

## **National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMART)**

The principal goal of NISMART is to design and test data collection methodologies that result in accurate national statistics on the number and characteristics of missing children reported to law enforcement. NISMART responds to the 1984 Missing Children's Assistance Act (Pub. L. 98-473) which requires OJJDP to conduct national incidence studies triennially *"to determine for a given year the actual number of children reported missing each year, the number of children who are victims of abduction by strangers, the number of children who are the victims of parental kidnappings, and the number of children who are recovered each year."*

In preparation for NISMART-4, Westat and the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children's Research Center (CCRC), are designing and pilot-testing a more efficient methodology for collecting national data on the child victims of stereotypical kidnappings (LES-SK) and family abductions (FA) known to law enforcement, and other types of missing children (MC), and returned children.

In conducting its design work, the study team convened expert panels to discuss missing children definitional issues, survey instrument content, how agency-reporting practices may affect the taking and classification of missing children reports and, importantly, the utility of survey items to the field.

**Funder: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice**

**Project Director: Michele Harmon, Ph.D.**

**UNH partners: David Finkelhor, Ph.D. and Kimberly Mitchell, Ph.D.**

Related publications

<http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/missing/papers.html>