

UNH News Release: National Expert Available to Provide Commentary During Child Sexual Abuse Trial of Former Penn State Coach Jerry Sandusky



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National Expert Available to Provide Commentary During Child Sexual Abuse Trial of Former Penn State Coach Jerry Sandusky

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DURHAM, N.H. -- David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes against Children Research Center and professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire, is available to provide expert commentary during the child sexual abuse trial of former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky.

Sandusky is scheduled to face 52 criminal counts related to allegations of child sexual abuse that span 15 years. His trial starts June 5, 2012.

According to Finkelhor, trials in cases like this one generally have a positive social influence in society.

“Sexual abuse of boys is still disproportionately under reported for many reasons, including the stigmas around being a victim and the taint of homosexuality. But cases like this that show boys coming forward do empower other male victims to disclose as well. That was one of the lessons we learned from the clergy abuse era,” Finkelhor said.

“On the other hand, one of the things that keeps victims from coming forward is the fear that they will be badly treated by the justice system and the publicity. It will be interesting to see how the victims are treated in this case regarding the

amount of focus on them, the allegations by the defense, and the steps that the judge and court take to deal with confidentiality. Many other countries have much stronger laws to protect victims from publicity than we have in the United States," he said.

A nationally recognized expert who has published extensively in the field of child abuse treatment, prevention, and developmental victimology, Finkelhor served on the Youth Protection Advisory Board for the Boy Scouts of America, and Cardinal Bernard Law's Commission for the Protection of Children. He also was a consultant to the National Catholic Risk Retention Group in developing abuse prevention strategies for Catholic dioceses around the country.

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 *Childhood Victimization* (Oxford University Press, 2008), *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.

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PHOTO

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/finkelhor.jpg>

David Finkelhor, director of the UNH Crimes against Children Research Center.

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