



UNH Professor Wins Award For Book About Childhood Victimization

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DURHAM, N.H. - David Finkelhor, director of the University of New Hampshire Crimes against Children Research Center and professor of sociology, has been selected for the Daniel Douglas Schneider 2009 Child Welfare Book Award for his book, "Childhood Victimization: Violence, Crime and Abuse in the Lives of Young People" (Oxford University Press, 2008).

The award is part of the Pro Humanitate Literary Awards, North America's premier literary awards for the field of child welfare, given annually by the Center for Child Welfare Policy of the North American Resource Center for Child Welfare (NARCCW).

The book award is given annually to an author from the United States or Canada whose work best exemplifies the intellectual integrity and moral courage required to transcend political and social barriers to champion best practice in the field of child welfare. Finkelhor will receive his award Thursday, Jan. 29, 2009, at the 23rd Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment.

Finkelhor's book is an introduction to a proposed new integrated field of study that he calls "developmental victimology," which brings together conventional topics like child molestation, child abuse, bullying, and exposure to community violence and shows how victimization patterns change over the course of development. The book presents surprising new evidence and explanations about dramatic declines in childhood victimization that occurred since the early 1990s.

"Children are the most criminally victimized segment of the population. Over a fifth of American youth face multiple, serious 'poly-victimizations' during a single year. Yet more attention in academic research and government policy has traditionally gone to studying juvenile delinquents than juvenile victims, despite the fact that children actually appear before authorities more frequently as victims than as offenders," according to Finkelhor.

"There is considerable ignorance, misunderstanding and mythology about the realities of child victimization that can be chalked up to a field that is fragmented and understudied," he says.

Finkelhor has been studying the problems of child victimization, child maltreatment and family violence since 1977. He is well known for his conceptual and empirical work on the problem of child sexual abuse, reflected in publications such as "Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse" (Sage, 1986) and "Nursery Crimes" (Sage, 1988).

He has also written about child homicide, missing and abducted children, children exposed to domestic and peer violence and other forms of family violence. He is editor and author of 11 books and more than 150 journal articles and book chapters. In 1994, he was given the Distinguished Child Abuse Professional Award by the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children and in 2004 he was given the Significant Achievement Award from the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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