

# Drop in ED visits related to child abuse, neglect during COVID-19

December 11 2020

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(HealthDay)—During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decrease in

the total number of emergency department visits related to child abuse and neglect, according to research published in the Dec. 11 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Elizabeth Swedo, M.D., from the CDC COVID-19 Response Team, and colleagues used National Syndromic Surveillance Program data from Jan. 6, 2019, to Sept. 6, 2020, to tabulate weekly numbers of emergency department visits related to child abuse and [neglect](#).

The researchers found that for all age groups examined (0 to 4, 5 to 11, and 12 to 17 years), during week 11 (March 15 to 22, 2020), the total number of emergency department visits related to child abuse and neglect began decreasing below the corresponding 2019 period, coinciding with the declaration of a national emergency on March 13. For all age groups, there was a simultaneous increase in the proportion of these visits per 100,000 emergency department visits above the 2019 baseline. The weekly number of emergency department visits related to child abuse and neglect resulting in hospitalization remained stable in 2020 despite decreases in the weekly number of these visits; however, there was a significant increase noted in all [age groups](#) in the yearly percentage of emergency department visits relating to child abuse and neglect resulting in hospitalization.

"This report demonstrates that emergency department visits related to [abuse](#) and neglect declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite evidence that pandemics increase risk for [child abuse](#) and neglect," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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