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DURHAM, N.H. – David Finkelhor, professor of sociology and director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire, has received an international award for his contributions to the field of sex offender research and treatment.

The award for significant achievement was presented Oct. 28, 2004, by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers at its annual conference in New Mexico. It is given to an individual whose work has advanced the safety and well-being of those affected by sexual abuse and the larger community. ATSA is an international organization with a membership of more than 2,100 professionals committed to the prevention of sexual assault through effective management of sex offenders.

Finkelhor has been studying the problems of child victimization, child maltreatment and family violence since 1977. He is well known for his work on the problem of child sexual abuse. In this work, he developed some of the earliest estimates about the prevalence and characteristics of child sexual abuse.

In particular, this award recognizes Finkelhor’s theoretical model of the causes for sexually abusive behavior that has proven useful for therapists and those who provide treatment for sex offenders, his work on the epidemiology of sexual abuse that has documented its frequency and highlighted some of the children most at risk, and his research evaluating the efficacy of sexual abuse prevention programs.

“You always wonder, as you work, whether any of these concepts and statistics are going to be useful,” Finkelhor said. “It is very gratifying that people doing such difficult and important work as trying to rehabilitate sex offenders think they are. This is a field where there has been a lot of unacknowledged progress.”

In 1994, Finkelhor was given the Distinguished Child Abuse Professional Award by the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. In 1998 he was awarded the Santiago Grisolia Chair by the University of Valencia in Spain. He has served on the boards of Prevent Child Abuse America, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.