

Data request on child protection and child interviews, April 2026

In March 2026, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families received a data request information on the ways children were interviewed upon assessment or investigation following a child maltreatment report (CMR). The request was shared with the Child Safety and Permanency Research and Evaluation Unit to provide data.

This document was created to fulfill this request. The tables below show data on children involved in screened-in and finalized CMRs, including both Family Assessment and Family Investigation. Specifically, local case workers are required to see children in response to screened-in reports of maltreatment. Upon completing assessments/investigations, the worker will document whether the child was observed or interviewed **“outside the presence of any alleged offender(s), including a parent, or anyone with a personal/familial relationship with the alleged offender(s)”** (see [“Child Maltreatment Report – CMR in SSIS”](#), May 2025, p. 21). For purposes of this request and for the sake of brevity, this document refers to cases where the response to that prompt was “yes” as “interviewed alone” and cases where the response to that prompt was “no” as “not interviewed alone”.

The information contained below includes data on cases completed/finalized in 2023, 2024, and 2025. Cases that are still pending or were unable to conclude are not included in this analysis. Further, “cases” are a combination of unique CMR reports and the unique children named as alleged victims. That is, if a unique child was involved in more than one CMR during the time period, each instance (“case”) will be counted separately, and the occurrence of the child being interviewed alone will be assessed for each case.

Per the request, information is provided by CMR response path (i.e., Family Assessment or Family Investigation), local child welfare agency, and age of the alleged victims. Further information is provided on the reasons why cases that were not interviewed alone.

Summary of findings on child interviews

CMR data for three calendar years shows that most children who are named as alleged victims in screened-in child maltreatment reports (CMRs) are interviewed alone (i.e., outside the presence of alleged offenders). That is, across almost 95,000 cases, 79% show that the child was interviewed alone, and 21% were not. Being interviewed alone varies as a function of child age, as only 39% of children under 3 years old were interviewed alone compared with 94% of children 12 and older. The most common reason for not having been interviewed alone was due to the child’s capacity (77% of cases). Alternatively, in some instances the child declines (12%) or the parent declines (11%). Lastly, worker safety (1%) and unavailability of a court order (<1%) are offered as reasons in an exceedingly small number of cases.

Table 1. CMR involvement and child interview status, 2023-2025

Year	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
2023	33,049	25,784	78.0%	7,265	22.0%
2024	31,481	24,753	78.6%	6,728	21.4%
2025	30,302	23,970	79.1%	6,332	20.9%
Total	94,832	74,507	78.6%	20,325	21.4%

Table 2. CMR involvement and child interview status shown by CMR response path, 2023-2025

Response path	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
Family assessment	61,502	47,785	77.7%	13,717	22.3%
Family investigation	33,330	26,722	80.2%	6,608	19.8%
Total	94,832	74,507	78.6%	20,325	21.4%

Table 3. CMR involvement and child interview status shown by local child welfare agency, 2023-2025

Agency	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
Aitkin	334	241	72.2%	93	27.8%
Anoka	3,448	2,765	80.2%	683	19.8%
Becker	565	353	62.5%	212	37.5%
Beltrami	1,011	928	91.8%	83	8.2%
Benton	724	519	71.7%	205	28.3%
Big Stone	106	86	81.1%	20	18.9%
Blue Earth	1,429	1,063	74.4%	366	25.6%
Brown	542	439	81.0%	103	19.0%
Carlton	1,099	860	78.3%	239	21.7%
Carver	1,236	945	76.5%	291	23.5%
Cass	450	334	74.2%	116	25.8%
Chippewa	348	301	86.5%	47	13.5%
Chisago	748	633	84.6%	115	15.4%
Clay	1,004	757	75.4%	247	24.6%
Clearwater	335	266	79.4%	69	20.6%
Cook	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%
Crow Wing	805	659	81.9%	146	18.1%
Dakota	5,087	4,124	81.1%	963	18.9%

Agency	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
Des Moines Valley HHS	411	298	72.5%	113	27.5%
Douglas	1,081	779	72.1%	302	27.9%
Faribault-Martin	763	553	72.5%	210	27.5%
Fillmore	209	156	74.6%	53	25.4%
Freeborn	563	453	80.5%	110	19.5%
Goodhue	704	510	72.4%	194	27.6%
Hennepin	17,829	14,596	81.9%	3,233	18.1%
Houston	262	201	76.7%	61	23.3%
Hubbard	747	538	72.0%	209	28.0%
Isanti	442	345	78.1%	97	21.9%
Itasca	930	616	66.2%	314	33.8%
Kanabec	306	245	80.1%	61	19.9%
Kandiyohi	1,524	1,222	80.2%	302	19.8%
Kittson	50	38	76.0%	12	24.0%
Koochiching	391	310	79.3%	81	20.7%
Lac qui Parle	149	122	81.9%	27	18.1%
Lake	144	122	84.7%	22	15.3%
Lake of the Woods	79	68	86.1%	11	13.9%
Le Sueur	458	383	83.6%	75	16.4%
Mahnomen	73	61	83.6%	12	16.4%
Marshall	163	135	82.8%	28	17.2%

Agency	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
McLeod	916	572	62.4%	344	37.6%
Meeker	550	401	72.9%	149	27.1%
Mille Lacs	877	659	75.1%	218	24.9%
MN Prairie	1,658	1,384	83.5%	274	16.5%
Morrison	440	361	82.0%	79	18.0%
Mower	669	501	74.9%	168	25.1%
Nicollet	765	578	75.6%	187	24.4%
Nobles	773	695	89.9%	78	10.1%
Norman	194	160	82.5%	34	17.5%
Olmsted	1,640	950	57.9%	690	42.1%
Otter Tail	1,011	830	82.1%	181	17.9%
Pennington	282	233	82.6%	49	17.4%
Pine	672	502	74.7%	170	25.3%
Polk	724	563	77.8%	161	22.2%
Ramsey	9,850	7,761	78.8%	2,089	21.2%
Red Lake	67	62	92.5%	5	7.5%
Renville	521	374	71.8%	147	28.2%
Rice	1,201	1,006	83.8%	195	16.2%
Roseau	349	338	96.8%	11	3.2%
Scott	1,637	1,333	81.4%	304	18.6%
Sherburne	1,725	1,363	79.0%	362	21.0%

Agency	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
Sibley	360	231	64.2%	129	35.8%
Southwest HHS	2,287	1,890	82.6%	397	17.4%
St. Louis	6,974	5,391	77.3%	1,583	22.7%
Stearns	3,044	1,978	65.0%	1,066	35.0%
Stevens	389	320	82.3%	69	17.7%
Swift	247	182	73.7%	65	26.3%
Todd	489	406	83.0%	83	17.0%
Wabasha	312	291	93.3%	21	6.7%
Wadena	467	366	78.4%	101	21.6%
Washington	1,854	1,449	78.2%	405	21.8%
Watonwan	385	336	87.3%	49	12.7%
Western Prairie Human Services	743	586	78.9%	157	21.1%
Wilkin	232	186	80.2%	46	19.8%
Winona	764	540	70.7%	224	29.3%
Wright	1,927	1,542	80.0%	385	20.0%
Yellow Medicine	245	203	82.9%	42	17.1%
Total	94,832	74,507	78.6%	20,325	21.4%

Table 4. CMR involvement and child interview status shown by age of alleged victim, 2023-2025

Age of alleged victim	# total cases	# cases, interviewed alone	% cases, interviewed alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
0 - 2 yrs	17,366	6,794	39.1%	10,572	60.9%
3 - 5 yrs	15,917	11,227	70.5%	4,690	29.5%
6 - 8 yrs	18,942	16,916	89.3%	2,026	10.7%
9 - 11 yrs	16,876	15,486	91.8%	1,390	8.2%
12 - 14 yrs	14,170	13,257	93.6%	913	6.4%
15+ yrs	11,561	10,827	93.7%	734	6.3%
Total	94,832	74,507	78.6%	20,325	21.4%

Table 5. CMR involvement and children not interviewed alone shown by reason for not interviewing alone, 2023-2025

Reason for not interviewing child alone	# cases, not interviewed alone	% cases, not interviewed alone
Child capacity	15,708	77.3%
Child declines	2,340	11.5%
Parent declines	2,146	10.6%
Worker safety	112	0.6%
Court order unavailable	17	0.1%
Incomplete data	2	<0.1%
Total	20,325	100.0%