of the type of

maltreatment or the male perpetrator's continued access to the child on this difference in recidivism rates is not known.

How does the presence of a mother coperpetrator influence the circumstances surrounding the child maltreatment or the outcomes?

- Almost two-thirds of male perpetrators of child maltreatment were reported as being the only perpetrator, one third acted with the child's mother and about 6 percent acted with someone other than the mother.
- Biological fathers were less likely than other male perpetrators to act alone. When acting in concert with the mother, biological fathers were more likely to be involved with younger children and more likely to be involved with neglect than other types of maltreatment.
- Biological fathers and father surrogates who acted with the mother were roughly twice as likely to repeat their maltreatments within 12 months as those fathers who acted alone.

The findings from this research provide insights that may help to design improved prevention and intervention programs. If prevention and treatment interventions for child maltreatment are targeted primarily toward women, a large proportion of perpetrators will not benefit from these efforts. Similarly, in-home services, in their most narrow sense, may be missing the opportunity to involve men who maltreat children but are not living in the home.

The findings also show that male perpetrators who are not biological fathers were more commonly associated with physical abuse and sexual abuse, older children, and female children. Similarly, when acting alone, biological fathers and father surrogates were more often perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse, but when acting with the mother were more often associated with neglect. The relatively large proportion of stepfathers and adoptive fathers associated with sexual abuse, as well as with older, female children, suggests the need for prevention efforts in blended and adoptive families.

Finally, the findings and the literature suggest that because male perpetrators have many different relationships with their victims, interventions that strengthen the role of fathers to prevent further child maltreatment and improve child well-being are a complex undertaking. This study identifies clear subgroups of male perpetrators, suggesting that interventions of all types may need to be more highly differentiated for these different groups.

Introduction

Successful service delivery requires a good understanding of one's client population and interventions tailored to those clients' needs. With respect to services that prevent or ameliorate child maltreatment, agencies serve children in the context of their families. But in practice, services are most often delivered to mothers. Men are noticeably absent in most social service agencies' waiting rooms, parenting classes, and family group decision meetings. Yet more than 40 percent of child maltreatment perpetrators were men, according to national data for 2002 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004). The intent of the analyses presented below was to look more closely at male perpetrators of child maltreatment in order to better understand their characteristics and patterns of maltreatment. By understanding more clearly who these men are and whether they are similar to or different from traditional child welfare clients (i.e. mothers), we may better design prevention and intervention approaches that meet their needs and protect their children and others in their care.

This paper used a unique multi-State data set of nearly 200,000 child maltreatment perpetrators to better understand the characteristics of male perpetrators, their maltreatment patterns, and the outcomes associated with their maltreatments. Furthermore, the influence of a mother copерpetrator on the circumstances surrounding the child maltreatment or the outcomes was also investigated.

Previous Research on Male Perpetrators

Until the past decade, child welfare research primarily focused on mothers of maltreated children rather than fathers. For example, a 1990 review of major social work journals published in the preceding 27-year period (814 issues) elicited only 21 articles focusing on fathers (Greif & Bailey, 1990).

Much of the recent research investigating the role of fathers and other males as perpetrators of child maltreatment has focused on circumstances related to specific types of maltreatment and relatively small samples or clinical populations. For example, Phelan (1995), Manion, McIntyre, Firestone, Ligezinska, Ensome, & Wells (1996), Manion, Firestone, Cloutier, Ligezinska, McIntyre, & Ensom (1998), and Rudin, Zalewski, & Bodmer-Turner (1995) focused on sexual abuse; Bagley & Pritchard (2000), and Klevens, Bayon, & Sierra (2000) focused on physical abuse; and Brewster, Nelson, Hymel, Colby, Lucas, McCanne, et al. (1998), Smithey (1998), and Adinkrah (2003) focused on fatalities.

Some research shows that when we take issues of severity into consideration, fathers or father surrogates (cohabiting husbands or boyfriends who are not biologically related to the child) are responsible for more severe physical abuse and fatalities than women perpetrators (Brewster et al., 1998; Klevens et al., 2000; U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1995). Daly & Wilson (1999) have argued that parents are less likely than surrogate parents to physically abuse or seriously injure their biological offspring due to their greater investment in the genetic continuity of their family. In a longitudinal analysis of a cohort of children at risk for child maltreatment, Radhakrishna, Bou-Saada, Hunter, Catellier, & Kotch (2001) demonstrated that the presence of a father surrogate in

the home increased the risk of a maltreatment report to more than twice that of families with both biological parents in the home.

The research on male perpetrators is complicated by inconsistent or imprecise definitions of perpetrators and classifications of male perpetrators. Persons found by a child welfare agency to be responsible for the maltreatment of a child may have committed an act of maltreatment, allowed an act of maltreatment to occur, or contributed to the risk of maltreatment. Furthermore, there is no consistent typology for male perpetrators. Some studies of male perpetrators do not distinguish between biological fathers and stepfathers in their analyses (Smith & Saunders, 1995), or they do not consistently group fathers in the various types of father relationships. Manion et al. (1996) cited Canadian national data indicating the percentage of sexual abuse cases that were incestuous (18%), involved strangers (18%), or involved other friends and acquaintances (18%). Bagley & Pritchard (2000), in their examination of a cohort of convicted child sexual abuse perpetrators, distinguished among biological relatives, consisting of birth fathers and other biologically related males such as uncles and grandfathers (18%), nonbiological relatives consisting of stepfathers and cohabiters (10%), and extrafamilial offenders, who had no family link with their victim (72%). Dubowitz et al. (2001) distinguished between fathers and other “father figures,” which included stepfathers, mother’s boyfriends, and other male relatives, but recognized that these relationships were based on the child’s perception, and were not based on other parental or adult information.

Research on Fathers and Child Well-Being

Recent research has begun to examine the specific benefits of fathers to child well-being. The economic and social stressors to which a single mother is exposed put her at risk for maltreating her children. Child Trends (2002) reported that children are more likely to be abused by mothers in single-parent families than in two-parent families. Children raised in two-parent families have been shown to have better school performance, superior peer relationships, and fewer behavioral problems than children living in single parent families (Lamb, 2001). Child Trends (2002) documented a large number of indicators to better understand the role that fathers play in the lives of their children. These indicators demonstrated that a considerable percentage of fathers were highly engaged in a variety of roles with their children, including play, discipline, and primary caregiving.

Dubowitz, Black, Cox, Kerr, Litrownik, Radhakrishna, et al. (2001) concluded that the presence of a father or father figure, regardless of whether he lived in the same home, was associated with better cognitive development and greater perceived competence among 6-year-olds when coupled with the child’s perception of father support. Researchers have shown that even nonresidential fathers can contribute to positive child outcomes when they maintain an active involvement in their children’s lives (Lamb, 2001; Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2003). Results of a community survey by Nobes & Smith (2002) that found that children in two-parent families were punished significantly more frequently than children in single mother households, raising the possibility of an association with maltreatment. The general direction of current research, however, has increased interest in supporting and strengthening the relationship of fathers and their children.

The Objective of This Study

The objective of this study was to better understand the characteristics of male perpetrators of child maltreatment as well as how they and their patterns of maltreatment vary among subgroups of men and compare to those of women. This research takes advantage of a large data set of child maltreatment investigations reported by States to the Federal Government through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). The study classifies subgroups of male perpetrators according to relationship to the victim, and examines how investigation outcomes differ depending on whether the male perpetrator was found to have acted alone or in conjunction with the victim's mother.

The key research questions for this study were the following:

1. What are the characteristics of male perpetrators of child maltreatment? Specifically, these analyses examined the age, race, and role of perpetrators.
2. What specific patterns of child maltreatment are associated with male perpetrators? The circumstances surrounding the maltreatment were examined for several categories of perpetrators. These included characteristics of the child victims such as age, race, and sex, as well as the number of child victims and the type of maltreatment.
3. What outcomes are associated with male perpetrators of child maltreatment? Of interest for this research question were events that occurred after the finding of maltreatment, such as, whether services were provided, whether the victims were placed in foster care, and whether there were any subsequent determinations of maltreatment by the same perpetrator.
4. How does the presence of a mother copерpetrator influence circumstances surrounding the child maltreatment or the outcomes? This line of analysis compared male perpetrators who acted alone with those who acted with the victim's mother.

Methodology

Case-level data from the 2002 National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) were used as the basis for the analysis. Only cases of substantiated or indicated maltreatment were included in the data set. These data are submitted on a voluntary basis in a common record format to the Federal Government by State CPS agencies. The submissions are a rich source of information about children who are the subjects of child maltreatment investigations, including data about the investigations, child demographics, and types of maltreatment, perpetrators, and services. Each year the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services prepares an annual report that analyzes the NCANDS data. For calendar year 2002, Child File data submissions from 42 States—containing case-specific information on close to 3 million reported children—were submitted to NCANDS. Data from 18 States, including 202,376 unique perpetrators,

were used to create the data set for this research.¹ These States were chosen for the completeness and validity of their data on the relationship of the perpetrators to the victims. The population in these 18 States was comparable to the national population on a range of demographic characteristics including age, race distribution, and poverty level. (See table 1.) The findings in this study are not necessarily representative of all reporting States or the entire nation as there may be other differences that are not reported or observed. For some analyses, fewer States were included if some States did not provide valid data on the variables of interest.

Table 1. Demographic Information in 18 States in Perpetrator Database Compared with National Data

Demographic Indicators		All States	18 States
Total Population		281,421,906	99,243,669
% of U.S. Population		100%	35%
Population under 18 years: Total		26%	26%
Families	Percent of total population living in family settings	80%	81%
	Married-couple family, with own children under 18 years old (percent of families)	35%	36%
	Families with female householder, no husband present, with own children under 18 years old (percent of families)	11%	10%
Average Poverty Rate		12.2%	12.0%
Race	White (not Hispanic), percent of total population	69%	73%
	Black or African American (not Hispanic), percent of total population	12%	11%
	American Indian and Alaska Native (not Hispanic), percent of total population	1%	1%
	Asian / Pacific Islander (not Hispanic), percent of total population	4%	2%
	Other or Multiple Race (not Hispanic), percent of total population	2%	1%
	Hispanic or Latino, percent of total population	13%	12%
Sex	Male, percent of total population	49%	49%
	Female, percent of total population	51%	51%
Child Abuse and Neglect	Rate of children investigated per 1,000 children in population	43.8	39.4
	Rate of victims of child maltreatment per 1,000 children in population	12.3	10.9

Creation of the Unique Perpetrator Database

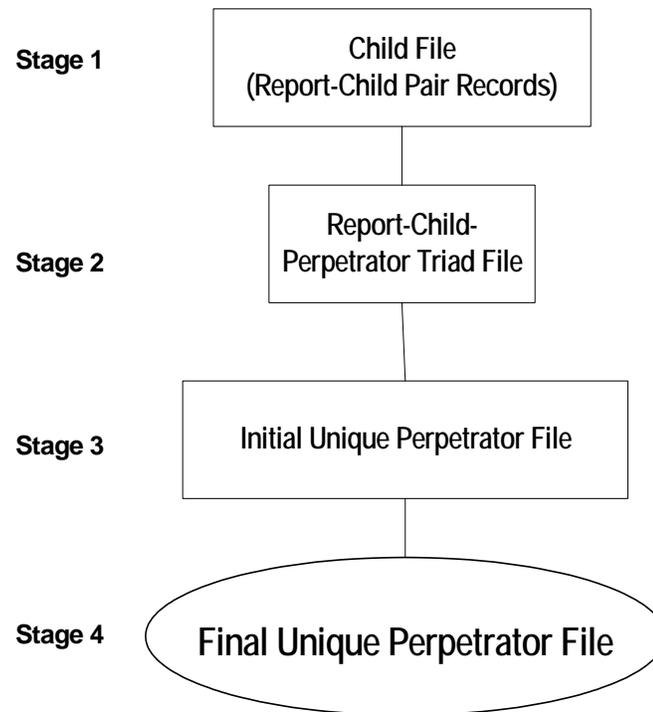
Consistent with the research questions, the analysis of the data depended on developing a data set of unique perpetrators. Despite the relative simplicity of obtaining unduplicated perpetrator data since encrypted unique identifiers are presented in the data set, the design for this research depended on examining complex event and relationship data associated with each perpetrator. For instance, a perpetrator may have victimized more than one child, in one or more report events. In addition, the perpetrator may have been related to one child as a biological parent and to another as a stepparent. Similarly, the perpetrator may have been associated with different or similar types of maltreatment with each child, and may have acted alone or in concert with other perpetrators each time or only sometimes.

¹ These States were: Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

Data on all reports, children, and maltreatments were merged and recoded to represent the categories of reports, children, and maltreatments associated with each unique perpetrator.

Figure 1 provides a graphical overview of the stages of data construction.

Figure 1. Construction of the Unique Perpetrator Data Set



Stage 1 refers to the NCANDS case-level Child File. The NCANDS Child File establishes a record for each child in a report alleging child maltreatment. This record entity is called a report-child pair. Data on up to three perpetrators and the types of maltreatment associated with each can be included in each report-child pair record. Data on perpetrators are collected only if the child has been found to be a victim of maltreatment.

Stage 2 refers to creating records for each perpetrator in each report-child pair record. In other words, if a report-child pair record had three perpetrators, then three report-child-perpetrator triad records were created.

Stage 3 refers to aggregating data for each perpetrator to create a new file with all unduplicated male perpetrators. During Stage 3, several additional variables were derived:

- Age and Sex of Victims—The age and sex of all victims associated with a specific perpetrator were recoded into categories that considered them as a group rather than as individuals. The categories for age were: younger than age 1, age

1–3, age 4–7, age 8–11, age 12–15, and age 16 or older. The categories for sex were girls (i.e., only girls), boys (i.e., only boys), and both boys and girls.

- **Maltreatment Types**—Maltreatment types were recoded into a single variable that described them collectively (such as physical abuse only or multiple types of maltreatments) so that the range of maltreatments with which the perpetrator was involved was captured.
- **Perpetrator Type**—The NCANDS collects both gender and relationship of the perpetrator. Male biological parents and female biological parents were recoded as biological fathers and biological mothers respectively. Similarly other relationships were recoded to include the following: biological father only, stepfather only, adoptive father only, mother’s boyfriend only, male nonparent only, and combination fathers. Combination fathers were perpetrators with more than one relationship type of which at least one relationship was that of a parent. Male nonparent was used to designate other male relatives and male nonrelatives, and includes a small number of perpetrators with multiple nonparental relationships. Corresponding categories were created for female perpetrators as well—biological mothers, stepmothers, adoptive mothers, fathers’ girlfriends, and combination mothers.
- **Perpetrator Relationship to Other Perpetrators**—To examine the differences among perpetrators who acted alone and those who acted with others, a variable was developed which matched each male perpetrator to other perpetrators. For example, if a biological father was associated with a report in which the child’s mother was also a perpetrator, then the biological father was classified as biological father acting with the mother.

Stage 4 included additional screening of data to exclude certain categories of missing data.

- Perpetrators without gender data were excluded (3,491 perpetrators).
- Perpetrators with missing or unknown relationships, including those who were known to be parents but the type of parent was not known were excluded (6,489 perpetrators).
- Perpetrators who were identified as having multiple, incongruous relationships with the same child, such as biological father and stepfather (71 perpetrators).
- Perpetrators who were probably misidentified as unique perpetrators, because they were associated with more than 20 victims, were excluded (4 perpetrators).

The final data set was composed of 192,321 unduplicated perpetrators based on data from 18 States.

Limitations to Analyses of These Data

While the advantages of this large, multi-State data set are many, some limitations to these data should be noted as well.

The designation of the individuals in this data set as perpetrators was made by CPS representatives during the disposition of a report or reports of child maltreatment. Inevitably, some individuals with similar circumstances or relationships may have been inconsistently recorded as perpetrators across agencies, counties, or States. For example,

a boyfriend living with a mother who was found to be neglecting her children may have been included as a coperpetrator in one CPS agency, but not in a different agency. While efforts were made to reduce these inconsistencies in the data set, some undoubtedly remain.

Furthermore, the NCANDS data did not include whether the perpetrators were living in the same home as the victims. Similarly, the relationship between coperpetrators was not captured. A child may have been maltreated by both his biological mother and biological father, but this data set does not indicate whether these parents were married to each other or whether they lived in the same household.

It is also important to note that some categories of male perpetrators that are discussed are much smaller than others. For example, adoptive fathers account for only 1 percent of all male perpetrators, but are discussed along with other groups that are much larger. The implications of findings related to these small groups should be considered carefully.

Findings

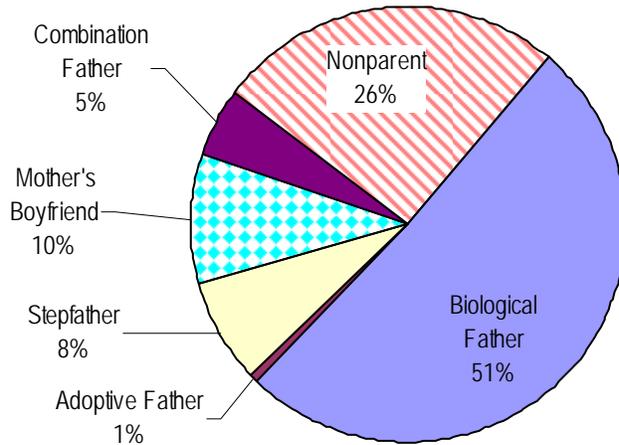
The findings are discussed in terms of the overall research questions. First, a general description of male perpetrators is presented. Second, the categories of primary interest for this research—biological fathers and father surrogates including adoptive fathers, stepfathers, and mothers’ boyfriends—are compared with male perpetrators who were not parents. Finally, comparisons of fathers, father surrogates, and male nonparents acting alone, with the mother, and with others are described. Supporting data tables for the analyses presented in this section are included in appendix A.

What are the characteristics of male perpetrators of child maltreatment?

Of the 192,321 unique perpetrators in the data set, 89,028 (46%) were male and 103,293 (54%) were female. Figure 2 shows male perpetrators by their relationship to their victims. More than one-half of all male perpetrators (51%) were biological fathers. The second largest group was male nonparents (26%), who included male relatives (12%), male nonrelatives (13%), and those with a combination of nonparental relationships (1%). Boyfriends, stepfathers, combination fathers, and adoptive fathers accounted for 10 percent, 8 percent, 5 percent, and 1 percent of all male perpetrators, respectively. Among female perpetrators, 86 percent were biological mothers, 10 percent were nonparents, and the remaining 4 percent were stepmothers, adoptive mothers, fathers’ girlfriends, or combination mothers.

Nearly one-half of all perpetrators were male, and of these, one-half were biological fathers.

Figure 2. Male Perpetrators²
(n = 89,028)

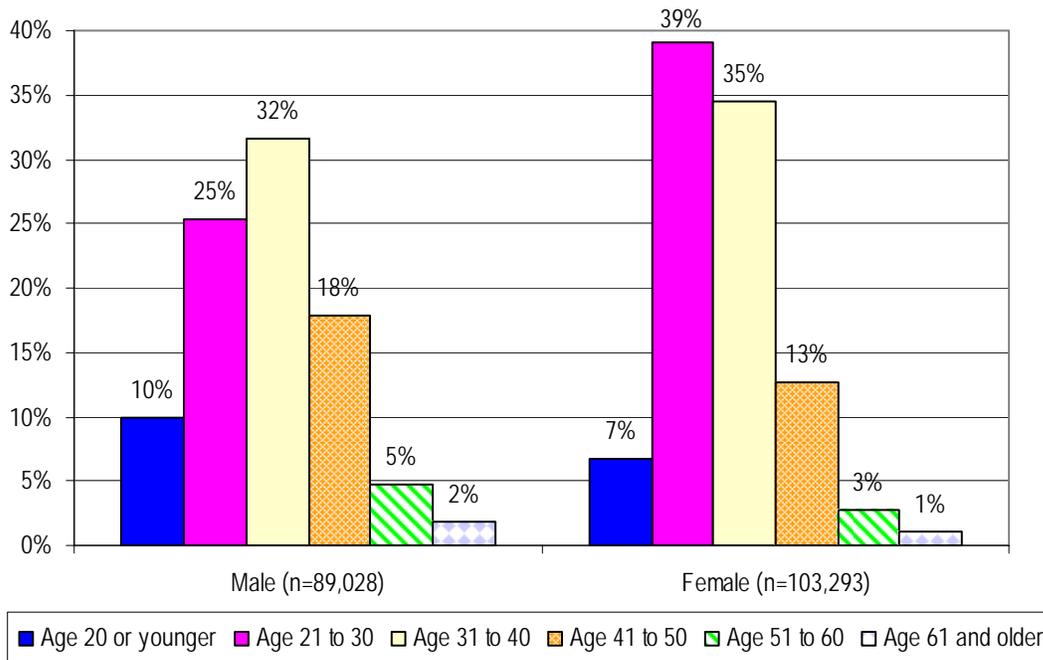


Age of Male Perpetrators

Male perpetrators were 5 years older, on average, than female perpetrators. The average age of male perpetrators was 38.6 years, while among females the average age was 33.4 years. (See figure 3.) This coincides with the typical age disparity between married partners. According to U.S. Census data, among married couples with children, husbands are on average 2.4 years older than their wives.³

Male perpetrators were older than female perpetrators.

Figure 3. Age of Male and Female Perpetrators⁴
(n = 192,321)



² Table A-1 provides supporting data for this figure.
³ Current Population Survey 2004, March Supplement.
⁴ Table A-2 provides supporting data for this figure.

Age distributions were also examined by male perpetrator relationship. (See table 2.) The average age for biological fathers was 37.7 years, for stepfathers 38.9 years, for adoptive fathers 47.0 years, for mothers' boyfriends 39.3 years, for combination fathers 34.8 years, and for male nonparents 40.8 years.

**Table 2. Age Distributions of Male Perpetrator Categories
(n = 89,028)**

Age of Perpetrator	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total
Age 20 or Younger	1,034 2%	0 0%	50 1%	303 4%	89 2%	7,396 32%	8,872 10%
Age 21–30	12,648 28%	24 5%	1,467 21%	2,905 34%	1,523 33%	3,939 17%	22,506 25%
Age 31–40	17,223 38%	139 29%	3,006 44%	2,930 34%	1,926 42%	2,887 13%	28,111 32%
Age 41–50	9,968 22%	156 33%	1,563 23%	1,302 15%	782 17%	2,144 9%	15,915 18%
Age 51–60	1,957 4%	98 20%	323 5%	231 3%	132 3%	1,492 7%	4,233 5%
Age 61 or Older	318 1%	37 8%	75 1%	46 1%	26 1%	1,156 5%	1,658 2%
Missing Age	2,378 5%	25 5%	373 5%	905 10%	126 3%	3,926 17%	7,733 9%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%

Perpetrator Race

Male and female perpetrators did not differ in terms of race. More than one-half of male perpetrators were White (58%), as were female perpetrators (57%). Sixteen percent of male perpetrators were African American; 21 percent of female perpetrators were African American. Among both male and female perpetrators, 13 percent were Hispanic. When the race of male perpetrators was examined for the different father categories, all had similar racial distributions. Among all father categories, the largest racial group was White and the second largest group was African American.⁵

Male and female perpetrators did not differ in terms of race.

Caregiver Status of Perpetrator

In 10 of the 18 States, data were provided on whether the perpetrator was in a caregiver role with the victim at the time of the maltreatment. If the perpetrator was in a caregiving role with any of the associated victims, he or she was considered to be a caretaker. Female perpetrators were much more likely to be in a caregiving role than were male perpetrators; 87 percent of females were caregivers compared with 60 percent of males.

Female perpetrators were more likely to be caregivers to their victims than male perpetrators.

⁵ Table A–3 provides supporting data on race of male perpetrators.

Biological or legal fathers were more likely to be designated as being in a caregiving relationship to the maltreated child than were nonparent males.⁶ Perpetrators in most of the father categories were almost as likely as female perpetrators to be in caregiver roles. The highest percentages of caregivers were among combination fathers (86%), stepfathers (82%), biological fathers (81%), and adoptive fathers (72%). Among mothers' boyfriends, only 43 percent were caregivers. Among male nonparents, the percentage of those in a caregiving role was 15 percent.

What specific patterns of maltreatment are associated with male perpetrators?

These analyses address the second key research question—are male perpetrators associated with any specific patterns of maltreatment? The basic characteristics of the child victims associated with male perpetrators in each of the six male perpetrator categories (biological father, stepfather, adoptive father, mother's boyfriend, combination father, and nonparent), as well as the type of maltreatment and the total number of child victims, are examined.

Number of Child Victims

The majority of both male and female perpetrators were associated with only one child victim—67 percent of males and 61 percent of females. Biological fathers were most likely of all the male perpetrators to be associated with more than one child.⁷ Among biological fathers, 35 percent were associated with more than one child. Among mothers' boyfriends, 31 percent were associated with more than one child. Among stepfathers, 22 percent were associated with more than one child. Among adoptive fathers, only 15 percent were associated with more than one child. Among nonparents, 18 percent were associated with more than one child. All combination fathers were associated with more than one child, because by definition they have more than one relationship with more than one child.

Both male and female perpetrators were most likely to be associated with only one child victim.

Age of Child Victims

When compared with female perpetrators, male perpetrators were involved with more children older than age 8 and fewer children younger than age 1. Twenty-one percent of females were associated with child victims under age 1, while only 11 percent of male perpetrators were associated with infant victims; and 29 percent of male perpetrators were associated with victims between age 12 and 15, compared with 22 percent of females.

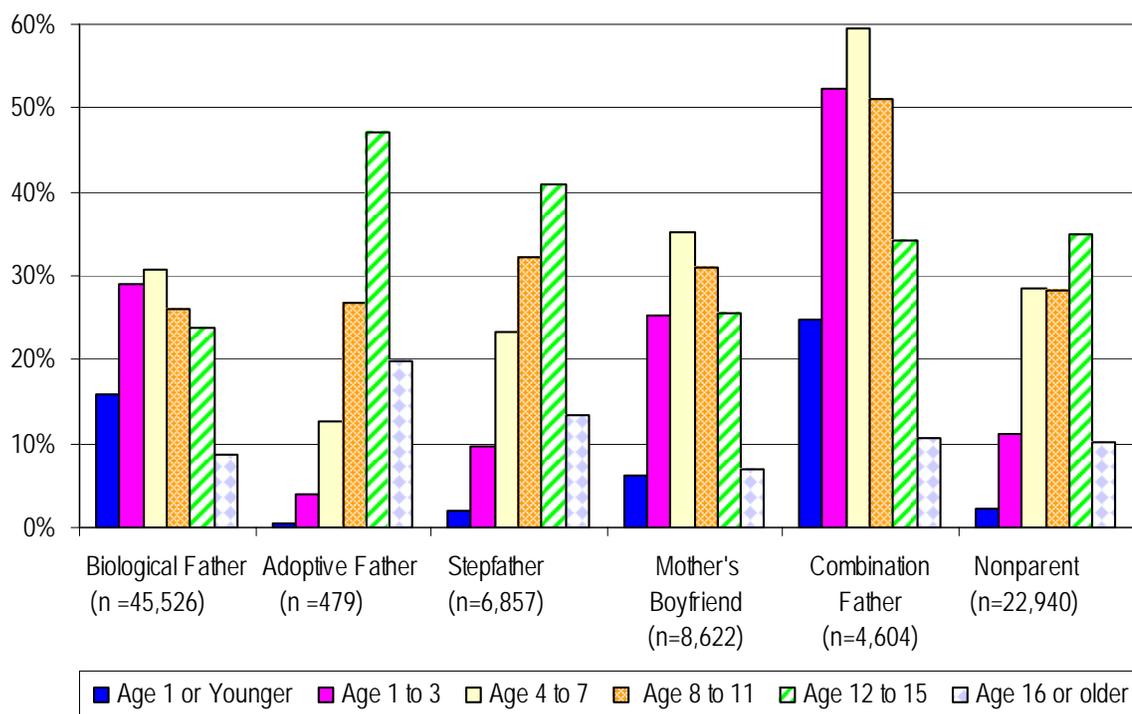
Male perpetrators were associated more often with older victims.

The different groups of male perpetrators varied in their associations with children in each age group. (See figure 4.) Biological fathers, combination fathers, and mothers' boyfriends were most frequently associated with infants and children under age 3. Stepfathers, adoptive fathers, and nonparents were most frequently associated with older children and adolescents.

⁶ Table A-4 provides supporting data on male perpetrators as caregivers.

⁷ Table A-5 provides supporting data on the number of child victims associated with male perpetrators in each category.

Figure 4. Distribution of Perpetrators by Age of Victims^{8,9}
(n = 89,028)



Sex of Child Victims

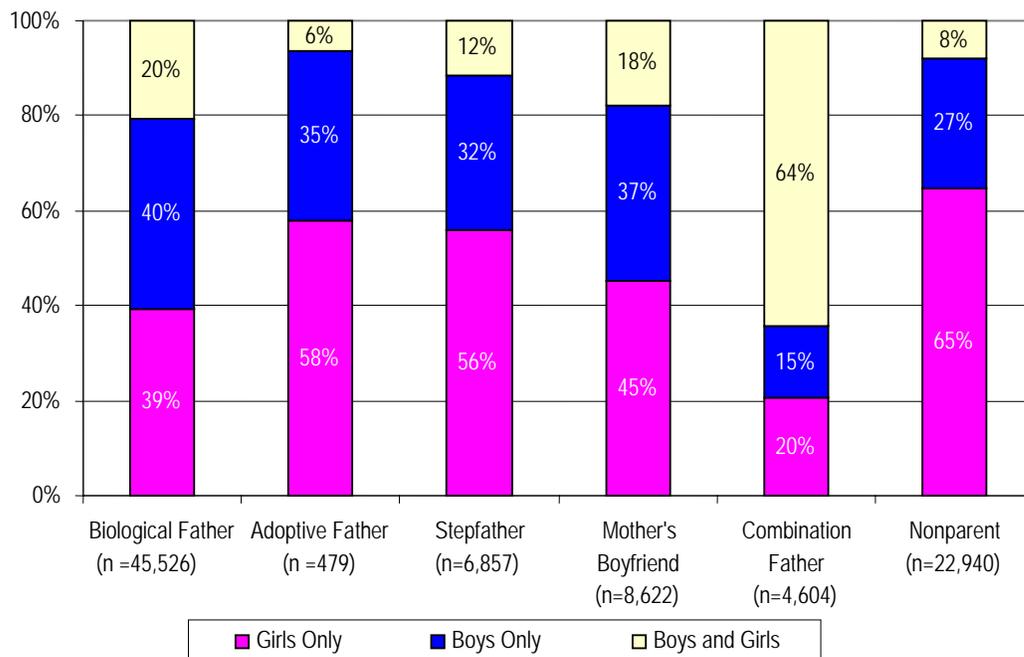
Perpetrators were categorized as having been associated with girls, boys, or both boys and girls. Male perpetrators were associated more often only with female victims, while female perpetrators were associated with male and female victims in almost equal numbers. However, this pattern does not hold true for all categories of male perpetrators. More than one-half of the perpetrators who were stepfathers or adoptive fathers maltreated girls. The majority of combination fathers were associated with both male and female victims; this is related to the fact that all these perpetrators were associated with multiple victims. Among biological fathers and mothers' boyfriends, the proportions associated with boys and with girls were more evenly distributed. Nonparents had the highest proportion of perpetrators (65%) who maltreated girls. (See figure 5.)

Stepfathers, adoptive fathers, and nonparents maltreated girls more often than other male perpetrators.

⁸ Table A-6 provides supporting data for Figure 4.

⁹ Percentages add to more than 100 percent due to perpetrators being counted more than once if they maltreated more than one child. Since all combination fathers maltreated more than one child, the percentages for this group are more than 200 percent.

Figure 5. Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victim¹⁰
(n = 89,028)



Perpetrators Acting Alone or with a Partner

Some perpetrators acted alone, and some acted with another person or people. (See appendix A, table A-1.) Sometimes, the other person was the mother of the victim, sometimes he or she was a different person.

More than one-half of male perpetrators of child maltreatment always acted alone.

The majority (59%) of male perpetrators always acted alone; 34 percent acted at least once with the mother of the victim; and 6 percent acted at least once with other(s) but never acted with the mother.

Among biological fathers, 55 percent always acted alone, while 41 percent were associated with the mother at least once, and 4 percent acted with another person. A slightly larger percentage of stepfathers (64%) and adoptive fathers (60%) always acted alone. Among nonparent male perpetrators, 73 percent always acted alone, only 12 percent acted at least once with the mother, and 14 percent acted with another person or people. Thus more than one-half of these male perpetrators were perpetrators of maltreatment without the involvement of either the victim's mother or another person as a perpetrator.¹¹

Type of Maltreatment

Male and female perpetrators had distinct patterns of maltreatment. More than one-third of male perpetrators (36%) were associated with neglect; 66 percent of female perpetrators were associated with neglect. (See figure 6.) A quarter of males

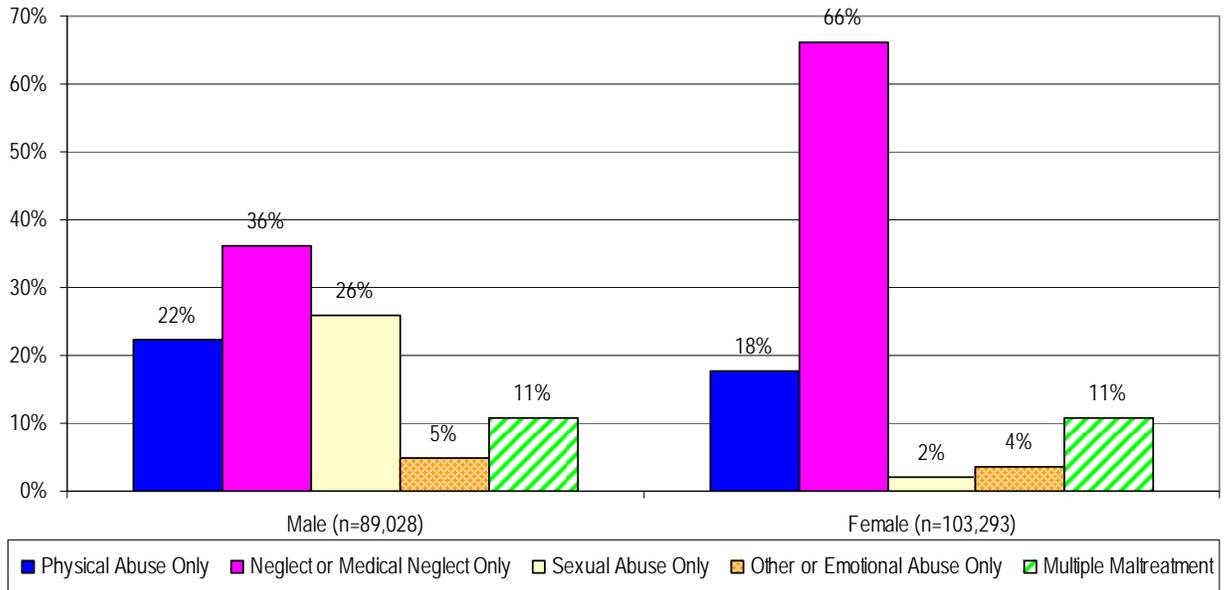
Male perpetrators physically or sexually abused their victims more and neglected their victims less than did female perpetrators.

¹⁰ Table A-7 provides supporting data for Figure 5.

¹¹ Table A-2 provides supporting data on the number of perpetrators in each category who acted alone, with the mother, or with another person.

(26%) were associated with sexual abuse, while 2 percent of female perpetrators were associated with sexual abuse. The percentages associated with physical abuse were comparable, although slightly higher for males (22%) than for females (18%).

Figure 6. Maltreatment by Male and Female Perpetrators¹²
(n = 192,321)



Within male perpetrator categories there were also distinct patterns in the type of maltreatment. (See table 3.) One-half of biological fathers were associated with neglect. Adoptive fathers and stepfathers had distributions similar to each other, approximately one-quarter to one-third of each group was associated with one of the main types of maltreatment—physical abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse.

Table 3. Perpetrator Categories by Type of Maltreatment
(n = 89,028)

Type of Maltreatment	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total
Physical Abuse Only	11,920 26%	157 33%	2,331 34%	2,629 30%	388 8%	2,544 11%	19,969 22%
Neglect or Medical Neglect Only	22,580 50%	111 23%	1,345 20%	2,662 31%	2,596 56%	2,819 12%	32,113 36%
Sexual Abuse Only	3,226 7%	114 24%	2,064 30%	1,712 20%	339 7%	15,579 68%	23,034 26%
Other or Emotional Abuse Only	2,971 7%	15 3%	286 4%	498 6%	124 3%	379 2%	4,273 5%
Multiple Maltreatment	4,828 11%	82 17%	831 12%	1,121 13%	1,157 25%	1,619 7%	9,638 11%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%

¹² Table A–8 provides supporting data for Figure 6.

For both adoptive fathers and stepfathers, physical abuse was the most frequent type. Nonparental perpetrators were primarily associated with sexual abuse (68%). Biological fathers had the smallest percentage of sexual abuse cases (7%) compared to between 20 percent and 30 percent for boyfriends, adoptive fathers, and stepfathers. The pattern for combination fathers was similar to biological fathers, although with higher proportions being associated with neglect (56%), and with multiple types of maltreatment (25%).

Risk Factors

Of great interest is the examination of risk factors associated with perpetrators. The analyses of these data are complicated both by the data collection process as well as the data submission process in NCANDS. Information on such risk factors is largely dependent upon the assessments that are conducted by the CPS agency during investigations and are therefore likely to be underreported. Additionally, since risk factors are specifically associated with each child in a report rather than each perpetrator, the risk factors discussed below would be associated with all perpetrators in a specific report-child pair record.

Of the States that identified whether the perpetrator was a caregiver or not, seven States were also able to indicate whether the caregivers in the report had drug or alcohol risk factors.¹³ Because the data on these risk factors were associated with caregivers, only perpetrators who were caregivers were included in these analyses. Sixteen percent of all male perpetrators who were caregivers were associated with these risk factors, compared with 20 percent of all female perpetrators who were caregivers. Boyfriends who were caregivers were more often associated with the risk factors of alcohol, drug, or drug and alcohol (25%) than were the other types of male perpetrators. (See figure 7.) Biological fathers and stepfathers, who were caregivers, had the next highest percentages of involvement with drugs and alcohol (18% and 14% respectively).

Mothers' boyfriends who were caregivers were associated with alcohol and drug use more than were other types of male perpetrators. They also had a higher incidence of domestic violence between adults.

Eight States provided data on the presence of domestic violence in the families of maltreatment victims. Combination fathers who were caregivers were most often associated with the risk factors of family violence (35%), followed by boyfriends and stepfathers (23% and 20%, respectively). (See figure 8.) Biological fathers who were caregivers had the next highest percentages of involvement with family violence (18%).

¹³These risk factors were coded as caregiver alcohol abuse and caregiver drug abuse in the NCANDS data set. They were recoded as alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Figure 7. Drug and Alcohol Abuse Among Male Caregiver Perpetrators¹⁴
(n = 24,085)

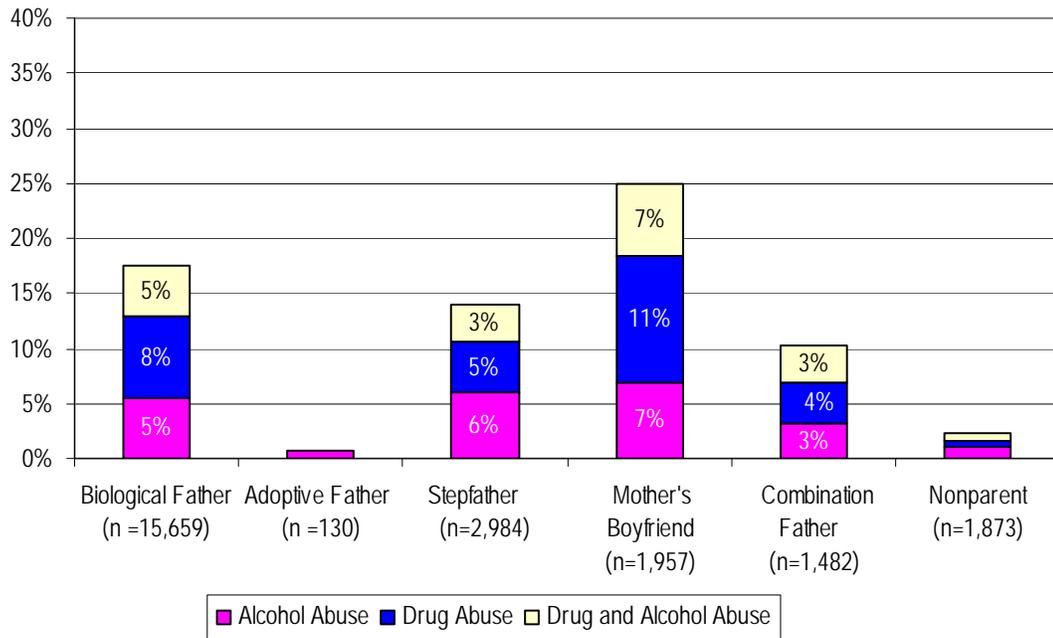
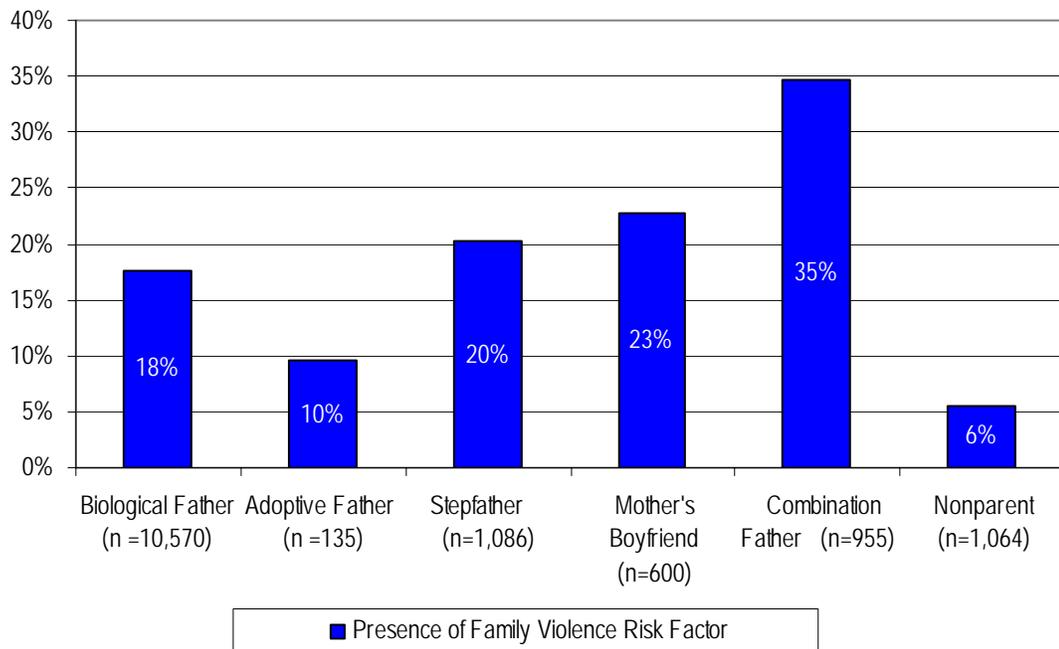


Figure 8. Family Violence Among Male Caregiver Perpetrators¹⁵
(n = 14,410), Data from 8 States



¹⁴ Table A-9 provides supporting data for Figure 7.

¹⁵ Table A-10 provides supporting data for Figure 8.

What outcomes are associated with male perpetrators of child maltreatment?

These analyses address the third key research question—are there different outcomes associated with different types of male perpetrators? Perpetrators were compared in terms of services and recidivism.

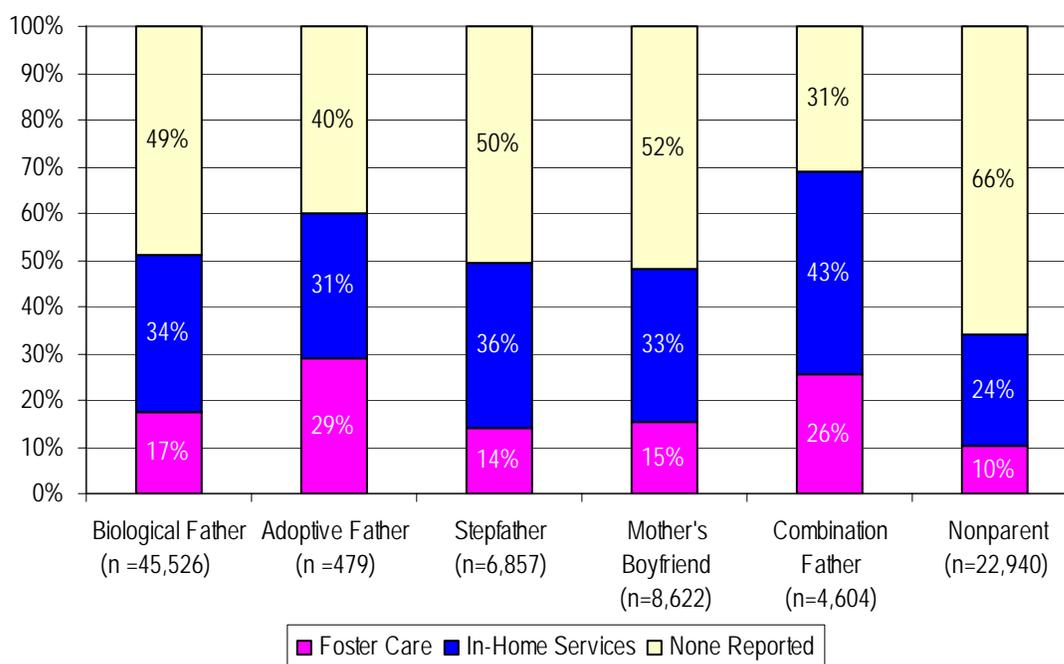
Services

Nearly one-half of all male perpetrators were associated with at least one investigation after which additional services were provided and recorded by the child welfare agency (47%). A larger percentage of female perpetrators (57%) received services. Approximately 16 percent of male perpetrators were associated with at least one victim who was placed in foster care as a result of the investigation compared to 24 percent of female perpetrators.

Postinvestigation services were provided more often with female perpetrators than with male perpetrators.

The proportions of male perpetrators who were associated with in-home services were quite comparable for all categories except combination fathers and nonparents. Approximately one-third of most categories of male perpetrators were associated with post-investigation in-home services. Among combination fathers 43 percent had in-home services provided and among nonparents only 24 percent had in-home services provided. The percentages of perpetrators associated with at least one child placed in foster care ranged from 10 percent (nonparents) to 29 percent (adoptive fathers). (See figure 9.) Approximately one-half of all perpetrators who were biological fathers, stepfathers, or mothers' boyfriends did not receive any services. The percentage that did not receive any services was lower among adoptive fathers (40%) and higher among nonparents (66%).

Figure 9. Services Received by Categories of Male Perpetrators¹⁶
(n = 89,028)



¹⁶ Table A-11 provides supporting data for Figure 9.

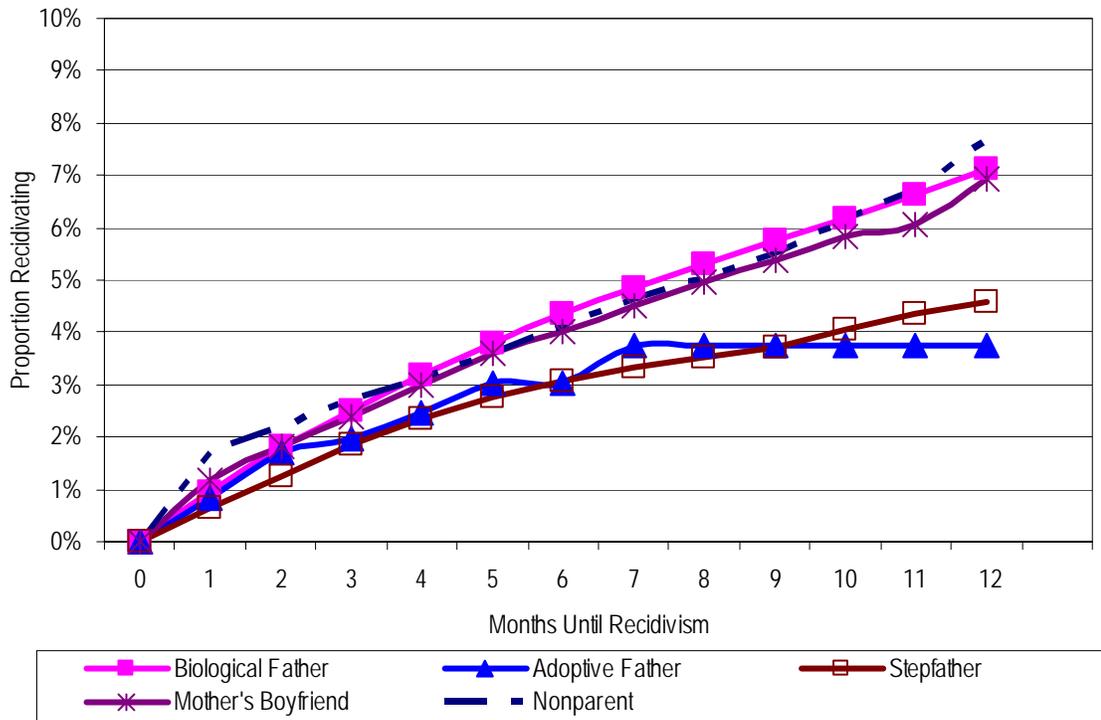
Perpetrator Recidivism

Survival analysis techniques were used to estimate the proportion of perpetrators who had a second finding of having maltreated a child within 12 months of the first finding in the reporting period.¹⁷ Overall, male perpetrators had a lower recidivist rate, 6 percent at 6 months and 9 percent at 12 months, compared with female perpetrators (8% and 12% respectively).

Male perpetrators had a lower rate of recidivism than female perpetrators. Stepfathers and adoptive fathers rate of recidivism was lower than most other male perpetrators.

Within 12 months, it was projected that 7 percent of biological fathers were associated with a second maltreated child, while approximately 4 percent of adoptive and stepfathers, 7 percent of boyfriends, and 8 percent of nonparents experienced an additional report of maltreatment in the same year. (See figure 10.) In addition, combination fathers experienced a 38 percent recidivism rate after 12 months. This is due to the fact that these perpetrators were necessarily associated with multiple children and frequently multiple reports.¹⁸

Figure 10. Recidivism of Categories of Male Perpetrators¹⁹
(n = 89,028)



¹⁷ Survival analysis is routinely used to provide an unbiased estimate of the likelihood of occurrence of a certain events—in this case, subsequent maltreatment by a perpetrator. Survival analysis controls for the situations in which the subjects can no longer be observed. Survival estimates are especially useful in this instance because not all perpetrators can be tracked for an equal period of time.

¹⁸ Combination fathers were omitted from Figure 10 due to inconsistency of scale and because they are defined, in part, by multiple events and may not represent a comparable category. Nonparents also include some complex relationships, with more than one event.

¹⁹ Table A–12 provides supporting data for Figure 10.

Among male perpetrators who were associated with postinvestigation services (either foster care or in-home services), the proportion recidivating in 1 year was twice the proportion of males who were not associated with services—12 percent compared to 6 percent. This finding is consistent with findings on female perpetrators in that 20 percent of females associated with services recidivate within 12 months compared with 8 percent who were not associated with services. Perpetrators receiving services may have an intrinsically higher risk of recidivism that cannot be fully addressed by services, or the increased recidivism may possibly be due to increased attention and surveillance by CPS. This finding regarding services and perpetrator recidivism is also consistent with studies of child maltreatment recurrence (Fluke, Yuan, & Edwards et al., 1999; DePanfilis & Zuravin, 1999a; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004).

How does the presence of a mother copерpetrator influence circumstances surrounding the child maltreatment or the outcomes?

Perpetrators could either act alone or in concert with others. As noted above, male perpetrators were classified by whether they always acted alone or they were responsible for the maltreatment along with the victim’s mother (biological mother, stepmother or adoptive mother) in at least one victimization event. Male perpetrators who acted only with a person or persons other than the victim’s mother were not included in these analyses.²⁰ Of a total of 79,031 male perpetrators, 65 percent only acted alone, and 35 percent were associated with at least one victim’s mother on at least one occasion. To simplify the comparisons for these analyses, a “father surrogate” category was created to combine adoptive fathers, stepfathers, and mothers’ boyfriends. The following categories were compared: biological father acting alone; biological father acting with mother; biological father acting with other person or people; father surrogate acting alone; father surrogate acting with mother; father surrogate acting with other person or people; male nonparent acting alone; male nonparent acting with mother; and male nonparent acting with other person or people. Fifty-five percent of biological fathers always acted alone; and 58 percent of father surrogates (adoptive fathers, stepfathers, and mothers’ boyfriends) and 73 percent of male nonparents acted alone.

Age of Child Victims

Male perpetrators showed different patterns in the age of their child victims. (See table 4.) Among biological fathers who acted with mothers, 25 percent were associated with children under age 1, but among those who acted alone only 9 percent were associated with infant victims. Among other groups of male perpetrators, very few were associated with the youngest victims regardless of whether they acted with the mother or alone. Biological fathers were associated with fewer preteen (age 8–11) and teenage (age 12–15) victims than were the other male perpetrators, regardless of whether they acted alone or with the mother.

Biological fathers acting with mothers were associated with maltreatment of infants more often than were those acting alone.

²⁰ For these analyses, 5,594 perpetrators who acted only with a person other than the victim’s mother were excluded.

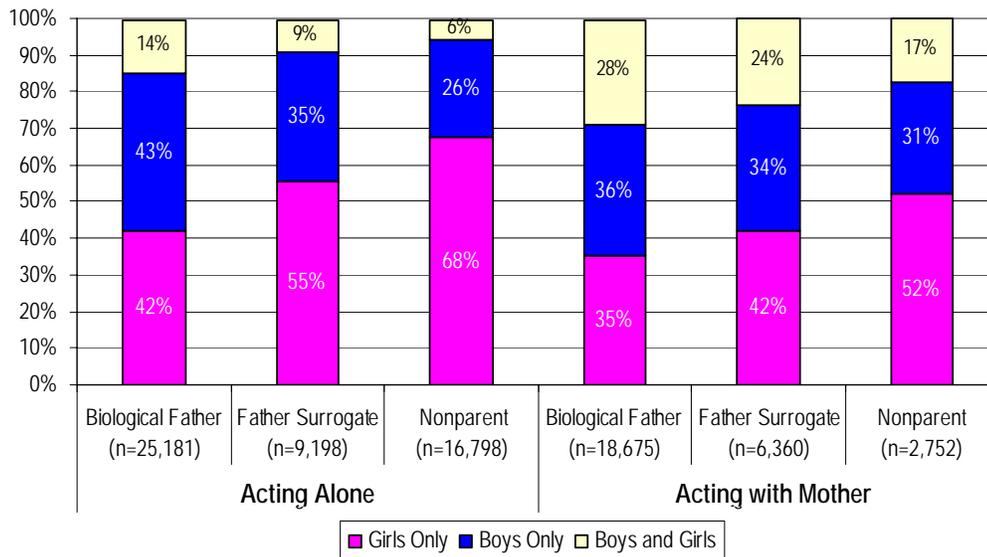
**Table 4. Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Age of Victims
(n = 79,031)**

Age of Youngest Child	Acting Alone				Acting with Mother				Total
	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	
Younger than Age 1	2,320 7%	229 2%	199 1%	2,748 5%	4,720 17%	433 5%	215 6%	5,368 13%	8,116 8%
Age 1-3	5,604 22%	1,182 13%	1,507 9%	8,293 16%	7,196 38%	1,615 25%	636 23%	9,447 34%	17,740 22%
Age 4-7	7,082 28%	2,302 25%	4,701 28%	14,085 28%	6,318 34%	2,267 36%	915 33%	9,500 34%	23,585 30%
Age 8-11	6,581 26%	2,721 30%	4,706 28%	14,008 27%	4,755 25%	2,150 34%	813 29%	7,718 28%	21,726 27%
Age 12-15	6,939 28%	3,208 35%	5,898 35%	16,045 31%	3,484 19%	1,886 30%	835 30%	6,205 22%	22,250 28%
Age 16 or Older	2,600 10%	1,016 11%	1,736 10%	5,352 10%	1,260 7%	553 9%	202 7%	2,015 7%	7,367 9%
All Perpetrators	25,181 100%	9,198 100%	16,798 100%	51,177 100%	18,727 100%	6,371 100%	2,756 100%	27,854 100%	79,031 100%
Total	31,126 122%	10,658 116%	18,747 111%	60,531 117%	27,733 140%	8,904 138%	3,616 129%	40,253 139%	100,784 125%

Sex of Child Victims

Male perpetrators acting alone were consistently associated with maltreating girls more often compared with male perpetrators acting with mothers. Among biological fathers acting alone, 42 percent had maltreated girls; 55 percent of father surrogates acting alone and 68 percent of male nonparents acting alone were associated with girls. (See figure 11.) In contrast to all categories of male perpetrators acting alone, for the categories of male perpetrators acting with the victim’s mother the percentage associated with girls was lower, and a higher percentage acted with both boys and girls.

**Figure 11. Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victims²¹
(n = 79,031)**



²¹ Table A-13 provides supporting data for Figure 11.

Maltreatment Type

Male perpetrators acting alone followed a very different pattern of maltreatment from those acting with the victim's mother. In all instances, male perpetrators acting alone were more likely to be associated with sexual abuse than if they acted with mothers. Also, biological father and father surrogate perpetrators were more likely to be associated with physical abuse and less likely to be associated with neglect if they acted alone. (See table 5.)

Male perpetrators were more likely to maltreat girls when acting alone than when acting with mothers.

Table 5. Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Type of Maltreatment (n = 79,031)

Type of Maltreatment	Acting Alone				Acting with Mother				Total
	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	
Physical Abuse Only	9,982 40%	3,854 42%	1,947 12%	15,783 31%	1,686 9%	1,172 18%	294 11%	3,152 11%	18,935 24%
Neglect or Medical Neglect Only	8,587 34%	1,079 12%	1,027 6%	10,693 21%	13,201 70%	2,944 46%	1,032 37%	17,177 62%	27,870 35%
Sexual Abuse Only	2,698 11%	3,198 35%	13,055 78%	18,951 37%	340 2%	575 9%	700 25%	1,615 6%	20,566 26%
Other or Emotional Abuse Only	2,001 8%	484 5%	234 1%	2,718 5%	874 5%	297 5%	64 2%	1,235 4%	3,953 5%
Multiple Maltreatment	1,913 8%	583 6%	535 3%	3,031 6%	2,626 14%	1,383 22%	666 24%	4,675 17%	7,706 10%
Total	25,181 100%	9,198 100%	16,798 100%	51,176 100%	18,727 100%	6,371 100%	2,756 100%	27,854 100%	79,031 100%

Services

Male perpetrators who acted alone were less likely to receive services than males who acted with the victims' mothers. (See figure 12.) In all categories, male perpetrators who acted alone were less likely to have a child placed in foster care or to receive in-home services. This finding may be consistent with the types of maltreatment associated with male perpetrators acting alone; in sexual abuse cases, the perpetrator may be removed from the household so that the child is protected without the need for foster care.

Recidivism

Recidivism was projected to be highest among biological fathers acting with mothers (10%), and lowest among father surrogates acting alone (4%). (See figure 13.) Five percent of biological fathers alone were recidivists compared with 10 percent of biological fathers acting with mothers. Similarly, among father surrogates, 4 percent of those acting alone were again perpetrators within 1 year, compared with 8 percent of those acting with mothers. Among nonparents, the

Among male perpetrators, recidivism was highest among biological fathers acting with mothers and lowest among father surrogates acting alone.

percent of recidivists was approximately the same for both groups, although slightly higher for those acting alone (7%) than for those acting with the mother (6%).

Figure 12. Services Received by Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Mothers²²
(n = 79,031)

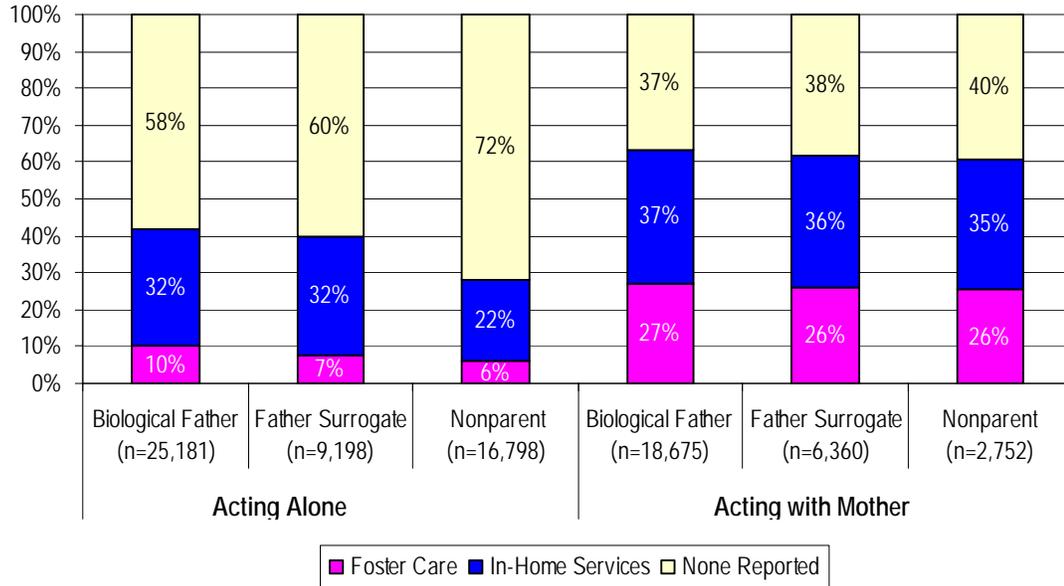
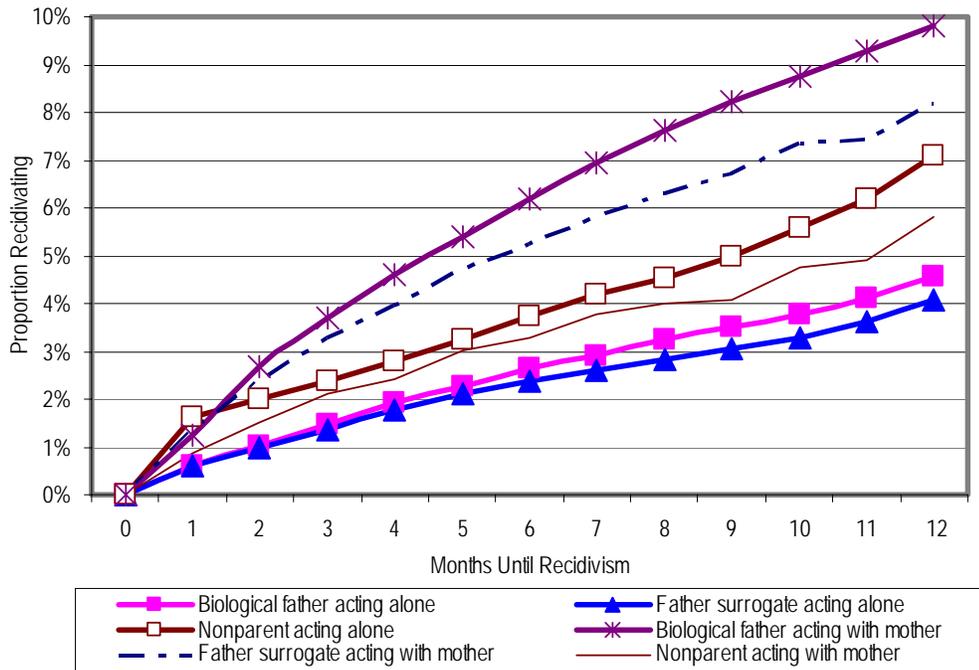


Figure 13. Recidivism of Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Others²³
(n=79,031)



²² Table A-14 provides supporting data for Figure 12.

²³ Table A-15 provides supporting data for Figure 13.

Summary and Conclusions

The distribution and characteristics of male perpetrators are among the least studied aspects of child maltreatment. Nonetheless, generalizations regarding this group are common. The use of NCANDS data to explore information about this group of perpetrators has revealed a clearer picture from a multi-State perspective.

Key Findings

This study confirms earlier findings (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004) that females outnumbered male perpetrators among cases investigated by CPS, by a margin of 10 percent. Males were slightly older than females, but otherwise no other basic demographic differences between male and female perpetrators were observed.

More than one-half of the male perpetrators were biological fathers, nearly one-quarter occupied some other parental role (adoptive fathers, stepfather, mothers' boyfriends), and an additional one-quarter were in nonparental relationships (including relatives, foster parents, daycare providers, or friends) to their victims. With respect to basic demographic descriptors, male perpetrators with different relationships to their victims varied to only a limited degree in their age and race.

In contrast, the categories of male perpetrators varied by the characteristics and experiences of their victims. Biological fathers were associated with the youngest victims compared with other male perpetrators, and among these groups, stepfathers and adoptive fathers were associated with relatively higher percentages of preteen or teenage victims. Further, nonparent perpetrators had the largest proportion of female victims, and more than one-half of the stepfather and adoptive father perpetrators had exclusively female victims. In contrast, fewer than one-half of the perpetrators who were biological fathers and mothers' boyfriends were associated with only female victims.

The study also confirmed NCANDS findings (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004) that patterns of sexual abuse were more common among male perpetrators, whereas neglect was more common among female perpetrators. About one-fifth of perpetrators, both male and female, physically abused their victims. The maltreatment pattern for biological fathers was similar to the overall female pattern—that is, the majority was associated only with neglect, and less than 10 percent were sexually abusive, although about one-quarter were physically abusive. In contrast, about one-quarter of the stepfather and adoptive fathers sexually abused their victims and roughly one-third physically abused their victims. Interestingly, maltreatment patterns for mothers' boyfriends appeared to fall between the biological fathers and the combined group of stepfathers and adoptive fathers, such that the proportion of sexual abuse was less than it was among stepfathers and adoptive fathers, but greater than it was among biological fathers, with the pattern being reversed for neglect. Finally, more than two-thirds of the nonparent perpetrators sexually abused their victims.

To explore this further, the categories of male perpetrators were broken down by those who acted alone and those who acted in concert with a victim's mother. One of the most important findings is that a majority of male perpetrators in this study were found to have always acted alone. For these analyses, the stepfather, adoptive father, and mother's

boyfriend categories were combined as father surrogates. When these categories were arrayed with respect to the victim characteristics, and particularly their maltreatment experience, a continuum emerges from the contrasts. Male perpetrators acting alone were more likely to have committed sexual abuse or physical abuse, to have abused girls, to have abused older children, and not to have received services than similar male perpetrators who acted with mothers. Male perpetrators who acted with mothers were more likely to be associated with neglect than any other type of maltreatment. In other words, the overall perpetration pattern for males acting with mothers has more similarities to the overall pattern for females when compared to males acting alone.

Both within the group of perpetrators acting alone and with the mother, the biological fathers' victims were younger and proportionally fewer were sexually abused. Surrogate fathers victimized a greater proportion of older female children and were associated more often with sexual abuse compared with biological fathers. However, when compared with biological and nonparent perpetrators, the surrogate fathers fell in between in terms of age, gender, and sexual abuse of their victims. Taken together, the data appear to support a two-dimensional continuum of male perpetration patterns based on the relationship to the child and whether the perpetrator acted alone.

Finally, intervention outcomes appear to be tied into the continuum as well. With the exception of mothers' boyfriends, more than one-half of male perpetrators in all father categories received some services. However, the rate of foster care service provision was three times as frequent among male perpetrators acting with mothers as it was among males acting alone, across categories. On the other hand, the proportion associated with the provision of in-home services was relatively consistent among male perpetrators, regardless of involvement of the mother. Only among nonparents was in-home service notably higher among those perpetrators involved with the mother than those who were acting alone.

Although recidivism rates were low, biological fathers were more likely to be perpetrators of maltreatment again than were most other male perpetrators. The lowest levels of recidivism were among mothers' boyfriends and stepfathers. The lack of permanence in the relationship between a boyfriend and the mother may be responsible for this; such a perpetrator may be excluded from the household before recidivism can occur. Among stepfathers, lower recidivism rates may also result from such exclusion from the household, either on the part of the mother or CPS, or it may reflect the successful implementation of intervention services.

A pattern of decreasing recidivism can also be tied to the perpetrator continuum, so that those males acting with mothers were more likely to recidivate than were males acting alone. Also consistent with the continuum, among perpetrators acting with mothers, biological fathers acting with mothers were most likely to recidivate followed by father surrogates and then nonparents. The father surrogate perpetrators acting alone were least likely to recidivate. The type of maltreatment or level of access to the child was not considered for these analyses.

Implications

These findings may have important policy implications. The first implication is that if prevention and treatment interventions for child maltreatment are targeted only to women, a large proportion of perpetrators will not benefit from these efforts. Secondly, in-home services, in their most narrow sense, may be missing the opportunity to involve men who maltreat children but who are not living in the home. As many as one-third more biological fathers act alone than act with a mother in maltreating their children, suggesting a degree of disconnectedness in family relations that may be significant.

The second implication is that perpetrators who are not biological fathers were more commonly associated with physical abuse and sexual abuse, older children, and female children. Similarly, when acting alone, biological fathers and father surrogates were more often perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse, but when acting with the mother were more often associated with neglect. These perpetrator category distinctions echo broader distinctions in the NCANDS data and add to the notion that the dynamics associated with neglect are quite dissimilar from physical and sexual abuse. But again, this study highlights that a relatively large proportion of male perpetrators are involved in neglect when both parents are present, a finding not emphasized in prior research. Additionally, the relatively large proportion of stepfathers and adoptive fathers associated with sexual abuse, as well as with older, female children, suggests the need for prevention efforts in blended and adoptive families.

The third area of findings with potential policy implications is that male perpetrators have many different relationships to their victims. The findings and the literature suggest that interventions that strengthen the role of fathers to prevent further child maltreatment and improve child well-being are a complex undertaking. This study provides insights into this complexity by identifying clear subgroups of perpetrators. Because of the distinct differences among these male perpetrators with different relationships to their victims, interventions of all types may need to be more highly differentiated. The classification scheme presented could be refined and combined with more information about victims, and ultimately families, resulting in a data driven classification scheme of CPS populations for whom specific and targeted interventions may be designed. For example, it seems discouraging that biological father perpetrators who acted with the victims' mother were more likely to recidivate than were other male perpetrators. However, as the data show, these are also situations in which neglect is more frequently of concern and children are younger, both important risk factors for recurrence (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004). This is precisely the set of children and families who must be served more effectively to reduce maltreatment recurrence. The data clearly imply that fathers of these families must be included in the service plans.

Further exploration of information on male perpetrators is certainly warranted. For example, multivariate analyses have not been conducted; these might highlight even more clearly how the variables relate to each other and the relative importance of some variables in refining the classification scheme. In addition, obtaining a clearer picture of how the various categories of perpetrators fit within households would provide insights into the service and recidivism outcomes. The NCANDS data remain an important resource in developing this understanding as they provide a comprehensive view of the range of child maltreatment circumstances among CPS populations.

References

- Adinkrah, M. (2003). Men who kill their own children: paternal filicide incidents in contemporary Fiji. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 27*(5), 557–568.
- Bagley, C., & Pritchard, C. (2000). Criminality and violence in intra- and extra-familial child sex abusers in a 2-year cohort of convicted perpetrators. *Child Abuse Review, 9*(4), 264–274.
- Brewster, A. L., Nelson, J. P., Hymel, K. P., Colby, D. R., Lucas, D. R., McCanne, T. R., et al. (1998). Victim, perpetrator, family, and incident characteristics of 32 infant maltreatment deaths in the United States Air Force. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 22*(2), 91–101.
- Child Trends. (2002). *Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers in America*.
- Daly, M., & Wilson, M. (1999). *The Truth About Cinderella: A Darwinian View of Parental Love*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- DePanfilis, D. and S. Zuravin (1999). Epidemiology of child maltreatment recurrence. *Social Services Review 27*(2), 218–223.
- Dubowitz, H., Black, M. M., Cox, C. E., Kerr, M. A., Litrownik, A. J., Radhakrishna, A., et al. (2001). Father involvement and children's functioning at age 6 years: A multisite study. *Child Maltreatment, 6*(4), 300–309.
- Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2003). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2003*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Freeman, J. B., Levine, M., & Doueck, H. J. (1996). Child age and caseworker attention in child protective services investigations. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 20*(10), 907–920.
- Fluke, J., Y. Yuan, & Edwards, M. (1999). Recurrence of maltreatment: An application of the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. *Child Abuse and Neglect 23*(7): 633–650.
- Greif, J. L., & Bailey, C. (1990). Where are the fathers in social work literature? *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 71*(2), 88–92.
- Klevens, J., Bayon, M. C., & Sierra, M. (2000). Risk factors and context of men who physically abuse in Bogota, Columbia. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 24*(3), 323–332.
- Lamb, M. E. (2001). Male roles in families "at risk": The ecology of Child Maltreatment. *Child Maltreatment, 6*(4), 310–313.
- Manion, I., Firestone, P., Cloutier, P., Ligezinska, M., McIntyre, J., & Ensom, R. (1998). Child extrafamilial sexual abuse: Predicting parent and child functioning. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 22*(12), 1285–1304.
- Manion, I. G., McIntyre, J., Firestone, P., Ligezinska, M., Ensome, R., & Wells, G. (1996). Secondary traumatization in parents following the disclosure of extrafamilial child sexual abuse: Initial effects. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 20*, 1095–1109.
- Nobes, G., & Smith, M. (2002). Family structure and the physical punishment of children. *Journal of Family Issues, 23*(3), 349–373.
- O'Donohue, W., Smith, V., & Schewe, P. (1998). The credibility of child sexual abuse allegations: Perpetrator gender and subject occupational status. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 10*(1), 17–24.

- Phelan, P. (1995). Incest and its meaning: The perspective of fathers and daughters. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 19*(1), 7–24.
- Radhakrishna, A., Bou-Saada, I. E., Hunter, W. M., Catellier, D. J., & Kotch, J. B. (2001). Are father surrogates a risk factor for child maltreatment? *Child Maltreatment, 6*(4), 281–289.
- Rudin, M. M., Zalewski, C., & Bodmer-Turner, J. (1995). Characteristics of child sexual abuse victims according to perpetrator gender. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 19*(8), 963–973.
- Smith, D. W., & Saunders, B. E. (1995). Personality characteristics of father/perpetrators and nonoffending mothers in incest families: Individual and dyadic analyses. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 19*(5), 607–617.
- Smithey, M. (1998). Infant homicide: Victim/offender relationship and causes of death. *Journal of Family Violence, 13*(3), 285–297.
- U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect. (1995). *A Nation's Shame: Fatal Child Abuse and Neglect in the United States*. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1998). *Nurturing Fatherhood: Improving Data and Research on Male Fertility, Family Formation and Fatherhood*. Retrieved February 3, 2004, from <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov/cfsforum/front.htm>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2002a). *State Policies to Promote Marriage - Final Report*. Washington, DC.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2003b). *Child Maltreatment 2001: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2004). *Child Maltreatment 2002: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

APPENDIX A. SUPPORTING DATA TABLES

**Table A–1. Male Perpetrators
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Perpetrator	Acting Alone	Acting with Mother	Acting with Other Person(s)	Total
Biological Father	25,181 55%	18,727 41%	1,618 4%	45,526 100%
Adoptive Father	287 60%	183 38%	9 2%	479 100%
Stepfather	4,399 64%	2,339 34%	119 2%	6,857 100%
Mother's Boyfriend	4,512 52%	3,849 45%	261 3%	8,622 100%
Combination Father	1,638 36%	2,765 60%	201 4%	4,604 100%
Nonparent	16,798 73%	2,756 12%	3,386 15%	22,940 100%
Total Male Perpetrators	52,815 59%	30,619 34%	5,594 6%	89,028 100%
Total Female Perpetrators	64,810 63%		38,483 37%	103,293 100%
Total Perpetrators	117,625 61%	30,619 16%	44,077 23%	192,321 100%

**Table A–2. Age of Male and Female Perpetrators
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Age of Perpetrator	Male	Female	Total Perpetrators
Age 20 or younger	8,872 10%	6,898 7%	15,770 8%
Age 21–30	22,506 25%	40,345 39%	62,851 33%
Age 31–40	28,111 32%	35,666 35%	63,777 33%
Age 41–50	15,915 18%	13,105 13%	29,020 15%
Age 51–60	4,233 5%	2,763 3%	6,996 4%
Age 61 and older	1,658 2%	1,030 1%	2,688 1%
Missing Age	7,733 9%	3,486 3%	11,219 6%
Total	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%

**Table A–3. Race of Perpetrators
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Race of Male Perpetrator	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
American Indian or Alaska Native Only	496 1%	5 1%	57 1%	46 1%	91 2%	199 1%	894 1%	1,664 2%	2,558 1%
Black Only	6,627 15%	69 14%	944 14%	1,778 21%	810 18%	3,954 17%	14,182 16%	21,855 21%	36,037 19%
Asian or Pacific Islander Only	444 1%	2 0.42%	44 1%	35 0.41%	37 1%	124 1%	686 1%	775 1%	1,461 1%
White Only	27,943 61%	333 70%	4,120 60%	4,268 50%	2,802 61%	12,444 54%	51,910 58%	59,005 57%	110,915 58%
Hispanic of Any Race	6,055 13%	23 5%	1,102 16%	1,197 14%	437 9%	3,182 14%	11,996 13%	13,062 13%	25,058 13%
Multiple Race	115 0.25%	2 0.42%	18 0.26%	15 0.17%	17 0.37%	74 0.32%	241 0.27%	485 0.47%	726 0.38%
Unknown or Other	3,846 8%	45 9%	572 8%	1,283 15%	410 9%	2,963 13%	9,119 10%	6,447 6%	15,566 8%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%

**Table A–4. Perpetrators as Caregivers
(n = 109,305, Data from 10 States)**

Caregiver Status of Perpetrator	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Caregiver	20,768 81%	187 72%	3,043 82%	2,007 42%	1,618 87%	1,914 14%	29,537 60%	52,234 87%	81,771 75%
Not a Caregiver	4,743 19%	71 28%	676 18%	2,736 58%	236 13%	11,409 86%	19,871 40%	7,663 13%	27,534 25%
Total	25,511 100%	258 100%	3,719 100%	4,743 100%	1,854 100%	13,323 100%	49,408 100%	59,897 100%	109,305 100%

**Table A–5. Perpetrators by Number of Child Victims
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Number of Child Victims	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
1	29,753 65%	405 85%	5,326 78%	5,908 69%	0 0%	18,372 80%	59,764 67%	62,520 61%	122,284 64%
2	9,537 21%	51 11%	948 14%	1,655 19%	1,906 41%	3,121 14%	17,218 19%	22,355 22%	39,573 21%
3	4,058 9%	19 4%	384 6%	707 8%	1,418 31%	938 4%	7,524 8%	11,056 11%	18,580 10%
4 or more	2,178 5%	4 1%	199 3%	352 4%	1,280 28%	509 2%	4,522 5%	7,362 7%	11,884 6%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%

**Table A–6. Perpetrators by Age of Child Victims
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Age of Child Victim	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Age 1 or Younger	7,189 16%	2 0%	139 2%	537 6%	1,142 25%	511 2%	9,520 11%	21,386 21%	30,906 16%
Age 1–3	13,242 29%	19 4%	660 10%	2,177 25%	2,408 52%	2,579 11%	21,085 24%	32,385 31%	53,470 28%
Age 4–7	13,949 31%	61 13%	1,592 23%	3,032 35%	2,742 60%	6,520 28%	27,896 31%	34,653 34%	62,549 33%
Age 8–11	11,820 26%	128 27%	2,202 32%	2,669 31%	2,353 51%	6,489 28%	25,661 29%	28,211 27%	53,872 28%
Age 12–15	10,852 24%	226 47%	2,801 41%	2,200 26%	1,576 34%	8,021 35%	25,676 29%	22,642 22%	48,318 25%
Age 16 or older	3,987 9%	95 20%	922 13%	589 7%	489 11%	2,337 10%	8,419 9%	7,635 7%	16,054 8%
All Perpetrators	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%
Total	61,039 134%	531 111%	8,316 121%	11,204 130%	10,710 233%	26,457 115%	118,257 133%	146,912 142%	265,169 138%

**Table A–7. Perpetrators by Sex of Child Victim
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Sex of Child Victim	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Just Girls	17,827 39%	276 58%	3,831 56%	3,895 45%	942 20%	14,806 65%	41,577 47%	39,698 38%	81,275 42%
Just Boys	18,243 40%	169 35%	2,216 32%	3,154 37%	709 15%	6,230 27%	30,721 35%	38,202 37%	68,923 36%
Boys and Girls	9,296 20%	31 6%	795 12%	1,542 18%	2,949 64%	1,852 8%	16,465 18%	25,076 18%	41,541 24%
Missing Data	160 0%	3 1%	15 0%	31 0%	4 0%	52 0%	265 0%	317 0%	582 0%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 78%

**Table A–8. Maltreatment by Male and Female Perpetrators
(n = 192,321, Data from 18 States)**

Maltreatment	Male	Female	Total
Physical Abuse Only	19,969 22%	18,168 18%	38,137 20%
Neglect or Medical Neglect Only	32,113 36%	68,289 66%	100,402 52%
Sexual Abuse Only	23,034 26%	2,064 2%	25,098 13%
Other or Emotional Abuse Only	4,273 5%	3,675 4%	7,948 4%
Multiple Maltreatment	9,638 11%	11,095 11%	20,733 11%
Total	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%

**Table A–9. Drug and Alcohol Abuse of Caregiver Perpetrators
(n = 24,085, Data from 7 States)**

Drug and Alcohol Abuse	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Just Alcohol	850 5%	1 1%	179 6%	136 7%	47 3%	20 1%	1,233 5%	1,645 4%	2,878 5%
Just Drug	1,176 8%	0 0%	136 5%	223 11%	55 4%	11 1%	1,601 7%	4,286 11%	5,887 9%
Drug and Alcohol	715 5%	0 0%	101 3%	128 7%	50 3%	13 1%	1,007 4%	1,861 5%	2,868 5%
None or Unknown	12,918 82%	129 99%	2,568 86%	1,470 75%	1,330 90%	1,829 98%	20,244 84%	31,384 80%	51,628 82%
Total	15,659 100%	130 100%	2,984 100%	1,957 100%	1,482 100%	1,873 100%	24,085 100%	39,176 100%	63,261 100%

**Table A–10. Family Violence of Caregiver Perpetrators
(n = 40,484, Data from 8 States)**

Family Violence	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Presence of Family Violence Risk Factor	1,851 18%	13 10%	221 20%	137 23%	331 35%	59 6%	2,612 18%	2,625 10%	5,237 13%
None or Unknown	8,719 82%	122 90%	865 80%	463 77%	624 65%	1,005 94%	11,798 82%	23,449 90%	35,247 87%
Total	10,570 100%	135 100%	1,086 100%	600 100%	955 100%	1,064 100%	14,410 100%	26,074 100%	40,484 100%

**Table A–11. Services Received by Categories of Perpetrators
(n = 192,131, Data from 18 States)**

Services	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators	Total Female Perpetrators	Total Perpetrators
Foster Care	7,920 17%	139 29%	953 14%	1,329 15%	1,177 26%	2,324 10%	13,842 16%	24,607 24%	38,449 20%
In-Home Services	15,354 34%	148 31%	2,446 36%	2,806 33%	1,992 43%	5,441 24%	28,187 32%	34,193 33%	62,380 32%
None Reported	22,252 49%	192 40%	3,458 50%	4,487 52%	1,435 31%	15,175 66%	46,999 53%	44,493 43%	91,492 48%
Total	45,526 100%	479 100%	6,857 100%	8,622 100%	4,604 100%	22,940 100%	89,028 100%	103,293 100%	192,321 100%

**Table A–12. Recidivism of Categories of Male Perpetrators
(n = 89,028, Data from 18 States)**

Recidivism	Biological Father	Adoptive Father	Stepfather	Mother's Boyfriend	Combination Father	Nonparent	Total Male Perpetrators
After 1 month	1%	1%	1%	1%	7%	2%	2%
After 2 months	2%	2%	1%	2%	10%	2%	3%
After 3 months	3%	2%	2%	2%	14%	3%	4%
After 4 months	3%	2%	2%	3%	16%	3%	5%
After 5 months	4%	3%	3%	4%	19%	4%	6%
After 6 months	4%	3%	3%	4%	22%	4%	7%
After 7 months	5%	4%	3%	4%	25%	5%	8%
After 8 months	5%	4%	4%	5%	28%	5%	9%
After 9 months	6%	4%	4%	5%	30%	6%	10%
After 10 months	6%	4%	4%	6%	32%	6%	10%
After 11 months	7%	4%	4%	6%	35%	7%	11%
After 12 months	7%	4%	5%	7%	38%	8%	12%

**Table A–13. Actions and Categories of Male Perpetrators by Sex of Victims
(n = 79,031, Data from 18 States)**

Victim	Acting Alone				Acting with Mother				Total Perpetrators
	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	
Girls Only	10,590 42%	5,104 55%	11,349 68%	27,043 53%	6,568 35%	2,687 42%	1,433 52%	10,688 38%	37,731 48%
Boys Only	10,855 43%	3,249 35%	4,447 26%	18,551 36%	6,775 36%	2,163 34%	843 31%	9,781 35%	28,332 36%
Boys and Girls	3,638 14%	810 9%	956 6%	5,404 11%	5,332 28%	1,510 24%	476 17%	7,318 26%	12,722 16%
Missing Data	98 0%	35 0%	46 0%	179 0%	52 0%	11 0%	4 0%	67 0%	246 0%
All Perpetrators	25,181 100%	9,198 100%	16,798 100%	51,177 100%	18,727 100%	6,371 100%	2,756 100%	27,854 100%	79,031 100%

Table A–14. Services Received by Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Mothers
(n = 79,031, Data from 18 States)

Services	Acting Alone				Acting with Mother				Total
	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Total	
Foster Care	2,526 10%	689 7%	1,007 6%	4,222 8%	5,040 27%	1,642 26%	709 26%	7,391 27%	11,613 15%
In-home Services	8,004 32%	2,965 32%	3,667 22%	14,636 29%	6,838 37%	2,301 36%	958 35%	10,097 36%	24,733 31%
None Reported	14,651 58%	5,544 60%	12,124 72%	32,319 63%	6,849 37%	2,428 38%	1,089 40%	10,366 37%	42,685 54%
Total	25,181	9,198	16,798	51,177	18,727	6,371	2,756	27,854	79,031

Table A–15. Recidivism of Perpetrators Acting Alone or in Concert with Others
(n = 79,031, Data from 18 States)

Recidivism	Acting Alone			Acting with Mother		
	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent	Biological Father	Father Surrogate	Nonparent
After 1 month	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
After 2 months	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
After 3 months	1%	1%	2%	4%	3%	2%
After 4 months	2%	2%	3%	5%	4%	2%
After 5 months	2%	2%	3%	5%	5%	3%
After 6 months	3%	2%	4%	6%	5%	3%
After 7 months	3%	3%	4%	7%	6%	4%
After 8 months	3%	3%	5%	8%	6%	4%
After 9 months	4%	3%	5%	8%	7%	4%
After 10 months	4%	3%	6%	9%	7%	5%
After 11 months	4%	4%	6%	9%	7%	5%
After 12 months	5%	4%	7%	10%	8%	6%