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Child abuse cases are on the rise

Oregon | Reports of suspected cases soar in fiscal year 2005, with 18 fatalities and half the victims younger than 6

BY EDWARD WALSH
THE OREGONIAN

Eighteen Oregon children died of abuse or neglect during the federal fiscal year that ended last Sept. 30. At the same time, the number of children who were victims of abuse or neglect reached a 10-year high, according to a new report compiled

by the Department of Human Services.

The annual report on the state's child protection system documents the continuing rise in child abuse and neglect cases in Oregon. It said the department received 55,114 reports of suspected abuse or neglect in fiscal year 2005, an 18.5 percent increase from the year before. That represented a 124.8 percent increase in the past 10 years, when Oregon's child population increased 5.8 percent, the report said.

In 11,255 of the 55,114 suspected cases, caseworkers concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that abuse or

Online

The state's report, "The Status of Children in Oregon's Child Protection System 2005": www.oregon.gov/DHS/abuse/publications/children/index.shtml

Children First for Oregon: www.children-firstfororegon.org

neglect occurred, a 6 percent increase over 2004, according to the report.

In other findings, the department reported:

- Almost half of the victims of abuse or

neglect were younger than 6.

- Girls represented slightly more than half of all abuse and neglect victims but 80 percent of sexual abuse victims.

- More than half the neglect cases reported involved children 5 or younger including 11.2 percent who were infants.

- Mothers and fathers represent about 7 percent of abuse and neglect perpetrators, and family members represent 9 percent of perpetrators.

- For the third year in a row, more children entered foster care in Oregon than

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