



Violence Against Children **Reported in the Media for June 2025**

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter, where we highlight the alarming trends of violence against children in Sri

Lanka. Our team monitors and analyses incidents from media reports, police records, and community alerts to compile verified cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Using the UNICEF International Classification of Violence Against Children, we categorise these incidents to identify patterns and advocate for systemic change. Through this newsletter, we aim to raise awareness, promote accountability and ensure a safer future for every child.

Ethical Reporting of Children's Issues



investigating online abuse. This initiative emphasised rights-based reporting to ensure media professionals uphold the dignity and safety of children. Journalists were equipped to report responsibly, with empathy and integrity, ensuring children's dignity and protection are always prioritised. Overview of Key Issues The safety and well-being of Sri Lanka's children are under severe threat. Recent reports reveal a disturbing surge in crimes, accidents and systemic failures affecting minors. From sexual exploitation to fatal negligence, the incidents underscore the urgent need for stronger child protection laws, better school safety measures and societal awareness. Below is a summary of the critical issues documented in June 2025: 1. **Sexual Abuse and Exploitation**: Minors face rape, trafficking, and digital abuse, including Al-generated sexual

public perception, legal frameworks and ethical guidelines for reporting and child-sensitive interviewing techniques and

images shared among students.

2. Violence in Schools and Homes: Children endure brutal assaults by teachers, parents, and strangers in both educational and domestic settings. 3. School Safety Failures: Negligence leads to mass food poisoning, drunk driving incidents, and students consuming

- 4. Drugs Targeting Students: Vendors are supplying narcotics to schoolchildren, with police seizing pills, cannabis, and 5. Negligence and Fatal Accidents: Children die from preventable incidents, including animal-related injuries,
- drownings, and medical neglect. 6. Mental Health and Suicides: Exam stress, domestic conflicts, and trauma drive children to self-harm and suicide.
- 7. Systemic and Societal Gaps: Delayed justice, unsafe schools, and parental neglect leave children unprotected and vulnerable.
- Type of Violent Incidents Perpetrated against children
- 16 15 13

10

15 to 18: 4 victims

Unspecified: 1 victim

Severe Outcomes

1 Child fatality

1 Attempted suicide

Multiple hospitalizations

Key Patterns Identified

Violence by authority figures in schools

Repeated abuse in homes

Victims 249 Female: 3,

Male: 3 Unspecified: 243

Severe Outcomes

4 separate food-poisoning affected 150

pupils.

12 10

Others (Community): 1 incident

Settings of Abuse

Schools: 4 incidents

Victim's Home: 3 incidents

Community: 1 incident

Third-party Home: 1 incident

Common Triggers

Missed homework

School absence

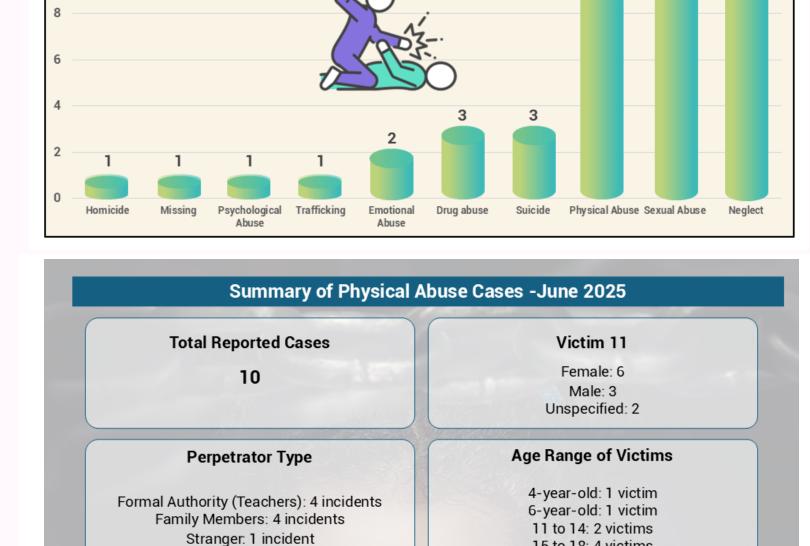
Total Reported Cases

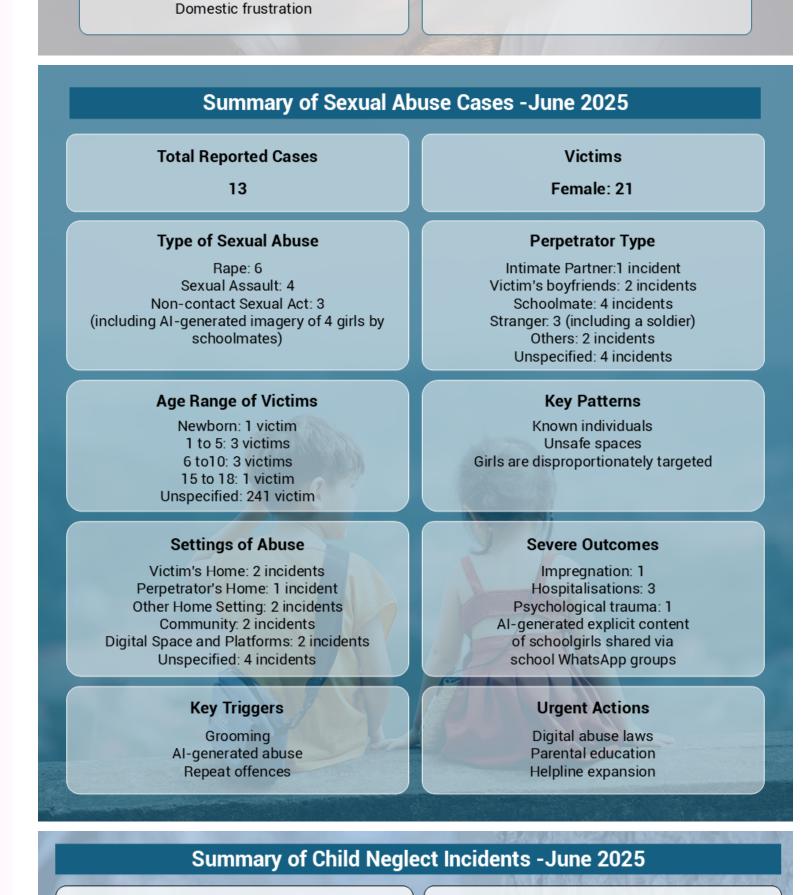
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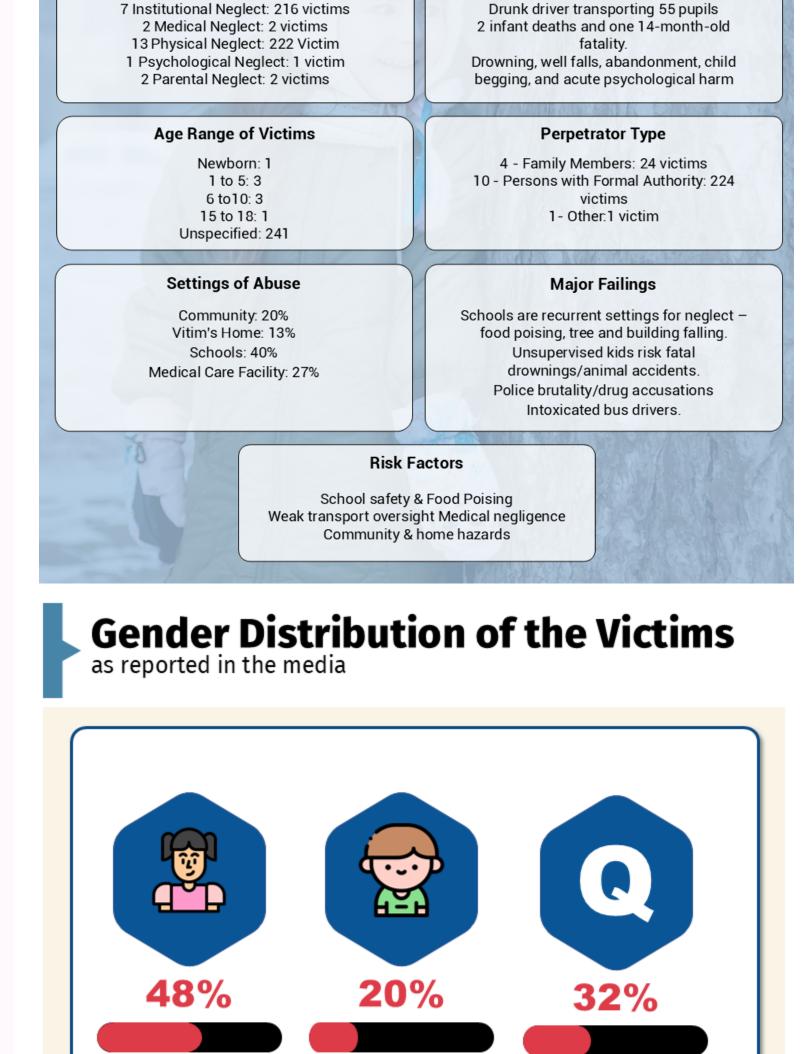
Type of Neglect

2 Abandonment: 22 victims

1 Educational Neglect: 6 victims







Age Distribution of Victims At the time of violence

1 to 5 Years

4 incidents 5

victims

sexually abused a 5-year-old

A 4-year-old girl was brutally

A 14-month-old boy died due

to medical negligence after

A 2½ year-old and a 5-yearold from a children's home

were hospitalised due to food

beaten by her pregnant

mother and father

choking on milk.

allergies.

A 51-year-old neighbour

Male

Unspecified

6 to 10 Years

4 incidents 4

victims

with poles by a man and

A 6-year-old girl died after

A 9-year-old boy died after

being dragged 900 meters

A 9-year-old girl witnessed

her father's murder, causing

by a cow's rope while

severe psychological

Unspecified

16 incidents 248 victims

poisoning from school meals. Al-generated explicit images

of female students circulated

78 students hospitalized in

Batticaloa due to food

by male classmates.

Drugs targeting students

seized (1,000+ pills, 9kg

hashish, 750g cannabis).

21 children rescued from

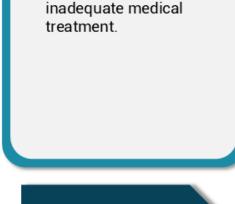
begging/selling on streets,

falling into a well.

playing

trauma.

A 6-year-old boy was beaten



11 to 14 Years

9 incidents 9 victims

Three 14-year-old girls reported sexual abuse in Nugegoda,

A 14-year-old girl was raped

and impregnated by a 53-year-

An 11-year-old boy committed

A 13-year-old girl was sexually

abused on a bus from Vavuniya

An 11-year-old boy was brutally

abused by his mother and

suicide after failing his

scholarship exam.

Borella and Nawala.

old man.

stepfather.

Newborn - Below 12

months

2 incidents caused

2 victims

abandoned in a hospital

with asthma died due to

· A newborn baby was

An 8-month-old baby

bathroom drain.

Female

15 to 18 Years 15 incidents 22 victims A 15-year-old girl was sexually assaulted by two men in Monaragala. A 16-year-old girl was attacked

by her teacher for not doing

homework, breaking her jaw.

A 17-year-old girl died after

relationship scare.

eating poisoned fruit in a failed

A 16-year-old boy was arrested

self-immolation after his father

for alleged heroin possession.

An 18-year-old boy died by

punished him for online

gaming.

Perpetrators Trend

In reported incidents

Individuals

Responsible for 23 Incidents

Teachers, relatives, and

School-Based Violence:

severely punish students

Individual teachers

Individuals run illegal

or supplying drugs to

Parents or stepparents

violently assault children .

students.

Incidents Direct Victims

Peer or Schoolmate

Where the violence occurred

Digital Space and Platforms

Other Home Setting

Third Party Home

Place of Work

Settings

200

150

50

Intimate Partner

Number 100

Sexual Abuse by Trusted Adults:

neighbours often exploit minors.

placed under guardianship. Bus driver arrested for drunk driving with 55 schoolchildren on board.

Groups

Responsible for 27 Incidents

acquaintances, like a

boyfriend's friends,

Failures by schools,

children at risk

sexual abuse

hospitals, or police put

Peer Abuse: Students exploit

technology to share explicit content of classmates,

showing a rise in digital

- schemes: selling newborns Parental and Guardian Abuse:

Perpetrator's Specific Classifications

Number of incidents perpetrated by each category

collaborate to rape minors Drug Trafficking in Schools: Networks supply drugs to students, dealers operating near schools. Institutional Negligence:

Group Sexual Abuse: Peers or

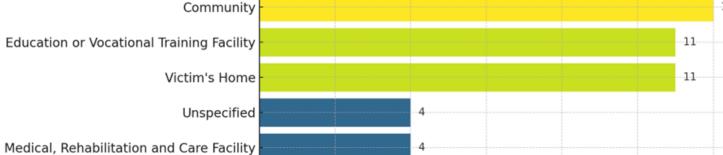
Person with Formal Authority

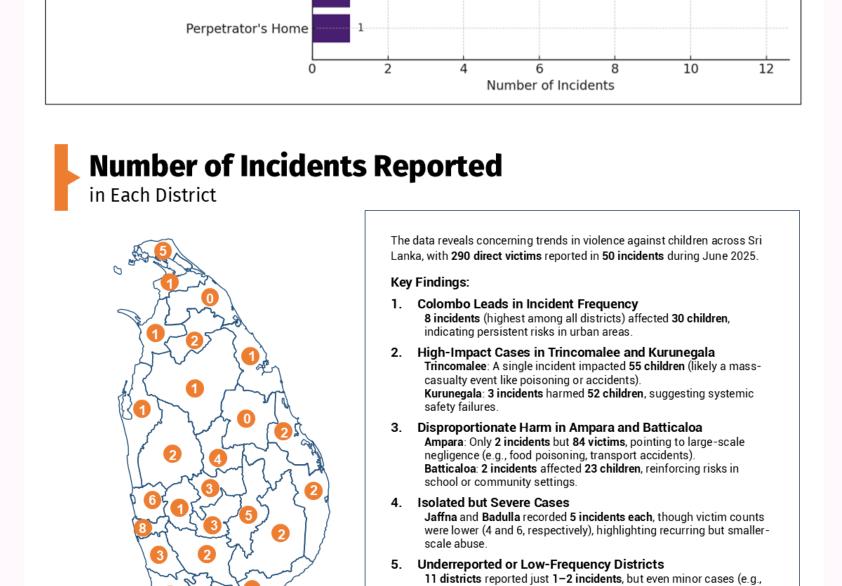
Family Member

Other

229

12





from road traffic crashes, drowning, and electrocution. Many of the affected children were teenagers, while others were as young as toddlers, highlighting the widespread and urgent need for stronger safety measures at home, in schools, and on our roads. The detailed analysis of these accidents is presented below, offering insights into the nature of the incidents, the demographics of the victims, and the settings in which these tragedies occurred.

TYPE OF ACCIDENTS

70%

An Overview of Accidents Involving Children - January to June

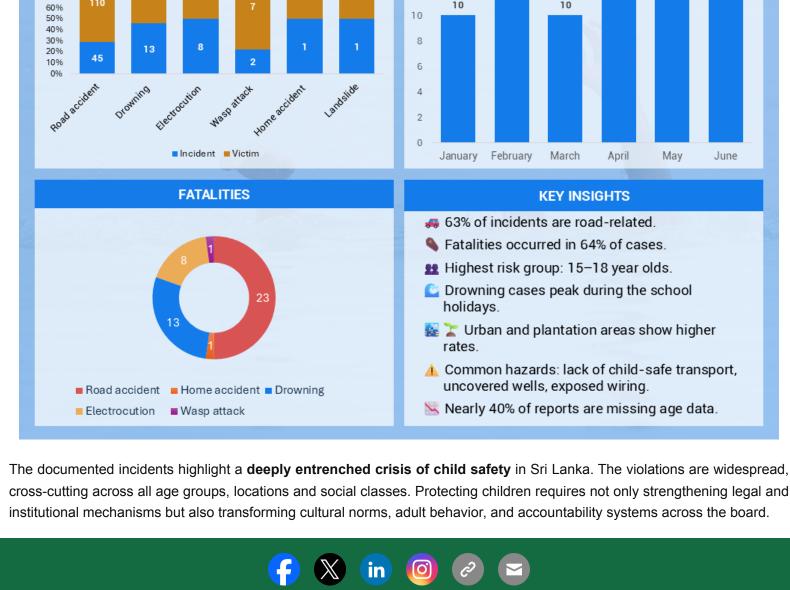
From January to June 2025, our media monitoring revealed a troubling pattern of accidents involving children across Sri Lanka. These incidents, often preventable, have led to a significant number of injuries and tragic fatalities—especially

> 13 10

MONTHLY INCIDENTS

drownings, beatings) demand attention to prevent escalation.

2 January February March April



cross-cutting across all age groups, locations and social classes. Protecting children requires not only strengthening legal and

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