

Child Maltreatment in El Paso County, Colorado

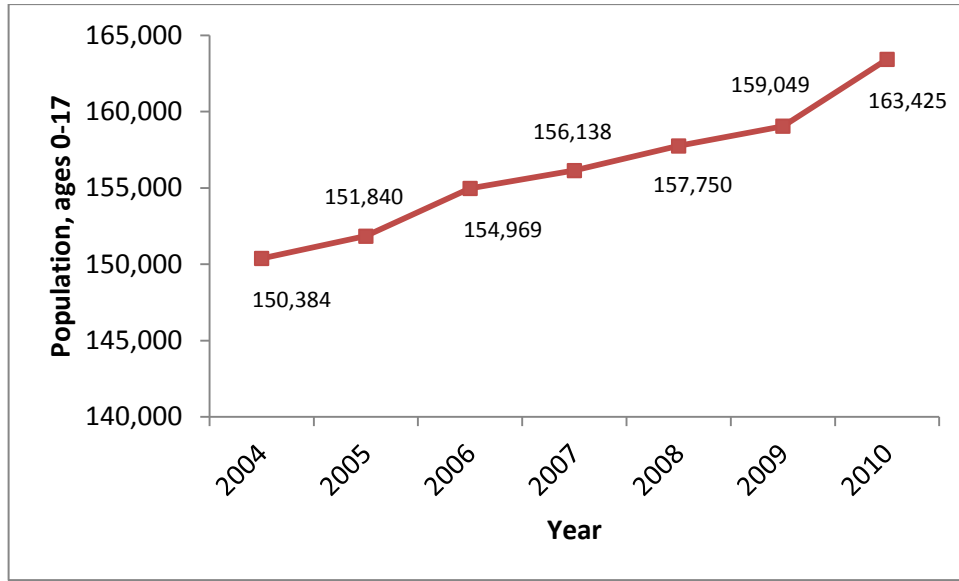
Summary of Selected Indicators

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Definitions:

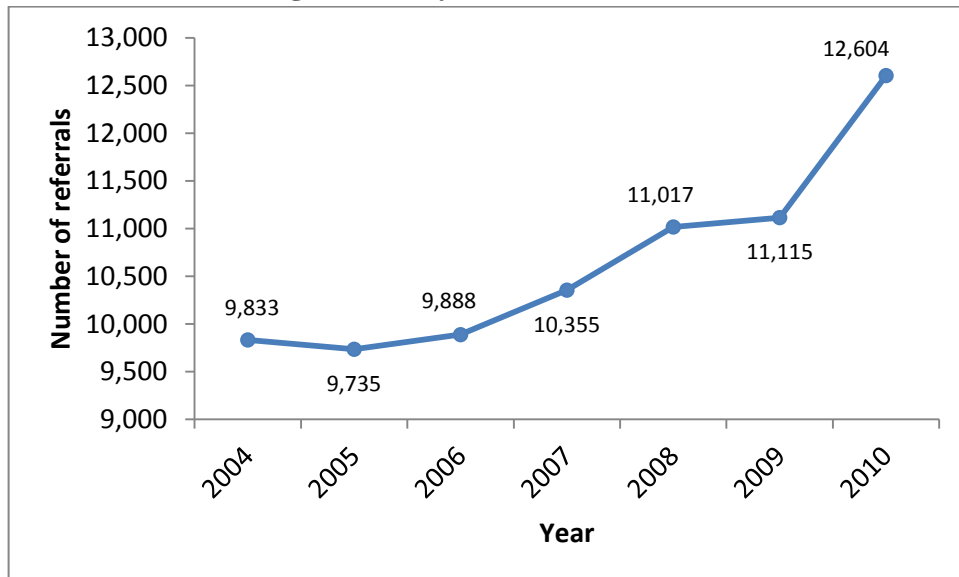
- Child maltreatment is an act, or a failure to act, which threatens the health or welfare of a child, and includes:
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Neglect
- Substantiated (or founded) cases of child maltreatment are investigations done by the Department of Human Services which conclude the allegation of maltreatment was supported by State law or policy.
- Unique cases of child maltreatment reflect the number of children with one or more reports of maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect).

Figure 1. Population of children ages 0 to 17 years, El Paso County 2004 to 2010¹



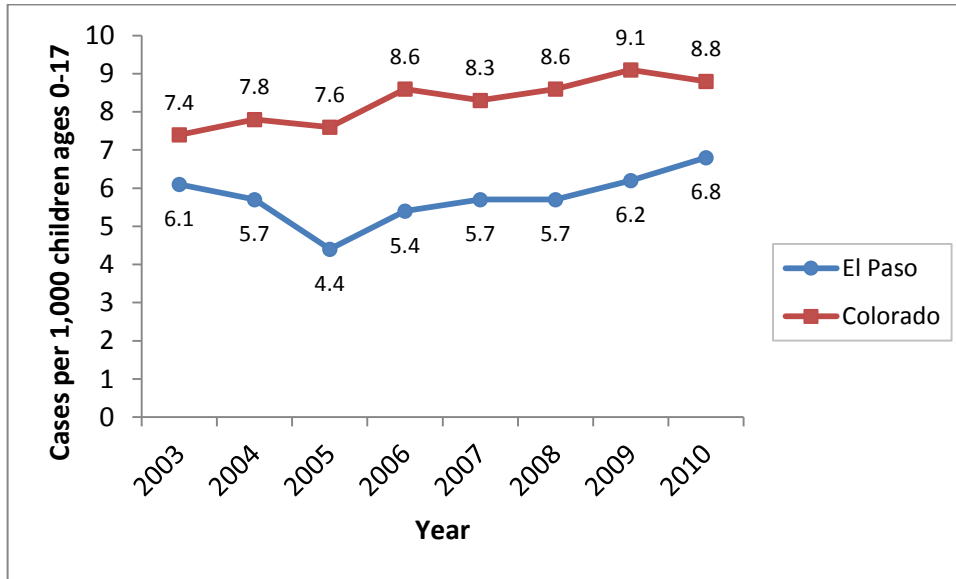
As shown in Figure 1, the child population in El Paso County has been steadily increasing. Between 2004 and 2010, the population grew by more than 13,000 children ages 0 to 17 years.

Figure 2. Number of referral calls to El Paso County Department of Human Services for suspected child maltreatment, ages 0 to 17 years, 2004 to 2010²



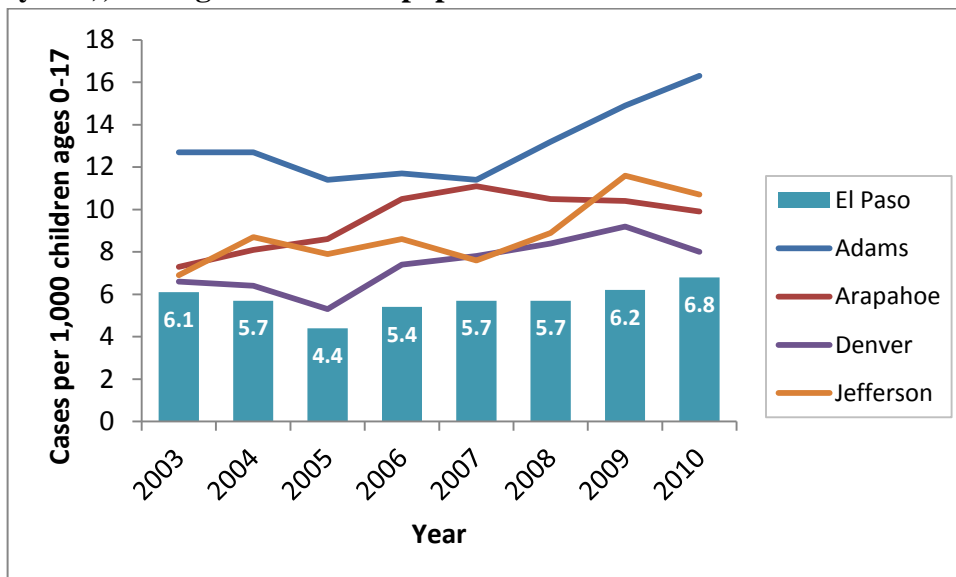
Between 2006 and 2010, the El Paso County Department of Human Services has experienced a sustained increase in the annual number of referral calls for suspected child maltreatment of children ages 0 to 17 years.

Figure 3. Rate of unique and substantiated cases of child maltreatment (per 1,000 children ages 0 to 17 years), El Paso County and Colorado 2003 to 2010³



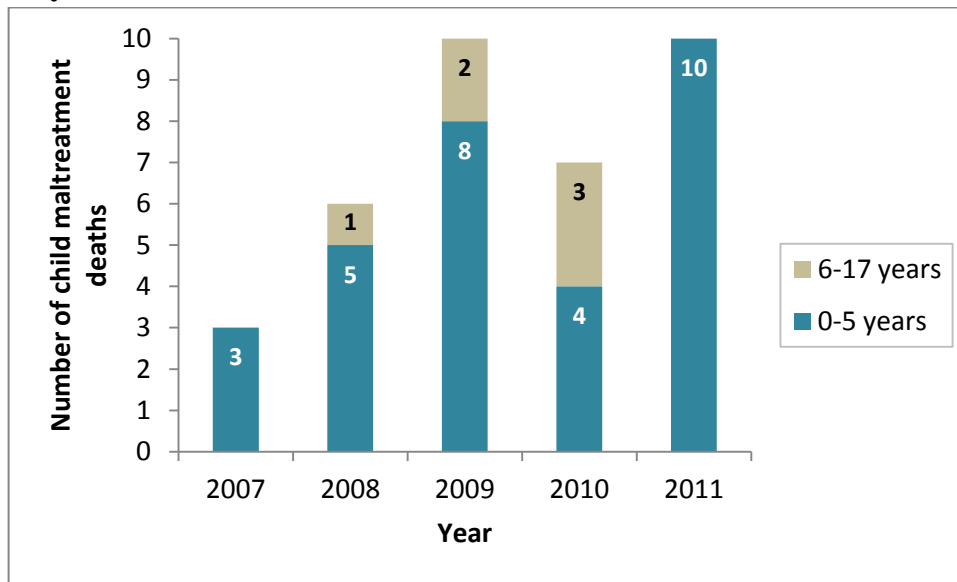
The data shows that since 2003, the rate of unique, substantiated cases of child maltreatment in El Paso County has remained below the state average. In comparing rates in 2003 versus 2010, the rate of maltreatment has increased 19 percent in Colorado and 11 percent in El Paso County.

Figure 4. Rate of unique and substantiated cases of child maltreatment (per 1,000 children ages 0 to 17 years), among the five most populous Colorado counties 2003 to 2010³



In looking at the five most populous counties in Colorado, between 2003 and 2010, the rate of unique, substantiated child maltreatment cases has been consistently lower in El Paso County. However, there has been an upward trend in all five counties.

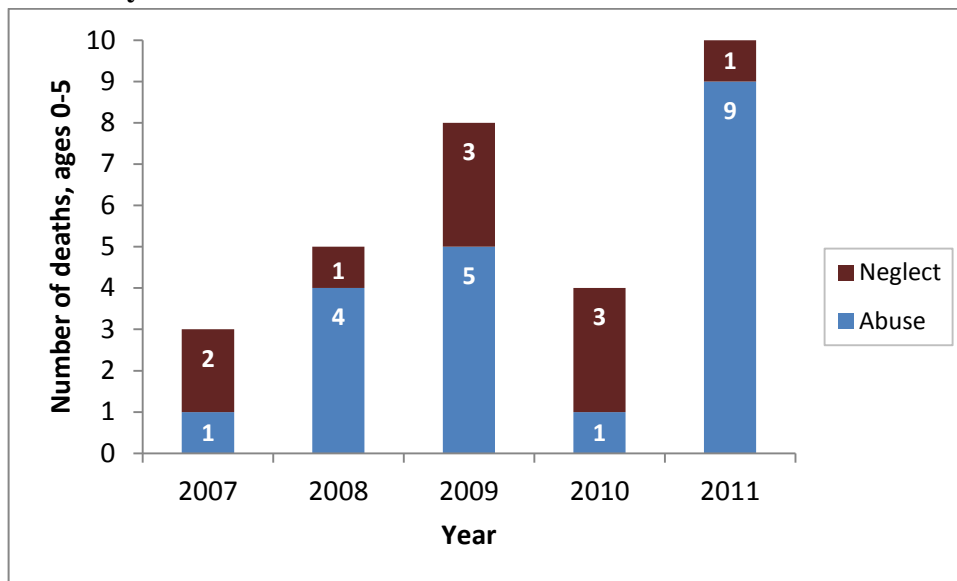
Figure 5. Number of child maltreatment-related deaths* by age of the child, per year, El Paso County 2007 to 2011²



*As designated by the Department of Human Services

The number of child maltreatment-related deaths in El Paso County ranged from 3 to 10 per year, between 2007 and 2011. During the 5-year period, 83 percent (30) of the deaths were among children ages 0 to 5 years, of which 12 deaths occurred in infants and 13 occurred in children ages 1 to 3 years.

Figure 6. Type of child maltreatment-related deaths* among children ages 0 to 5 years, per year, El Paso County 2007 to 2011²



*As designated by the Department of Human Services

The data shows that 20 (67 percent) of the 30 child maltreatment-related deaths in children 5 years of age and younger were associated with child abuse (2007 to 2011).

Table 1. Cause of death among child maltreatment-related deaths* in children ages 0 to 5 years, El Paso County 2007 to 2011²

Cause of death	Percent of deaths (out of 30 total deaths)
Abuse	67%
Head trauma	43%
Other abuse†	13%
Gunshot wound	7%
Smoke inhalation/burns	3%
Neglect	33%
Lack of supervision	23%
Drug overdose	7%
Overlay (suffocation)	3%

*As designated by the Department of Human Services

†Injuries included lacerated liver, fatal physical abuse, trauma to abdomen, and retinal hemorrhage

Abuse accounted for two-thirds of child maltreatment-related fatalities among children ages 0 to 5 years between 2007 and 2011. Head trauma (e.g., traumatic brain injury and subdural hemorrhage/hematoma) was identified as the cause of death in nearly half of the maltreatment deaths. Fatal injuries resulting from lack of supervision were responsible for 23 percent of deaths.

Table 2. Characteristics of persons known to be responsible* for child maltreatment-related fatalities among children ages 0 to 5 years, El Paso County 2007 to 2011²

Perpetrator Characteristic	Percent of deaths (out of 28 deaths) [¶]
Military status	
Active duty	14%
Relationship to victim	
Parent/stepparent	61%
Both parents	11%
3 rd party	32%

*As designated by the Department of Human Services

[¶]Excludes a death still under investigation and death with undetermined perpetrator

Thirty-two individuals were found responsible for 28 of the child maltreatment-related deaths among children ages 0 to 5 years which occurred in El Paso County between 2007 and 2011. The majority (72%) of these deaths involved maltreatment by one or both parents, while nearly one-third involved a third party such as a babysitter. Young adults ages 25 years and younger accounted for more than half (54%) of the responsible persons, persons ages 26 to 35 years accounted for 28 percent, and persons ages 36 and older accounted for 19 percent. Only 14% of persons responsible for child maltreatment-related deaths in the past five years were active duty military personnel (at the time of the death). Of note, supplemental data on child maltreatment deaths from Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) was also assessed; of the eight child maltreatment-related deaths investigated by CSPD in 2011, 63 percent of perpetrators had current (2) or former (3) military involvement.⁴

Data Sources

¹ Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office

² El Paso County Department of Human Services

³ Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center (original data source: Division of Child Welfare Services, Colorado Department of Human Services)

⁴ Colorado Springs Police Department, Crimes Against Children Unit