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DURHAM, N.H. – Two University of New Hampshire professors doing research in the field of child abuse and exploitation have been appointed to Gov. Craig Benson's new Commission on Child Protection.

Glenda Kaufman Kantor, a research associate professor in UNH's Family Research Laboratory and Crimes against Children Research Center, and Ted Kirkpatrick, director of the university's Justiceworks program, will join law enforcement and child advocacy officials from around the state on the panel.

The commission is charged with conducting a thorough assessment of the state's current child protection resources and service delivery systems at both the state and local levels. The commission will present its findings and recommendations at the end of the year.

Kantor has more than 20 years of experience in the field of family violence and has published extensively on the subject. She is directing multiple studies, including an evaluation of the state's Division for Children, Youth and Families' model demonstration project on parental substance abuse and child maltreatment, and she is the principal investigator of a National Institute of Health study on the causes and assessment of child neglect.

"I applaud the governor's new initiative on child protection," she says. "Nothing could be more important than strengthening the state's systems to protect our children. Research and policy need to inform one another. I hope to bring my knowledge of current research on child maltreatment, systems of collaboration and prevention models to the commission's work so that we can make feasible recommendations for reform that are based on best practice models, and that are right for New Hampshire."

Over the course of his career, Kirkpatrick has served as a juvenile case worker, correctional officer in a maximum security prison for

men, trained with municipal police officers at a state academy, conducted a comprehensive study of female criminal homicide, and worked for nearly 20 years with students at risk at UNH in his role as associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

“The governor’s commission represents an impressive commitment in the state to the wellbeing of New Hampshire’s children,” Kirkpatrick says. “It is an honor to serve with the distinguished commission members that the governor has assembled. New Hampshire does very well in its current child protection practices. The commission will recommend possible ways for us to do even better. There is much work to be done by year’s end, and we are all deeply committed to the task.”

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