



Child Abuse Incidents Reported in Media for June 2023

This information is the result of the aggregation and verification of reported cases of violence against children in the media for the month of June 2023. Since January 2023, we have been sharing similar information in the form of a monthly newsletter with a range of stakeholders. We believe that sharing the information with a wider audience is to everyone's benefit.

Throughout June 2023, in Sri Lanka, 78 incidents of child abuse cases were reported in the media. Impacting a total of 80 child victims. Among the victims, 58% were female and 37% were male. Out of the abusers, 40% were individuals known to the child but not related to them, while 27% were strangers to the child's family.

The district of Kalutara reported the highest rate of child abuse, accounting for 13% of the cases and affecting 10 child victims. Gampaha and Colombo closely followed, with each representing 10% of the cases and impacting a total of 18 children.

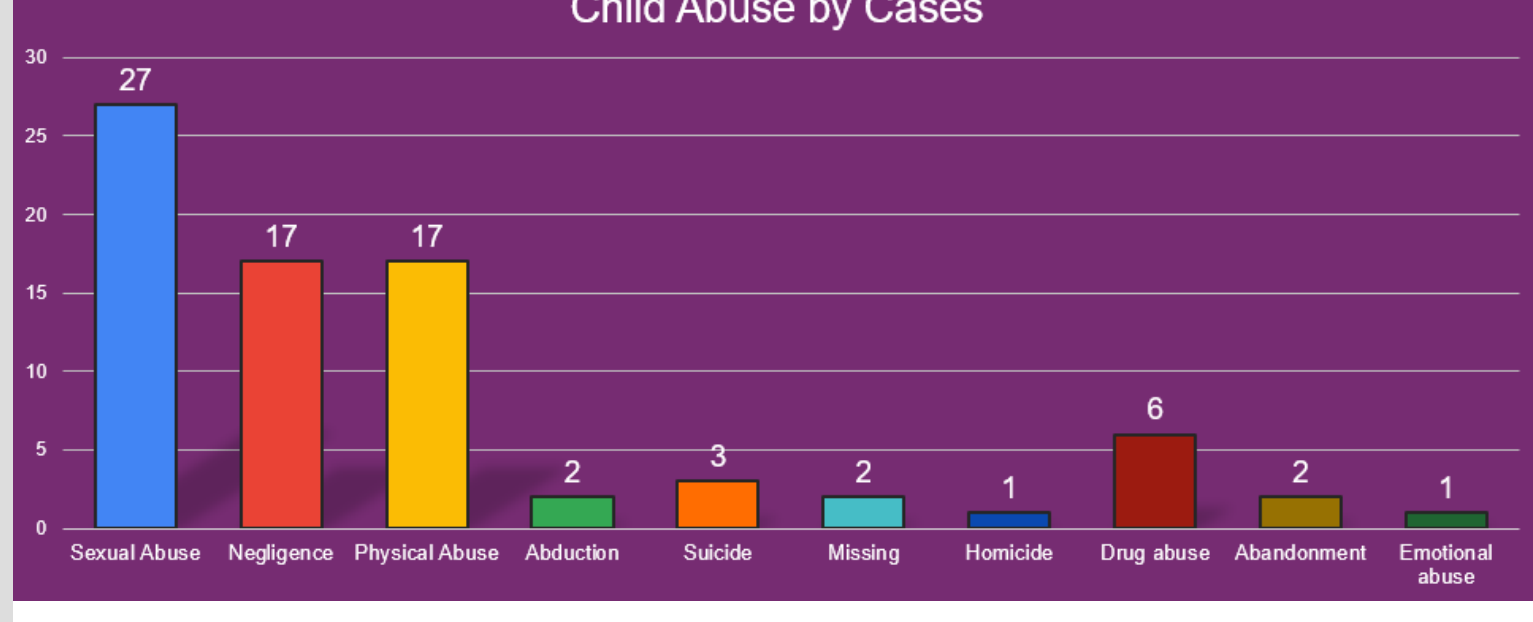
Sexual abuse remained the most prevalent form of abuse reported in the media for the sixth consecutive month, comprising 35% of the reported cases. Negligence and physical abuse each accounted for 22% of the incidents.

A concerning trend is the ongoing negligence exhibited by school caregivers, which has persisted for the past three months. Two incidents resulted in approximately 60 students being hospitalized due to food poisoning, raising questions about the safety and well-being of children in educational settings. Additionally, three mothers abandoned their children for various reasons, with two cases involving newborns.

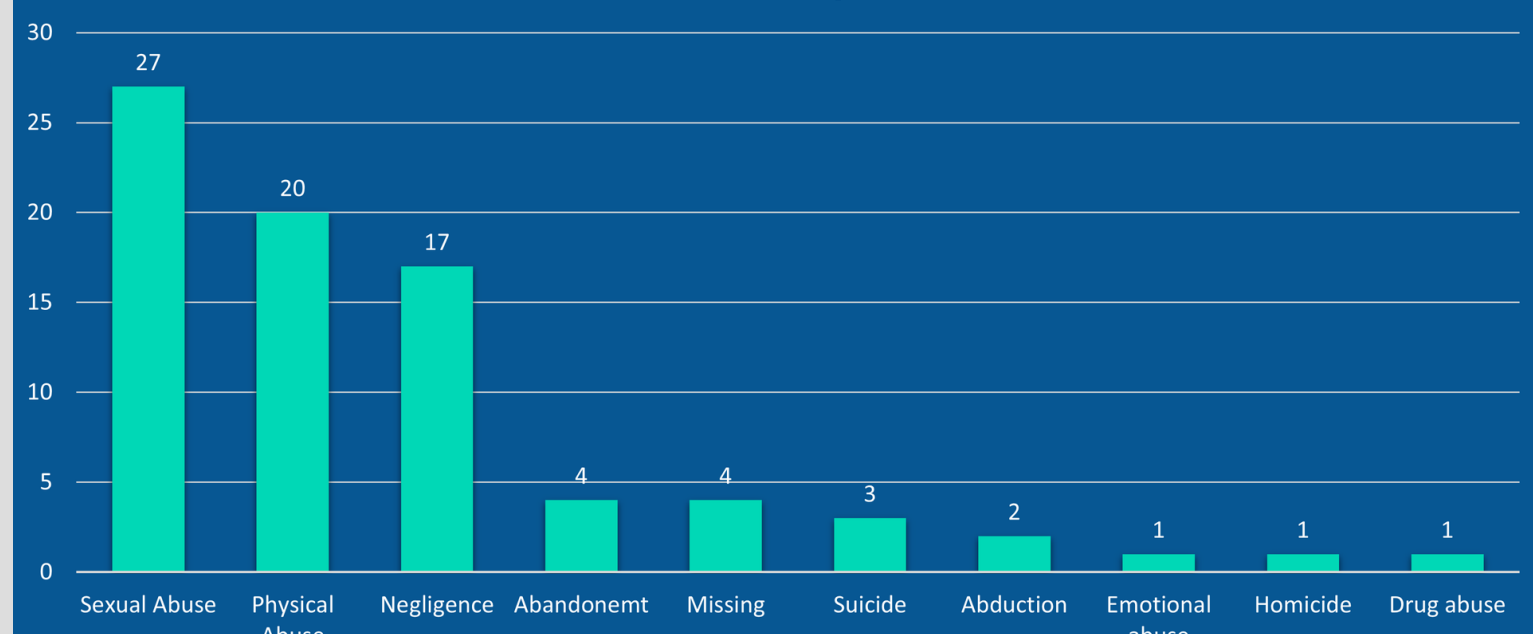
In a separate issue, authorities arrested five perpetrators in different districts with significant quantities of various drugs. It appears these individuals intended to sell these drugs to school children.

Keep reading to find out more.

Child Abuse Categories



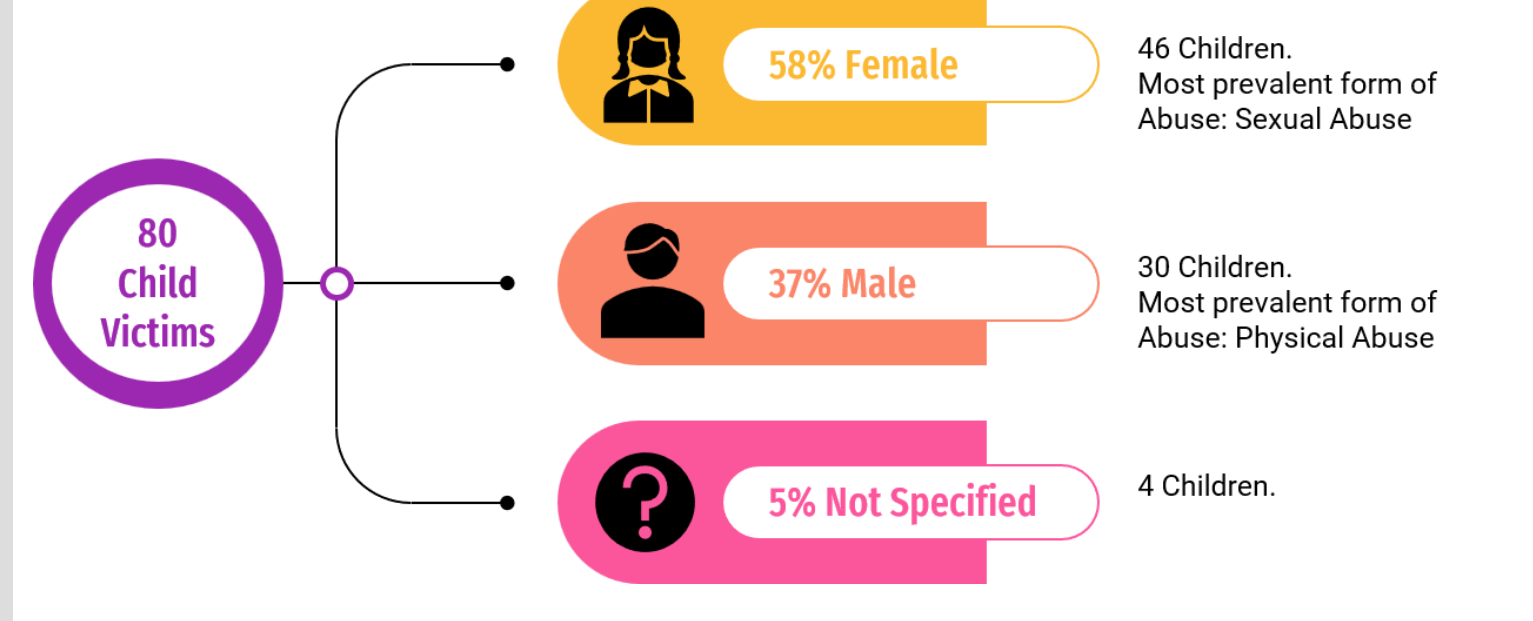
Among the 78 reported incidents, sexual abuse stands out as the most prevalent form, accounting for over a third with 27 cases. Acts of negligence and physical abuse, each 17 cases, contribute significantly to the overall picture of abuse, constituting 44% of the reported cases. There has been a decrease in reported cases involving abductions, missing incidents and abandonment compared to the previous month, with only two cases each.



80 Child victims have been reported during the month of June. There have been 27 victims accounting for 34% of sexual abuse cases. This is a decrease from the previous month's sexual abuse reporting which was at 54%. There is a rise in physical abuse and negligence causing 21% and 25% child victims respectively. Victims of Abduction, Suicide, Missing Incidents, Homicides, Drug Abuse and Abandonment. There have been 5 incidents where drug abusers have been caught by authorities in which victims weren't identified.

Note: It is important to acknowledge that not all reported cases had a specified child victim. Some incidents involved the arrests of drug sellers and allegations against teachers who generally punished children. These cases, which lack exact victim data, have not been included in the specific data provided. Additionally, there were cases of mass food poisoning that were considered as special cases and not included in the aforementioned data. These incidents of food poisoning, affecting a large number of children, require particular attention due to the potential harm and negligence involved.

Victims by Gender



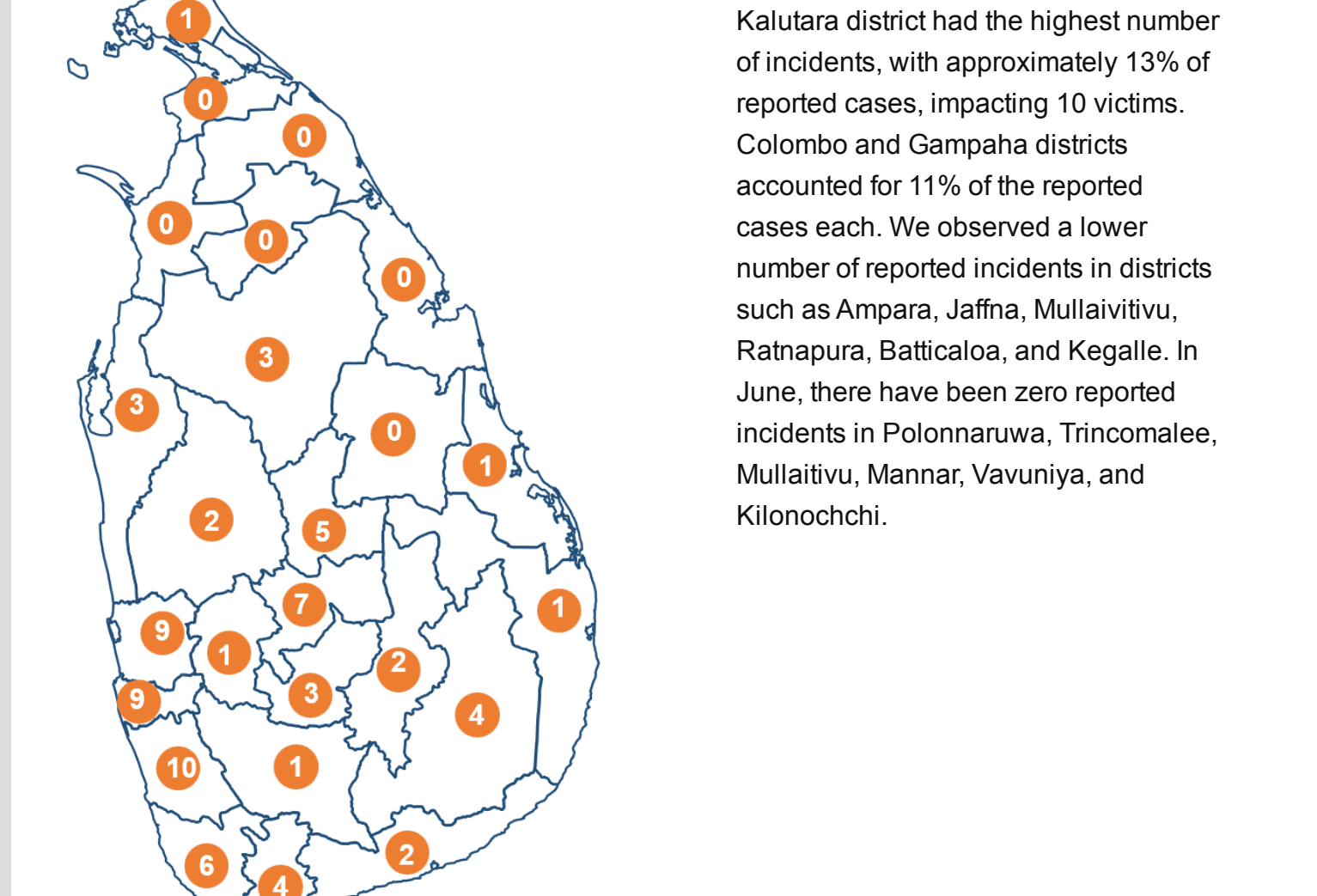
Forty-six of the victims were female children, constituting over half of the total number of victims, which accounts for 58%. The remaining 42% comprises of 30 male children who experienced abuse, along with four victims whose genders were not specified. Among the female children, sexual abuse was the most prevalent form of abuse, affecting 21 children. Among the male victims, physical abuse was found to be the most common form of abuse, with 12 children enduring such assaults.

Age Group of Victims

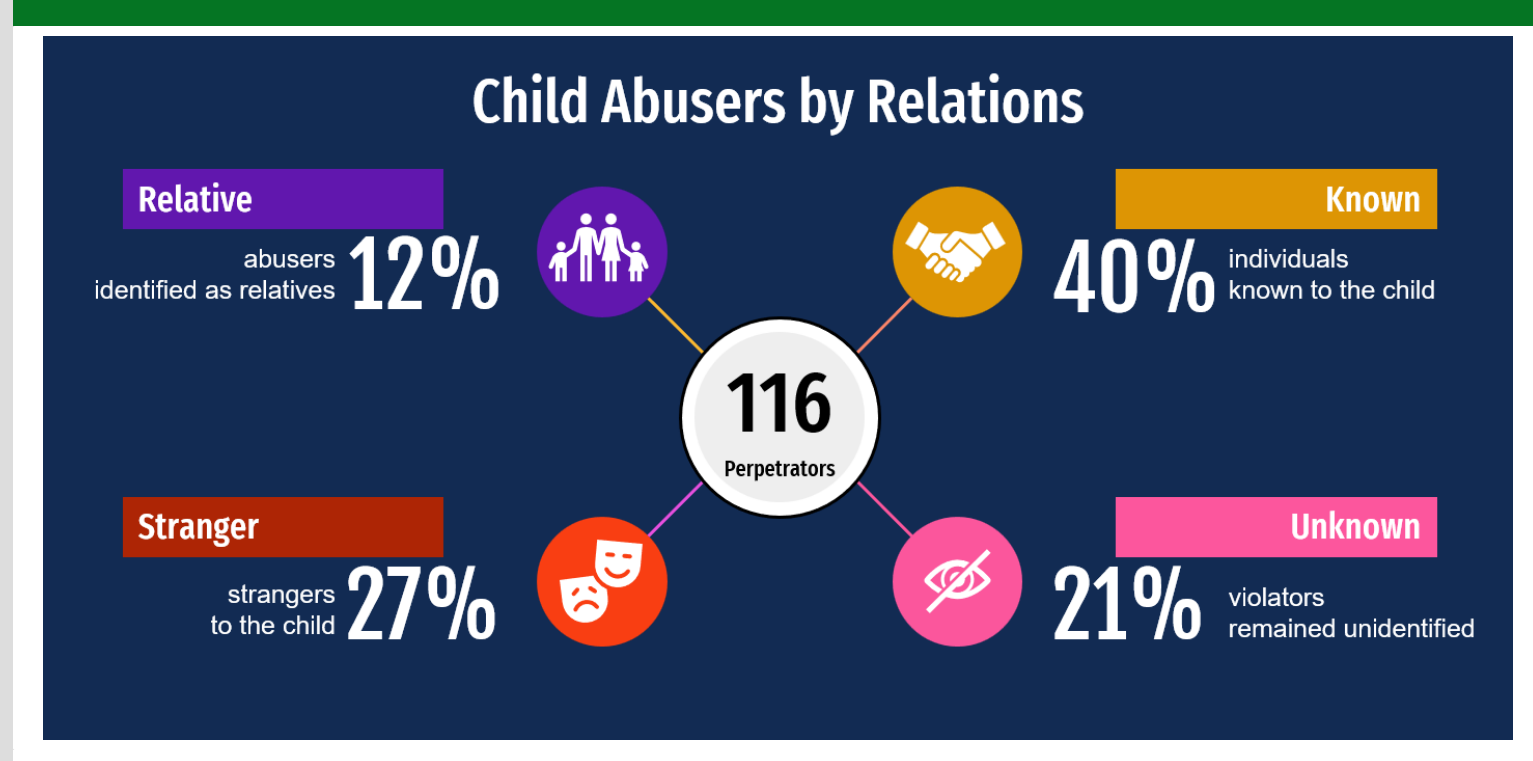


Physical abuse has emerged as the most prevalent form of abuse among teenagers, deviating from the more commonly seen sexual abuse trend. Children between the ages of 11 and 14 constitute 24% of the victims, with 19 children affected. Children aged 6 to 10 account for 18% of the victims, experiencing sexual abuse as the primary form of harm. Children aged 2 to 5 make up 11% of the victims, with 9 children affected, while infants aged 0 to 1 years old represent 6% of the total victims. In both of these age groups, negligence is the most prevalent form of abuse they are subjected to.

Geographic Distribution

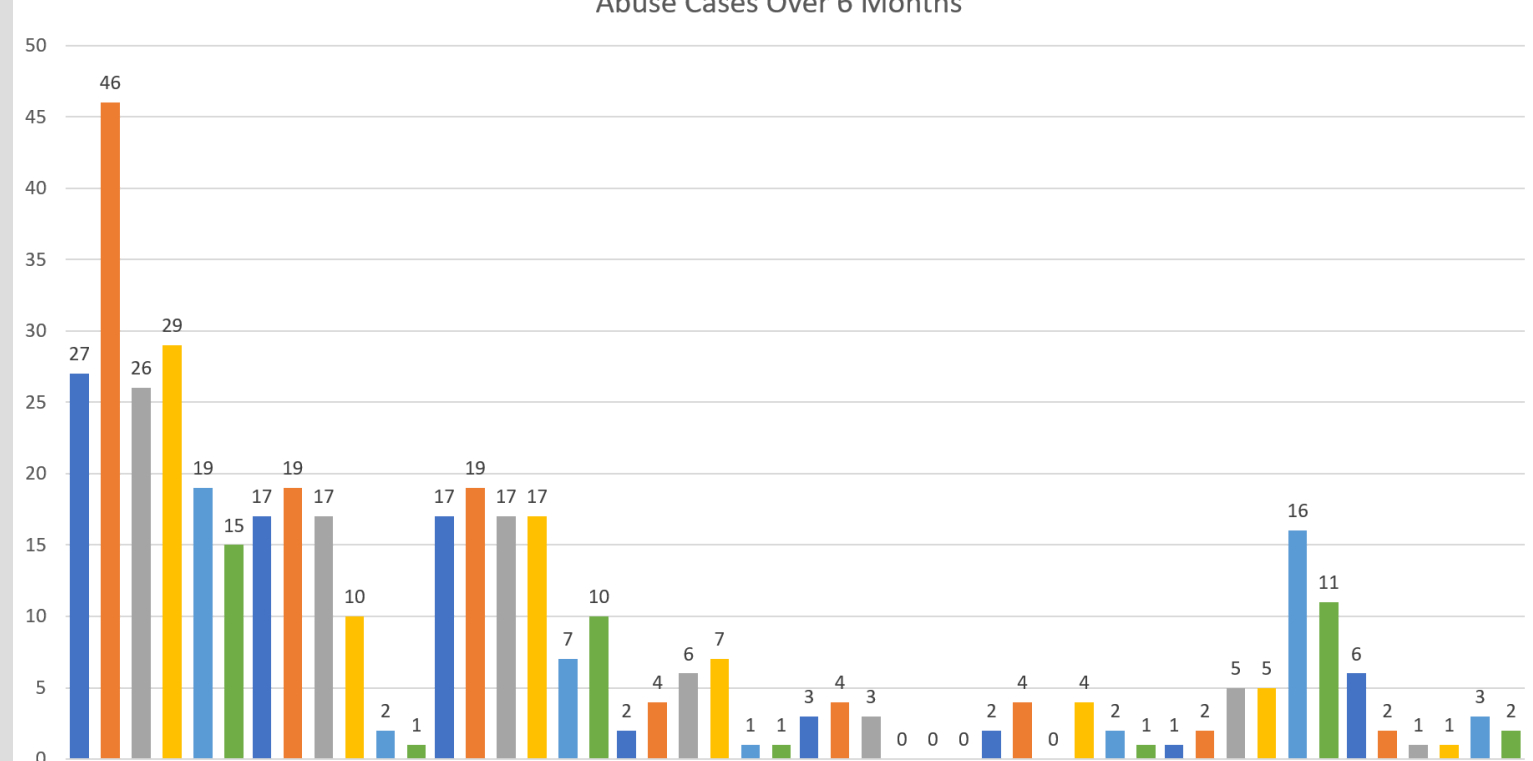


Child Abusers



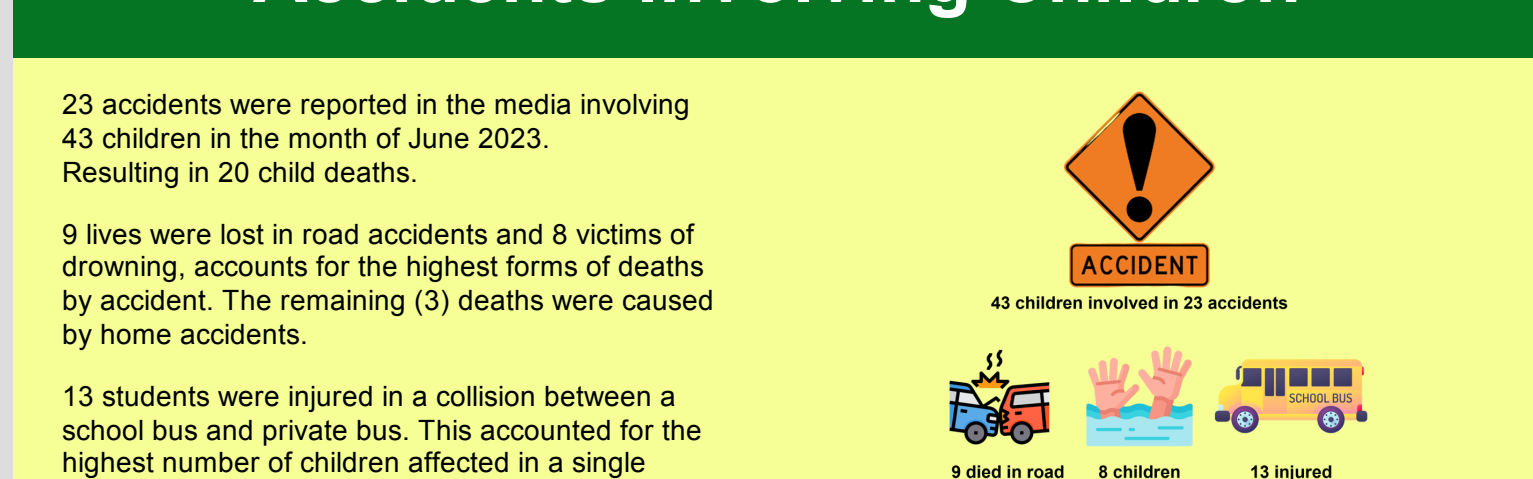
A total of 78 cases of child abuse were reported, involving 116 perpetrators. Among these perpetrators, 40% were individuals known to the child, while 12% were identified as relatives. This is concerning to note that the majority of the abusers continue to be part of the victim's immediate social circle. Additionally, 27% of the perpetrators were strangers to the child, while in 21% of the reported cases, the perpetrators remained unidentified.

Child Abuse Cases Over 6 Months

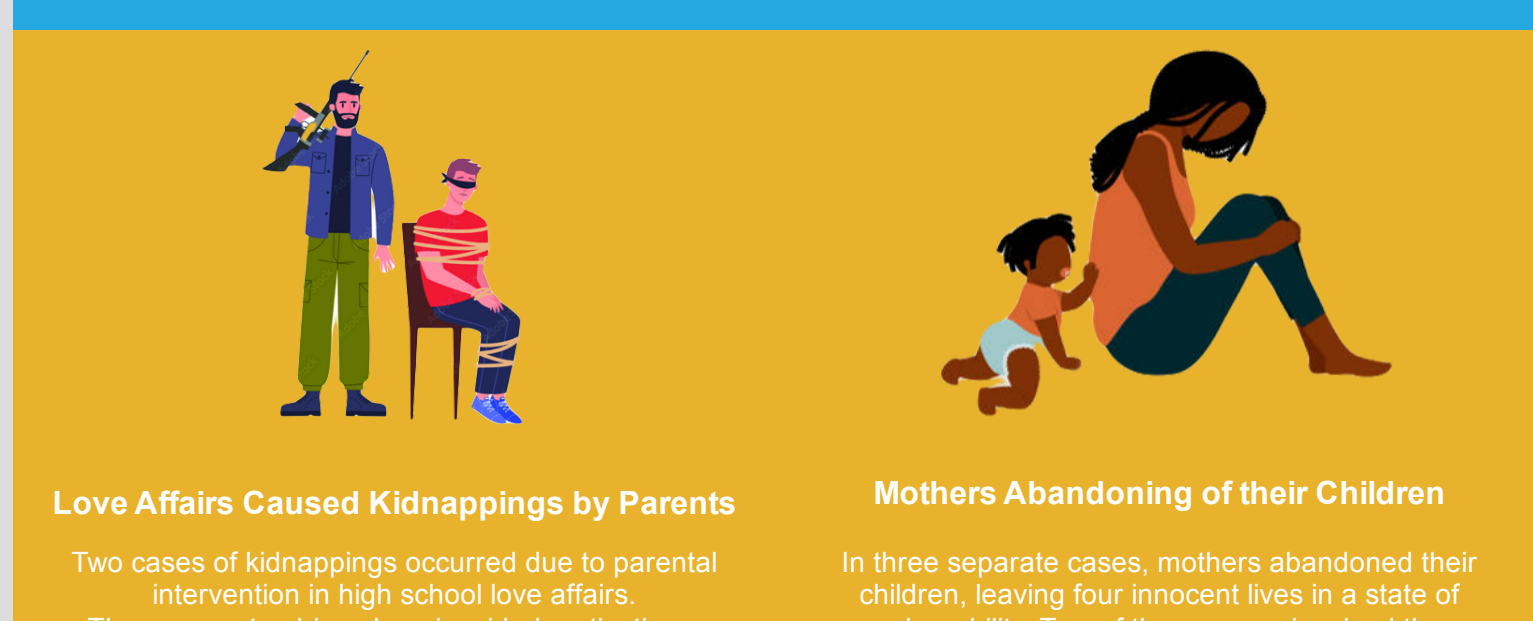
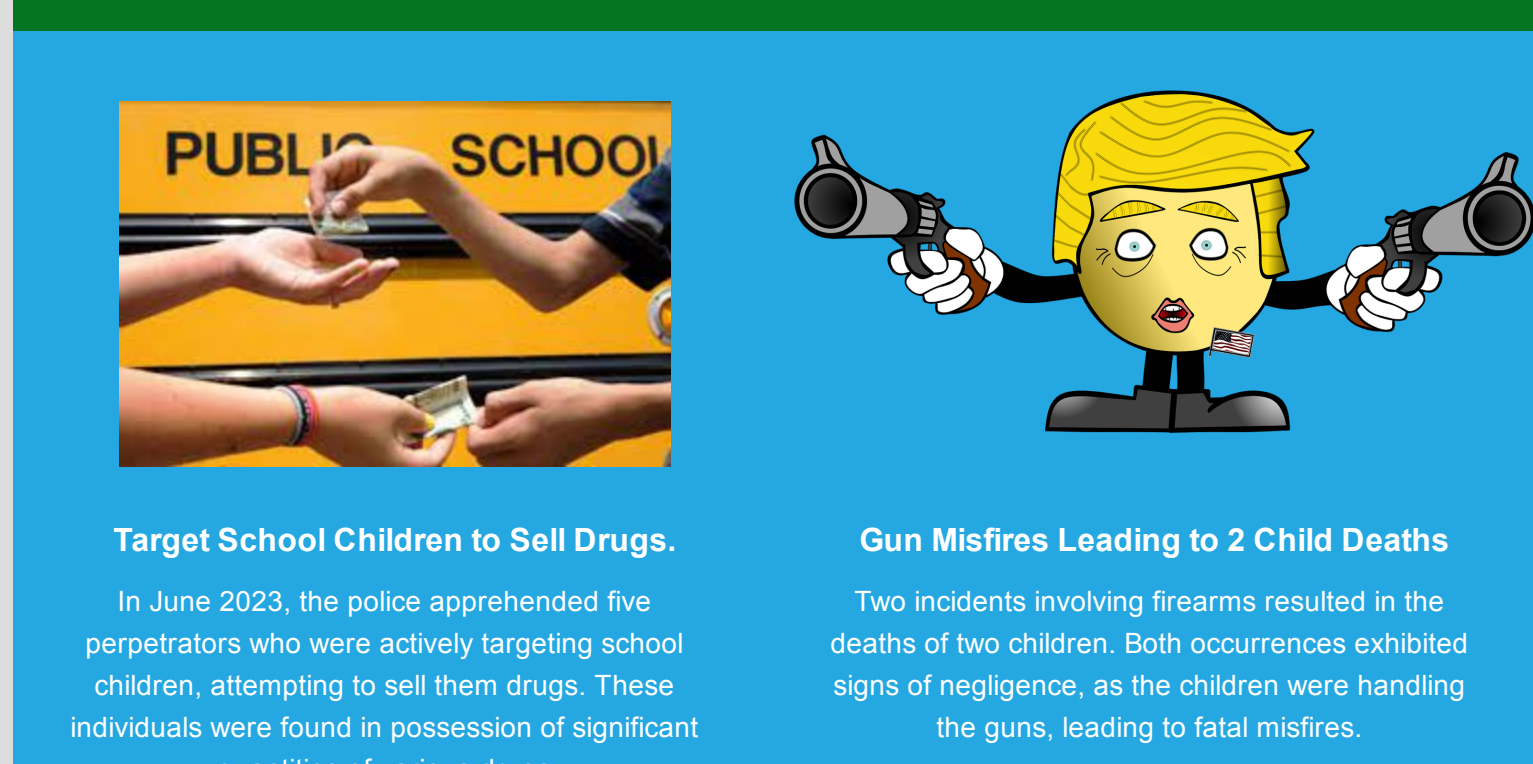


Upon immediate examination, it is evident that the number of high-profile sexual abuse cases during the month of May demands immediate attention. Notably, two high-profile incidents captured public attention. The incidents have garnered increased media coverage, shedding light on the issue of sexual exploitation. Tragically, a 16-year-old schoolgirl resorted to a desperate act, losing her life after jumping out of a third-floor window near a motel and a rail line. Additionally, a tuition master exploited the trust placed in him, sexually abusing over 12 schoolgirls who were his students. These incidents received extensive media coverage, prompting the President of Sri Lanka, who also serves as the Minister of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment of Sri Lanka, Ranil Wickremesinghe to address the matter. His response emphasized the need for stronger legislation to safeguard the well-being of children. The heightened awareness and public outcry generated by these high-profile cases likely contributed to the significant increase in reported instances of sexual exploitation in May.

Accidents Involving Children



Unusual Cases



More Cases of Mass Food Poisoning

