

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN! SITUATION IN MALAYSIA

BREAKDOWN: CHILD ABUSE AND INCEST IN MALAYSIA (as reported to the Malaysian Royal Police)

	CHILD ABUSE		INCEST	
	Total	Ave month	Total	Ave month
2001	150	12.5	246	21
2002	123	10	306	26
2003	119	10	254	21
2004	148	12	335	28
2005	189	16	295	25
2006 ¹	108	18	209	35
TOTAL	837		1,645	

¹ 2006 as at August 2006

Source: Ministry of Women, Family & Community Development

INCIDENCE OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- Statistics of the Malaysian Royal Police (PDRM) show that child abuse, molestation and rape are on **the increase, from 2,236 cases in 2005 to 5,744 in 2008. For the first seven months of 2009, 2,193 cases were reported to PDRM.**
- The difficulties of definition and the covert nature of child abuse (especially abuse in the privacy of the home involving family members) make it extremely difficult to make accurate assessments of the incidence of child abuse and neglect.
- This is compounded by the absence of proper institutional mechanisms for monitoring and managing such cases in Malaysia.
- Cases reported to and officially recorded by the Social Welfare Department are normally the more severe instances and are estimated to represent only about 10% of the actual incidence in Malaysia (Social Welfare Department 1995).
- Cumulatively, Selangor followed by Federal Territory, Pulau Pinang and Johor Bahru have the highest number of reported cases of child abuse between the period of 2001 to 2006. This may however be an indication of higher levels of public awareness in these states.

MALAYSIA: CHILDREN ABUSED AND/OR KILLED

December 2009: A half naked 9-year old girl was found dead in a water retention pond. She had been raped.

September 2007: An 8-year old girl was kidnapped, raped and murdered. She went missing from home after going to the night-market on her own. Her mutilated body was later found in a bag.

January 2004: A 10-year old girl died after being gang-raped by three men who sodomised and strangled her in a guard hut close to her home. She was sent by her mother on an errand to a nearby grocery store.

January 2004: A 10-year old girl was walking to school when she was abducted and raped. She was then stabbed to death.

November 2002: A 2-year old girl was abducted, raped and murdered. Her naked body was found on the banks of a river, about 500 meters from her home. An autopsy revealed that she suffered 40 slash wounds all over her body as well as brain hemorrhage due to being hit with a hard object.

October 2002: A secondary school student was strangled and raped. The victim who almost died fractured her spine. She was found with both hands tied at the back, her mouth stuffed with stockings and her body covered with a black plastic.

April 2002: A 6-year old girl was raped and murdered.

July 2001: A 16-year old girl was murdered on her way home from school.



SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- The generally accepted causes for child abuse and neglect to occur include: severe emotional pressures, pressures arising from poverty, marital relationship problems, poor housing conditions, negative employment situations, drug abuse, absence of supportive extended family members, fanatical religious or superstitious beliefs.
- Statistics suggest that there is a correlation between child abuse, neglect and poverty in Malaysia. Parents who have to struggle to make a living in negative employment situations often hold more than one job and have little time to supervise their children.
- In addition, living in crowded and unhealthy conditions is very stressful and mental health problems occur, which are manifested in marital conflicts, alcoholism and drug abuse. These marginalised families are also less likely to have access to social and recreational facilities and services such as counselling and family support.
- Available child minding services are unsupervised and of questionable standards, posing the risk of abuse by child minders.
- Abuse and neglect of children also takes place in affluent families. These involve adults with emotional problems who lack parental skills or have low levels of tolerance and unrealistic expectations of the children they abuse.
- Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that irrespective of income, children become the target of abuse because they are the most vulnerable members in the family hierarchy.
- A factor which can be linked to the increase of child abuse and neglect is the lack of avenues for children to articulate their grievances against adults who abuse and neglect them.
- The cultural and social environment which instills the value of unquestioned obedience to adults suggests to children that even in cases of abuse and neglect, they are expected to submit to the adult perpetrator and keep silent.
- Also, factors like the hierarchal structure of a family, with the parents or guardian having the final say in matters concerning the care and upbringing of a child, can thwart the attempts of a child to draw attention to abuse and neglect.
- The child is not fully aware that it is wrong for an adult to abuse and neglect his or her body. As a result the child suffers in silence.

October 2000: A 6-year old girl was raped, strangled and murdered and her body was found in a rooftop water tank at a three-storey house. She was last seen on the way to a shop near her house. A foreigner and a 13-year-old boy were detained in connection with the case.

May 1999: A teenager was brutally raped and murdered on her way to school.

July 1996: Five males, including a 15-year-old boy and a 72-year-old man, were arrested for repeatedly raping an 11-year-old girl over one year.

July 1996: A 64-year-old man was charged with raping his 13-year-old daughter and abetting two foreign workers to rape her as well for a few ringgit.

October 1996: A 10-year-old girl was repeatedly raped over a period of time by 25 men between the ages of 20 and 58. The oldest rapist was a man who acted like a grandfather to her, often taking the girl to school.

May 1996: A man claimed trial to raping a 15-year-old student inside the bus at the last stop.

April 1987: An 8-year old was found dead with a metre-long piece of wood with three nails at the end forced into her vagina, puncturing her intestines, stomach and heart, and a piece of wire around her neck. Her body was discovered in a deserted house used as a drug haunt about 70 metres from her home, three hours after she went missing while buying breakfast with her 11-year-old brother.