

UNH to Establish New Sibling Aggression and Abuse Initiative

Wednesday, October 19, 2022



DURHAM, N.H.—According to national surveys, one-third of children have been physically assaulted by a brother or a sister in the past year. To help reduce its prevalence and impact, the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire is establishing a new Sibling Aggression and Abuse Research and Advocacy Initiative (SAARA) that will work to change the perception that sibling aggression and abuse is not serious as well as provide guidance on how to prevent its occurrence.

“Sibling aggression is the most common form of family violence,” said Corinna Tucker, senior project director of SAARA. “While peer bullying is widely recognized, most people do not realize that more children are victimized by a brother or sister.”

This first-of-its-kind initiative will be funded over five years by an



MEDIA RELATIONS

LATEST NEWS

UNH Hosts Pulitzer Prize Winning Historian and JFK Scholar Nov. 14

October 31, 2022

Alumnus Alex Freid Named UNH Social Innovator of the Year

October 27, 2022

UNH to Establish New Sibling Aggression and Abuse Initiative

October 19, 2022

UNH Receives Grant to Study Atlantic Cod, Common Terns in Warming Gulf of Maine

October 18, 2022

UNH Study Finds One-in-Six US Children Experience Online Sexual Abuse

October 14, 2022

award of more than \$900,000 from the Louis and Anne Abrons Foundation. It will aim to reduce sibling aggression and abuse by creating user-friendly information and tools for the public and professionals on its [website](#) and at conferences and community educational forms. The intended audience includes educators, human service workers, physicians and mental health providers as well as parents. The initiative will also help to highlight the experiences of sibling abuse survivors and assist in their advocacy efforts.

[VIEW ALL](#) 

 [SUBSCRIBE
TO UNH TODAY](#)

The researchers say that each year children of all ages—from toddlers to teenagers—experience sibling aggression in the form of hitting, biting, kicking, name calling, intimidation, harassment and destruction of personal items as well as sexual abuse. Roughly 4% are attacked with a weapon. While some of these incidences are minor, many are ongoing, injurious and terrifying. Studies show that all kinds of sibling abuse are linked to poorer mental and physical health and problematic interpersonal relationships with parents, peers and romantic partners. The initiative will also build a network of researchers, advocates and experts in relevant organizations in the fields of child and family welfare, parent education, pediatrics and mental health.

“There are no other organizations or websites specifically focused on the topic of sibling abuse,” said David Finkelhor, professor of sociology and director of UNH’s Crimes Against Children Research Center. “One of the roles we have tried to serve over the years is to draw attention and research to many of the less visible threats to children, like day care abuse, internet crimes, exposure to domestic violence and now sibling abuse.”

“We’re proud to support such a significant and much needed effort and look forward to seeing the difference the UNH initiative will make for many children, adult survivors and their families,” said Leslie Abrons, family representative for the Louis and Anne

Abrons Foundation. “The program will shine a light on an overlooked problem and offer professionals and parents the much-needed tools to identify and treat those of all ages who are suffering in silence.”

The [University of New Hampshire](#) inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top-ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. A Carnegie Classification R1 institution, UNH partners with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, and received \$260 million in competitive external funding in FY21 to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Media Contact

[Robbin Ray '82](#) | Communications and Public Affairs |

robbin.ray@unh.edu | 603-862-4864



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.

The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).

Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#) [CONTACT US](#)



UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234
Copyright © 2022 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)