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*UNH Media Relations*

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## Media Relations

# No Large Recession Effects On Child Maltreatment So Far, New UNH Analysis Says

January 7, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. -- New national child abuse statistics for 2009 show additional declines in sexual abuse, a small increase of child maltreatment fatalities, and flat rates for physical abuse and neglect, according to an analysis of federal child maltreatment data by the Crimes against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire.

"Many of us worried about possible large increases in 2009 due to worsening economic conditions," said David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes against Children Research Center and one of the analysts. "But so far the impact of the recession on child maltreatment does not appear too dire."

"It was particularly encouraging that neglect did not increase," Finkelhor said. Neglect is considered the form of maltreatment most sensitive to economic conditions and its related stressors.

The 3 percent increase in fatalities is worrisome, according to the report, but the increase was very geographically localized. Almost all of it could be accounted for by an increase of 50 fatalities in Texas.

The 5 percent decline in sexual abuse from 2008 to 2009 caps a trend dating from 1992 during which cases have declined by 61 percent to a new low of 65,700.

Finkelhor said that the current recession has been unusual in other ways as well. Overall crime declined in 2009 and early 2010, in spite of fears that economic setbacks would lead to more crime. He believes that the unexpected trends may be the benefit of established prevention and intervention efforts that are having ongoing effects.

Created in 1998, the UNH Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) works to combat crimes against children by providing high-quality research and statistics to the public, policy makers, law enforcement personnel, and other child welfare practitioners. CCRC is concerned with research about the nature of crimes including child abduction, homicide, rape, assault, and physical and sexual abuse as well as their impact. Associated with the CCRC is an internationally recognized group of experts who have published numerous books and articles concerning the incidence and impact of violence against children. Visit the center online at <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/index.html>.

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*Editors and Reporters: The UNH Crimes against Children Research Center's analysis is available at [http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/Updated\\_Trends\\_in\\_Child\\_Maltreatment\\_2009.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/Updated_Trends_in_Child_Maltreatment_2009.pdf).*

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