

Media Relations

September 19, 2012

MEDIA ADVISORY: National Child Abuse Expert Available to Discuss New Department of Justice Violent Crime Report



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

DURHAM, N.H. – Prof. David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire and authority on prevention of child abuse, is available to comment on a new report from the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Statistics released Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2012, on the prevalence of violent crime among households with children from 1993 to 2010.

Finkelhor can be reached at 603-767-1010 and david.finkelhor@unh.edu.

According to Finkelhor, the [new report](#) from the Bureau of Justice Statistics showing a 68 percent decline since 1993 in children’s direct and indirect violent crime exposure is the latest good news about children and crime.

Other recent reports have highlighted major declines in sexual abuse and caregiver physical abuse. Surveys have shown that school safety has improved dramatically. Bullying, in spite of the new attention it has been receiving, has been on the wane. Other related indicators of child well-being also have improved. Teen suicide has declined and suicidal thinking has abated. Teenage pregnancy and births are at historic lows, and there are fewer youth engaged in various forms of risky sexual behavior including early intercourse and multiple sexual partners.

“Some advocates looking at the improving trends worry that policy makers are going to use them as a justification for ‘mission accomplished’ cuts and closures. But that’s not the inevitable script. Policy makers like to see returns on investment. Showing progress can be a way of arguing for more support. And we are far from out of the woods. The United States has levels of youth crime, abuse, and risky sexual behavior that outpace most developed and many not-so-developed countries. There’s a lot of work yet to do to make it safe for our children, but we should take some pride in what we have achieved.

A nationally recognized expert who has published extensively in the field of child abuse treatment, prevention, and developmental victimology, 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.

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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Photo:

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

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

-30-

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