Document Title:	**National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4) Law Enforcement Survey – Family Abduction (LES-FA) Pilot Study Report**
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National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4)

Law Enforcement Survey – Family Abduction (LES-FA)
Pilot Study Report

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Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4)

Law Enforcement Survey – Family Abduction (LES-FA) Pilot Study Report

This report is in fulfillment of Deliverable 32b Draft Report on LES-FA Pilot Findings.

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Law Enforcement Survey – Family Abduction (LES-FA) pilot study was to assess the potential for gathering data directly from law enforcement agencies and investigators about the incidence and dynamics of FA episodes. This was a departure from previous NISMARTs, which gathered family abduction information from a nationally representative household survey. However, falling participation rates and climbing expense to such surveys suggested the need for a redesign. Also of consideration was the possibility that getting the information from law enforcement agencies (LEAs) would allow more analysis and understanding of how law enforcement responds to and tries to resolve these cases.

Family abduction was defined, consistent with previous NISMARTs, as: A biological, adoptive, step- or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a parent**;** took or kept a child in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation rights, and there was:

> An attempt to <u>conceal</u> the taking or whereabouts of a child with the intent to prevent return, contact or visitation.
> <u>Transport or intent to transport</u> a child from the state for the purpose of making recovery more difficult.
> Intent to <u>prevent contact</u> with a child on an indefinite basis.
> Intent to <u>affect custodial privileges</u> indefinitely.

2. METHODOLOGY

There were three stages to the data collection for the LES-FA pilot study:

Stage 1: *Testing instrument and data collection instructions with a small number of LEAs who could provide critical comment on their challenge following instructions and completing the survey.*

We approached five agencies, asking each to identify specific family abduction cases investigated by the agency in 2019. To help in the identification of these cases we asked each agency to search its case management system for codes related to "*abduction"* and "*family offense"* and to conduct free text searches for the word "*custody."* Additional eligibility criteria included:

1.   Involvement of a juvenile ages 0-17,
2.   Involvement of a family perpetrator, and
3.   The removal or detention of a child without permission.

Agencies were instructed to keep track of any problems and questions encountered during their search. Respondents could write down their observations and questions at the end of the screener survey (Section F) and were told we would follow up with a brief phone interview to ask about their experience with the process. We also asked the National Center on Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) to search their data bases for cases from the cooperating agencies, as validation exercise.

Each agency was sent an invitation package which included (1) a cover letter, (2) the mail survey screener with glossary of terms, and (3) frequently asked questions.

Stage 2: *Testing the survey procedures for the recruitment and response of agencies to mail out requests for participation in the data collection effort.*

Recruitment letters were sent to 50 agencies chosen at random from the National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators, limiting the choice to agencies that had not been recruited for the earlier LES-SK (Stereotypical Kidnapping) study to avoid over-burden.

The recruitment period ran from February 19, 2021 to August 31, 2021, over six months, although all but one agency responded in the first five months.

Stage 3: *Testing the recruitment and performance of investigators via two data collection options (online and phone interview) for providing information on specific cases.*

Investigators were sent links to questionnaires about cases listed by their agencies; these were followed up by phone calls. All participating investigators were debriefed by phone or questionnaire about their experience in data collection.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Stage 1

The goal for Stage 1 was to locate five law enforcement agencies that could carry out the proposed search for cases and identify any problems encountered in the search and identification activities. We looked for agencies that had some interest and investment in the study goals by consulting three sources: 1) the NCMEC, which works closely with local LEAs on missing children cases, 2) state-level missing children assistance agencies (MCAA), that also work closely with local LEAs, and 3) the National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC) of Fox Valley Technical College that provides missing children recovery training courses for law enforcement.

A total of 29 referrals came from the sources we solicited: 18 from NCJTC, six from MCAAs, and five from NCMEC.

We chose the first five agencies to respond positively to our invitation. After they conducted the requested search for FA cases, we debriefed the respondent in charge of the search.

The results from the five agencies: were as follows:

LEA 1 (Pop: 507K)

- Result: One qualifying case.
- Time taken: 1 hour.
- Ease of completion: 5 out of 5 – very easy.

The search for cases took one hour. The respondent rated the process as a 5 out of 5 – very easy.

Their search focused on the terms *"abduction"* and *"custodial interference."* The main problem encountered was a discrepancy between the FAQ section of the provided materials and the questionnaire instructions on whether to search for "custody interference" in addition to "abduction." [We resolved the discrepancy.]

The biggest issue this agency ran into was their belief they had only a few days to compile the data. [We had asked them after a lengthy delay to complete the search in a week. They did not ask for more time.] As such, the timeline made it difficult for them to gather all the relevant data and then forward it on and/or to ask clarification questions.

Working under their perceived timeline, they did not have a chance to clarify which qualifying criteria likely played a role in the data they provided. They thought there was a potential for more cases if they had had more time. The timeline also played a role in not asking other sergeants if they could think of cases that would apply just in case the records review missed something.

LEA 2 (Pop: 110K)

- Result: One qualifying case.
- Time taken: less than an hour.
- Ease of completion: 4 out of 5 – somewhat easy.

This agency did not have the technical ability to do free term search in their data base. Consequently, the contact person searched on the terms *"kidnapping"* and *"custodial interference,"* crime classification codes build into the system. A total of 43 cases were identified; many of which were rapes and partner and family member assaults. Some of the custodial inference did not actually involve children. There was one case of unlawful restraint of a child due to domestic violence. Only four of the cases ultimately involved a child, and three did not meet the study eligibility of family abduction. Some of these children were not even taken.

The analyst mentioned two cases where the ascertainment of "intent" was challenging ("intent to keep permanently" was one criterion that made an episode qualify as a family abduction.)

In one case a stepfather with unlawful custody had hit the child and did not want the child to leave; it was unclear whether this rose to the level of unlawful restraint. This case was deemed to not qualify.

In another case, the state placed a child in the temporary custody of a non-parent and this temporary custodian left, together with the birth mother who took the child briefly. The birth mother quickly returned the child and intent was not to keep indefinitely. This case was deemed to not qualify.

LEA 3 (Pop: 186K)

- Result: One qualifying case.
- Time taken: 2 hours.
- Ease of completion: 5 out of 5 – very easy.

The search took two hours to complete. The respondent liked the form and rated the ease of process as a 5 out of 5 – very easy.

This agency searched for cases listed in the data base under the crime statutes about kidnapping, abduction, and child custody interference, and did not have the capacity to search for free text. Most of the qualifying cases came from the *"child custody interference"* search. There were some borderline cases: 10 custody dispute cases did not qualify and one that did. She characterized the non-qualifying cases as couples who had a conflict over the understanding of the custody agreement. She thought our criteria for searching were helpful enough. For follow-up, she provided her own name for more information under the qualifying episode, because the investigating officer who wrote the report was no longer with the department.

LEA 4 (State Police LEA, Pop: 8.67 Million)

- Result: No qualifying cases.
- Time taken: 1.5 hours.
- Ease of completion: 4.5 out of 5 – somewhat/very easy.

She searched under statute 18.2-47, subsection A (Any perpetrator abduction and kidnapping), subsection D (parental kidnapping), and statute 18.49 (child kidnapping for prostitution) (see below). A total of 14 cases were identified in the search under the first statute, but none under the other two statutes. In 14 cases this responding LEA was not the primary investigating unit but was serving a secondary function, such as serving warrants for arrest of the perpetrator in a highway stop. She searched two systems: (1) the agency case records and (2) the IBR (Incidence Based Reporting) system for the state under the category of *"kidnapping and family perpetrator."*

This LEA, a state police agency, had jurisdiction all over the state, and sometimes the local agencies asked for help so the state police then became the primary investigating agency. More typically, they are only in an assistive role. There was one qualifying case for 2018, but none for 2019. This result surprised the respondent, who subsequently reached out to another branch of their agency, the criminal records exchange, and asked them to double-check her search by pulling arrests under the statutes indicated above. This was to make sure there was no "typo" or mistake in her classification. No additional cases were found.

LEA 5 (Pop: 362K)

- Result: 11 qualifying cases.
- Time taken: 25-30 hours over 3-4 days.
- Ease of completion: 5 - very easy.

This jurisdiction was considerably larger than the other participating agencies. Their search took 3-4 days to pull together with a number of staff. The analyst estimated the total time spent at about 25-30 hours.

They used the following criminal codes to pull data fitting this survey eligibility:
- Custody Dispute (4 cases)
- Recovered Missing Juvenile (3 cases)
- Child Abuse (1 cases)
- Child Neglect (3 cases)

This agency also used free text searches on key words within their record management system (RMS). Below were the free text search term results for 2019:
- *Abduction* = 44 cases
- *Family offense* = 2 cases
- *Custody* = This term yielded too many results since police are always taking people into custody.

The initial search began with any child victim cases handled by the department's special victims unit (SVU); employing search terms: *"juvenile," "custody dispute," "conceal child," "prevent contact," "abduction," "family offense."* Other terms entered in the survey -- *"child abuse," "child neglect," "custody dispute,"* -- represent the statutory or crime classification of the system where the case was located.

To get to the 11 cases that were included they had to read through 30-50 total cases. He said the classification process was straightforward, and he did not find it confusing.

The respondent offered an example of an ambiguous case: a runaway to a different parent.

The agency declined to provide contact information for the investigators. Had we taken the additional step of requesting case details, they would likely give us the written report with the officers' name redacted.

NCMEC Follow-up

We asked the NCMEC to search their case files from 2019 for family abductions from the five agencies in our Stage 1 sample. NCMEC only had cases from one of the sample agencies: LEA 5. NCMEC found four cases in their files for 2019 from LEA 5. However, these NCMEC cases did not overlap with any cases we had received from the LEA 5 search. When re-interviewed to understand the discrepancy, the respondent from LEA 5 confirmed that these NCMEC cases were likely qualifying family abductions. He believed that they were missed because they were classified under other more serious crime categories.

The following are the discrepant cases:

2019-Case 1: Classified as a home invasion robbery with charges listed as "Armed burglary of occupied dwelling" and "State statute aggravated assault with a firearm." Juveniles were removed from the house due to the arrested individual being an ex-partner of the parental guardian. Two children were involved. Charge was home invasion and aggravated assault with firearm. Ex-husband ransacked the place and took the children. It was listed as a more serious charge than family abduction.

2019-Case 2 & Case 3: These were duplicate cases, each occurring on 6/6/2019 at the same locale. Two kids were taken into DCF custody. Neighbors said they were with the father in violation of custody. Perhaps the involvement of child protection meant that the crime was not logged with the police.

2019-Case 4: In this case, the child was missing from [home city] and was located in [another state]. No abduction was mentioned in the documents. Charges that were lodged as "Moving or concealing a minor pending custody proceedings." It was the only statute violation listed, and for some reason this did not come up in the custody dispute or family offense search.

These omissions raise serious concerns about the adequacy of the search categories in the instructions.

In addition, none of the 11 qualifying cases from LEA 5 was in the NCMEC files. This is less concerning because NCMEC gets notified of FA cases primarily at times when help is needed in recovery, so many qualifying FAs do not get reported to NCMEC

Stage 1 Conclusions

1. Agencies have an easy time finding cases with our instructions and our survey form.
2. The work to complete the form does not take long for small to medium size agencies. It may take considerably longer in large agencies.
3. It is possible that searching on terms like *"family abduction"* and *"custodial interference"* misses cases that would qualify under our definitions. It would be good to add some additional search terms like *"concealing a child"* or *"transporting a child."*
4. There are clearly some differences to consider between agencies whose systems allow free search terms and those who have to search for pre-established terms like *"family abduction"* or *"custodial interference."*

Stage 2

The goal of Stage 2 was to test the full recruitment letters and protocols with a variety of agencies of different sizes and geographies to see if they would respond and provide the study with in-scope cases of family abduction. (See Appendix A for the Screener Survey Invitation to Agencies, and Appendix B for the Agency Screener Survey.)

Table 1. LES-FA Pilot Study Summary	
	Count
Stage 1 – Pre-pilot	**5**
Stage 2 – Agency screener survey	
Agencies sent request	**50**
Response	
• *Agencies reporting cases*	*9*
• *Agencies reporting no cases*	*30*
• *Refused participation*	*4*
• *No response*	*7*
Stage 3 – Investigator case information	
Cases collected from screener survey and pre-pilot	**40**
• *Completed online*	*20*
• *Completed by phone*	*9*
• *Logged in but did not start survey*	*9*
• *Other*	*2*
Completed surveys	**29**
• *In scope*	*20*
• *Out of scope*	*9*
Debriefing	**26**

As shown in Table 1, 39 of the 50 agencies completed the survey, four refused participation, and seven failed to respond after at least three months and more than six calls, yielding an overall response rate of 78 percent. During recruitment, contact was made on a weekly basis and most of the agencies responded with two contacts. After six calls, no additional participation was obtained, suggesting six attempts as the maximum number of attempts to contact.

Of the 39 agencies that completed the survey, nine reported eligible cases and 30 reported no eligible cases.

Assuming that our original sample of 50 was representative of a national sample, this might mean that to recruit 500 FA cases we would need an initial sample of 2,800 agencies.

<u>Stage 2 Conclusions</u>

1. Police survey recruitment protocols similar to those used in the LES-SK study and other policy surveys were effective in obtaining cooperation from local LEAs with adequate participation rates.
2. A police survey using protocols similar to this pilot but of national scope would receive responses adequate to make an estimate of national incidence and to have a robust report of incidence characteristics, although there might be some missed cases as illustrated in Stage 1.
3. The number of cases residing in large urban agencies is probably within the capacity of respondents to provide, but it might be a good idea to offer a randomized 1-month option for agencies exceeding jurisdictions of one million.

Stage 3

The goal of Stage 3 was to test the case-level data collection instrument, to see if investigators would complete the survey and if the questions were clear and interpretable to the respondents. An important element of Stage 3 was to test whether investigators could be persuaded to fill out questionnaires online (as a cost saving) and whether online responses provided adequate information. (See Appendix C for the Survey Invitation to Investigators, and Appendix D for the Investigator Survey.)

A total of 40 cases were available for Stage 3 testing (Table 1), utilizing cases provided in both the Stage 1 and 2 recruitment. Investigator surveys were ultimately completed on 29 cases for a response rate of 72 percent. Nineteen were completed online and 10 were completed via telephone, with the phone option initiated after considerable time and reminders to complete the online survey. The overall recruitment and data collection period lasted about four months, from May 11, 2021 to August 31, 2021.

All investigators were initially urged via email requests to complete the survey online. This resulted in 19 out of 29 surveys completions (nine additional cases had an online start but no completion). After the start of phone follow-up, 10 additional questionnaires were filled out via phone interview, recruited from non-starters. This was a somewhat lower rate of online completions than anticipated. Initially, we had sought to get two-thirds of completions online.

Inspection of the questionnaires showed that respondents were able to readily navigate the surveys and provide interpretable answers. There were no responses that were out of context or inappropriate to the case.

From debriefing information completed by telephone with all respondents a few problems were articulated by investigators:

1. There were two investigators who made note that there were limited options to choose from, such as this comment: *"I felt like some of the questions presented me with limited options that didn't apply to this case. My answer didn't always fall into the categories provided."*

2. Another investigator noted that they were constrained by policy about what information they could provide: *"We are limited on the information we can release regarding victim demographic information."*

Or, *"Have trouble sharing that personal information about victims with anybody other than the DA and other law enforcement agencies."*

      3. While most investigators did not have any additional information to add regarding their cases, three investigators had additional information to provide. One example includes: *" [the] only part [that] wasn't asked -- drugs involved, typically are -- should add onto survey (most have this)."*

      4. Most investigators stated that the length was acceptable, but one stated the survey was *"a little long."*

Of the 29 cases provided by agencies and with completed details provided by investigators, nine (31 percent) were out of scope for the study definition of family abduction. Five of the cases were out of scope because the investigator answered either *no* or *don't know/cannot determine* to question 5, which includes the four qualifying questions for family abduction cases. Two cases were determined out of scope because one investigator answered *don't know/cannot determine* to question 2, and another answered *no* to this question, which asks if a family member or someone on behalf of a family member took or kept a child in violation of a court order, written agreement, or mutual understanding. Finally, the last two cases were deemed out of scope because they did not occur in the qualifying timeframe.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several positive conclusions from the pilot test of the LES-FA protocols:

- Given time and prodding, agencies will participate, fill out and return mailed questionnaires about FA case numbers.
- The time involved in the task is not burdensome for most agencies but alternate options and strategies may be required for larger agencies.
- Adequate participation rates and case numbers can be collected to generate population estimates.
- Given time and prodding and alternative questionnaire modes, investigators will provide details on cases to the study.
- The online questionnaire proved to be a viable addition to the methodology, garnering close to two-thirds of the completed responses.
- The questionnaire was deemed easy to follow, and did not prove problematic or confusing to respondents. We concluded that the online questionnaire should be retained as part of the methodology because it reduces telephone interviewing costs and it gives respondents a ready alternative to provide information without making an appointment or at times like evenings or weekends when an interviewer might not be available.

However, some challenges were highlighted by the pilot test.

1) Searching for family abduction cases in police databases may be more difficult than searches for other missing child episodes and other crime categories. This could be because state statutes vary and because there may not be a standard colloquial definition of FA in the minds of law enforcement personnel.

2) Terms like "*family abduction*" and "*custodial interference*" do not necessarily provide a complete inventory of cases that qualify as in scope for our FA definitions. For example, cases can be classified under a primary crime of domestic assault or home invasion. The agency survey form should add some other search terms such as "*child concealment*" and "*child transport.*" However, many agencies do not have search capacity for more than classified crime categories. This study was not designed to assess the influence of RMS systems capabilities on search results, a task perhaps better addressed in a more generic survey about crime data quality in the context of NIBRS. Nonetheless, the NISMART study in the future could consider collecting more information about RMS systems, asking about brand of system and a few key questions about categories and search capabilities. Some preliminary work with RMS providers might be helpful to this collection. It is not certain, but it is possible, that this data could be used to minimize bias in future NISMARTs.

3) Information crucial to the classification of FA cases as in scope to the study definition may not always be available in case records or even in the memories of investigators. The specificity of some of the definitional elements of FA also means that the qualifying information may not be available to, or consulted by, the officials filling out the agency survey. Subsequently, when the investigator is reached for their information or when a more complete assessment is made based on the records, the qualifying elements in the case details questionnaire may be different from what was reported in the agency survey. This happened as nine out of the enumerated, initially-qualifying cases (31 percent) turned out to be non-qualifying when investigators or investigation records were examined. We can urge those filling out the agency survey to check the file more carefully, but we cannot insure that this will happen. Since the counts and weightings will be based only on qualifying cases at the end of the process, we do not see that this over-enumeration poses a large threat to the estimate.

4) The criterion about "*intent to keep permanently*" is particularly difficult for respondents to assess given the information they often have.

5) The search task may be particularly challenging for larger agencies with a lot of custodial interference cases that need a careful searching of files before deciding whether they qualify to go on the survey form.

Although a law enforcement survey of family abduction may miss some cases because not all qualifying cases may show up from conventional searches, conducting such a survey appears merited for the following reasons:

1) A LES-FA survey will provide an estimate that appears to be a plausible approximation of the burden on law enforcement and missing children agencies as a result of this crime.

2) Conducted with the same definition and methodology in consecutive studies, such a survey should provide a basis for estimating trends in the incidence of these episodes.

3) The search challenge for agencies may be aided by adding to the case recruitment methodology a complete inventory of cases known to NCMEC for the study year traced back to the agency making the NCMEC report.

4) The tested survey design has the capability of providing descriptive information about the characteristics of these episodes to educate law enforcement, journalists and policymakers about the typical dynamics and categories of a robust national sample of episodes.

List of Appendixes

Appendix A – Screener Survey Invitation to Agencies

Appendix B – Agency Screener Survey

Appendix C – Survey Invitation to Investigators

Appendix D – Investigator Survey

Appendix A
Screener Survey Invitation to Agencies

[INSERT F_NAME, MID_INIT, L_NAME]   [INSERT DATE]
[INSERT DEPT NAME]
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L_NAME],

We are asking your agency to participate in a pilot study for the National Law Enforcement Survey on Family Child Abduction, a study designed to estimate the number of children abducted by biological, adoptive, step- or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a parent in the U.S.

This study is part of the Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4). The ultimate study will update the national estimates of child victims of family abductions and determine whether there have been any changes in the overall number of victims or in specific categories of victims. This study will limit the scope of events to those known to law enforcement and so we are relying on law enforcement agencies as the source of data.

<u>Today we are requesting your help in an important component of this pilot study where we want to test the ability of law enforcement agencies to find such cases in their data bases for a one-year period (2019)</u>. Attached are pilot survey materials for your agency. The attachments include (1) the mail survey screener with glossary of terms, and (2) frequently asked questions.

As part of the survey we will be asking you to identify specific family abduction cases investigated by the agency. In identifying these cases we ask you to search your case management system for codes related to "abduction" and "custodial interference" as well as other search terms you might consider relevant for your system. Additional study criteria include:

1. Involvement of a juvenile ages 0-17.
2. Involvement of a family perpetrator.
3. The removal or detention of a child without permission.
4. An attempt to conceal the taking or whereabouts of a child with the intent to prevent return, contact or visitation.
5. Transport or intent to transport a child from the state for the purpose of making recovery more difficult.
6. Intent to prevent contact with a child on an indefinite basis.
7. Intent to affect custodial privileges indefinitely.

When conducting these searches, please keep track of the problems and questions you encounter: we provide a place at the end of the survey (Section F) where you can write these down.

You may fill out the accompanying paper survey with the requested information and return it scanned by email or in the provided return envelope.

As an alternative, you may fill out the survey online by following this link:

[LINK]

After you complete the search and return your survey, we may contact you by telephone to ask you about your experience with the process.

Your agency's participation is voluntary and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. The study avoids asking for identifying information about cases, such as victims' names. Throughout the research, all information that would link an agency with any specific case details will be kept under lock and key or in secure computer files, accessible to authorized study staff only. Finally, federal law requires that all information be used for statistical purposes only—no specific agencies or cases will be identified in any publicized materials.

We will be happy to answer your questions about this project. Please call us at 1-603-767-1010 or send an email to David Finkelhor at David.Finkelhor@unh.edu. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

David Finkelhor, Ph.D.
University of New Hampshire
Co-Principal Investigator

[BACK PAGE]

FEDERAL ASSURANCES OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND OTHER NOTICES

This data collection is authorized under the Missing Children's Assistance Act (see 34 U.S.C. § 11293(c)). NIJ, OJJDP, its employees, and its data collection agents will use the information you provide for statistical or research purposes only and will not disclose your information in identifiable form without your consent to anyone outside of the research team. All personally identifiable data collected are protected under the confidentiality provisions of 34 U.S.C. § 10231, and any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to $10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Your compliance with the request for information is entirely voluntary, and if you choose to provide information, you may discontinue at any time without penalty of any sort.

Under the Federal Paperwork Reduction Act, a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number. We try to create forms and instructions that are accurate, can be easily understood, and which impose the least possible burden on you to provide us with information. We estimate that it will take 3 hours to complete this questionnaire. This estimate includes time for reviewing the instructions, searching for and gathering the data, completing the form, and reviewing answers.

If you would like more information concerning this authorization, the confidentiality guarantee, have comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate, or suggestions for making the form simpler, please contact Benjamin Adams, Social Science Analyst, at Benjamin.Adams@usdoj.gov. If you need assistance regarding your submission, please contact David Finkelhor at David.Finkelhor@unh.edu or call the project's toll-free number: 603-767-1010.

Appendix B
Agency Screener Survey

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVEY ON FAMILY CHILD ABDUCTION

Part of the 4th National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway & Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4)

Sponsored by:
U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Juvenile Justice &
Delinquency Prevention

Managed by:
U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice
Washington, DC 20531

Conducted by:
Westat
1600 Research Blvd,
Rockville, MD 20850
and
Crimes against Children Research Center
University of New Hampshire
10 West Edge Drive
Durham, NH 03824
Phone: 603-767-1010

Please provide the name, position, and contact information of the person completing this survey, in case we need to clarify responses or gather additional information.

NAME:	
POSITION OR TITLE:	
DEPARTMENT OR UNIT:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	( ) Ext.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	
DATE COMPLETED:	

SECTION A

1.   Does your agency have jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of cases in which a child is reported as missing or abducted?

Yes ☐   No ☐ ——————————————→ *Skip to Section E, Page 4* ——————→

2.   Between **Jan 1, 2019 and December 31 2019**, did your agency investigate any cases where a biological, adoptive, step- or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a parent took or kept a child in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation rights?

> *Consider all cases where your agency performed <u>any</u> investigation activity between [one-year period], including unsolved cases from previous years which remained open between [one-year period] including investigations that your agency turned over to another agency, if applicable.*

Yes ☐   No ☐ ——→ *Skip to Section C, Page 4* ——→

3.   Did any of these cases involve…

   a.   An attempt to <u>conceal</u> the taking or whereabouts of a child with the intent to prevent return, contact or visitation? ……………………   Yes ☐   No ☐

   b.   <u>Transport or intent to transport </u>a child from the state for the purpose of making recovery more difficult?……………………………   Yes ☐   No ☐

   c.   Intent to <u>prevent contact</u> with a child on an indefinite basis?………   Yes ☐   No ☐

   d.   Intent to <u>affect custodial privileges</u> indefinitely? …………………   Yes ☐   No ☐

4.   Did you answer "yes" to any item in Question 3? —————————

Yes ☐   No ☐ ——————————————→ *Skip to Section C, Page 4* ——————→

5.   Indicate the total number of cases that your agency investigated between **Jan 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019**, that fit one or more of the criteria given in Question 3.

> *Remember to include all cases that fit the Question 3 criteria where your agency performed <u>any</u> investigation activity between [one-year period] regardless of when they were first reported and regardless of the involvement of another agency.*

Total Number of Qualifying Cases Investigated Between **Jan 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019**,

☐

<u>IMPORTANT:</u> *Please provide specific information about each case by completing Section B on the next page.* ——————→

SECTION B

For all family abductions included in the total in Question 5 on the previous page, please provide the following information. If your agency has a lot of eligible cases you can: 1) print out the eligible cases directly and insert those pages into your returned survey; 2) add additional pages as necessary; or 3) contact us directly and we will provide you with additional assistance.

a) Case Number *Provide your agency's case number for reference in our follow-up call*	b) Who was the key investigating officer or who in your agency is now the most knowledgeable person about the case?	c) Were any other law enforcement agencies involved?	d) When was the case reported? (MM/DD/YY)	e) Is the case still open?	f) Indicate which criteria this case appears to fit (circle all that apply):
1.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges
2.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges
3.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges
4.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges
5.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges
6.	Name Email	Yes ☐ No ☐	/ /	Yes ☐ No ☐	Conceal, Transport, Prevent Contact, Affect Custodial Privileges

Continue with Section D

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SECTION C

1. You have indicated that your agency did not investigate any cases between **Jan 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019**, that fit the NISMART criteria for a family child abduction (**see Glossary, page 6**). What year did your agency last investigate any case that fit those criteria?

    [ ]

2. Are you aware of any cases of family child abductions in your general area or in your state between **Jan 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019**,

    Yes [ ] ⟶ Indicate the county (counties) where the abduction(s) took place

    No [ ]

SECTION D

1. To the extent possible, please verify your answers in the previous sections by conducting a check of investigation records and/or discussions with your agency's investigative unit(s). Indicate here the way(s) you verified this information:
    a. Checked with other staff in your department?................................. Yes [ ]   No [ ]
    b. Checked with staff elsewhere in your agency?................................ Yes [ ]   No [ ]
    c. Checked records? .... Yes [ ]   No [ ]
    d. Used a computerized information system? .... Yes [ ]   No [ ]

2. Is your specific department or unit responsible for…..
    a. Investigating missing children?.................. Yes [ ]   No [ ]
    b. Maintaining data on missing children?...... Yes [ ]   No [ ]

SECTION E

You indicated in Section A that your agency does not have the jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of child family abductions. Please describe what responsibilities do come under your agency's jurisdiction.

| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

SECTION F

Please use this section to note the problems and questions you encountered as you conducted a search with the criteria we provided. Please also note if there are additional criteria you used to find these cases in your system.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY.
RETURN INSTRUCTIONS:

This survey may be scanned and returned by email to David.finkelhor@unh.edu or it may be returned in the included envelope.

As an alternative, you may fill out an online survey by following the link provided in the original request letter.

GLOSSARY OF STUDY TERMS

Child. Person under the age of 18.

Family abduction: The taking or keeping of a child by a biological, adoptive, step- or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a parent in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation rights

Family member: A biological, adoptive, step- or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a parent

Missing child: A child whose caregiver contacted the police in order to recover or locate the child.

Endangerment: Caregiver believed that child was at risk of physical assault, sexual abuse, physical injury, or health problem in the company of the perpetrator.

Recovery: Child was returned or came back to the custody of the aggrieved caregiver

Violation of custody agreement: An aggrieved parent is stating that a specific part of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation rights has been violated

Appendix C
Survey Invitation to Investigators

National Law Enforcement Survey on Family Child Abduction

Dear [INSERT NAME HERE,

We are conducting the pilot study for the National Law Enforcement Survey on Family Child Abduction. [INSERT NAME HERE] from your agency completed a mail survey for us and gave us your name and email address so that you could complete an online survey about Case #####. The survey will take approximately **15 minutes to complete** and you will be able to pause the survey and go back to it at any time.

After the survey is completed, if you are willing, we will follow up with a phone call at a time of your convenience to talk about the survey experience. For example: *Did the survey allow you to say everything you wanted to say about this case? Were there questions that were confusing because of how they were worded?* This follow-up conversation should take about 20 minutes.

This study is part of the Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4), funded by the US Department of Justice. The ultimate study will update the national estimates of child victims of family abductions. It will determine whether there have been any changes in the overall number of victims or in specific categories of victims. It will also help improve law enforcement practice for this offense.

Your participation is voluntary and will not affect your status in your agency in any way. The study avoids asking for identifying information about cases, such as victims' names. Throughout the research, all information that would link an agency with any specific case details will be kept under lock and key or in secure computer files, accessible to authorized study staff only. Finally, federal law requires that all information be used for statistical purposes only—no specific agencies or cases will be identified in any publicized materials.

You can access the survey here:

CLICK HERE to access the survey.

We will be happy to answer your questions about this project. Please call us at our number, 1-603-767-1010, or send an email to survey director David Finkelhor at mailto:David.Finkelhor@unh.edu. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

David Finkelhor, Ph.D.
University of New Hampshire
Co-Principal Investigator

FEDERAL ASSURANCES OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND OTHER NOTICES

This data collection is authorized under the Missing Children's Assistance Act (see, 34 U.S.C. § 11293(c)). NIJ, OJJDP, its employees, and its data collection agents will use the information you provide for statistical or research purposes only, and will not disclose your information in identifiable form without your consent to anyone outside of the research team. All personally identifiable data collected are protected under the confidentiality provisions of 34 U.S.C. § 10231, and any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to $10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Your compliance with the request for information is entirely voluntary, and if you choose to provide information, you may discontinue at any time without penalty of any sort.

Under the Federal Paperwork Reduction Act, a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number. We try to create forms and instructions that are accurate, can be easily understood, and which impose the least possible burden on you to provide us with information. We estimate that it will take 0.25 hours to complete this questionnaire. This estimate includes time for reviewing the instructions, searching for and gathering the data, completing the form, and reviewing answers.

If you would like more information concerning this authorization or the confidentiality guarantee, have comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate, or have suggestions for making the form simpler, please contact Benjamin Adams, Social Science Analyst, at Benjamin.Adams@usdoj.gov . If you need assistance regarding this survey, please contact David Finkelhor at David.Finkelhor@unh.edu or call 1-603-767-1010.

Appendix D
Investigator Survey

The Law Enforcement Survey on Family Abduction (LES-FA)

FA1 Please provide your <u>contact information</u> here so the researchers can reach you with any questions after they review your survey. This information will be deleted as soon as the research team verifies that your survey is complete.

FA1.1_NAME	Name _____
FA1.1_TITLE	Title _____
FA1.1 AGENCY	Agency_____
FA1.1_PHONE	Telephone number ( )_____
FA1.1_EMAIL	Email address_____

FA2 Your agency's case number for this investigation is [CASE NUMBER FILL].

Please confirm that this incident involves a biological, adoptive, step or foster <u>family member, someone acting on behalf of such a family member, or the romantic partner of a parent,</u> who <u>took or kept</u> a child in violation of a <u>court order</u>, <u>written agreement</u> or <u>mutual understanding</u> about custody or visitation rights.

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2) → **GO TO BOX 1**
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → **GO TO BOX 1**

_____

BOX 1

If FA2 = 2 (case is not FA) or FA2 = 3 (don't know) and respondent has no additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY1.

If FA2 = 2 or FA2 = 3 and respondent has additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY2.

_____

FA3 Was this a violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding <u>reported</u> between [TIME FRAME]?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2) → **GO TO BOX 2**
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → **GO TO BOX 2**

_____

BOX 2

> If FA3 = 2 (case not in time frame) or FA2 = 3 (don't know) and respondent has no additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY1.

> If FA3 = 2 or FA3 = 3 and respondent has additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY2.

_____

FA4 Did your agency make a <u>missing child report</u> about a child involved in this incident to ... ? (Please respond to both questions.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
…the National Crime Information Center (NCIC)? (1)	❍	❍	❍
…your state's Missing Child Clearinghouse? (2)	❍	❍	❍

FA5 Did a perpetrator in this incident …? (Please respond to all statements.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
<u>Attempt to conceal</u> the taking or whereabouts of a child with the intent to prevent return, contact or visitation? (1)	❍	❍	❍
<u>Transport or intend to transport</u> a child out of state for the purpose of making recovery more difficult? (2)	❍	❍	❍
<u>Intend to prevent another person from having contact</u> with a child on an indefinite basis? (3)	❍	❍	❍
<u>Intend to affect custodial privileges</u> indefinitely? (4)	❍	❍	❍

_____

BOX 3

> If none of the answers to FA5 = 1 (Yes), and respondent has no additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY1.

> If none of the answers to FA5 = 1 and respondent has additional surveys, go to ENDSURVEY2.

_____

FA6 Did the <u>person who</u> <u>reported</u> this incident primarily want law enforcement to...?
- ◯ Locate and recover a child whose <u>whereabouts</u> were <u>not known</u>, or (1)
- ◯ Recover a child whose <u>whereabouts were known</u>? (2)
- ◯ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA7 Did the <u>person who reported</u> this incident have an address, telephone number or other information <u>that worked to contact</u> the child or the perpetrator?

- ◯ Yes (1)
- ◯ No (2)
- ◯ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA8 Did the <u>person who reported</u> this incident state that a specific part of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation rights had been violated?

- ◯ Yes (1)
- ◯ No (2) → **GO TO FA10**
- ◯ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → **GO TO FA10**

FA9 What were the conditions of the court order, written agreement or mutual understanding that this episode violated?

[TEXT ENTRY_____ [ALLOW HALF PAGE]

FA10 Did the <u>person who reported</u> this incident believe that a child was <u>at risk</u> of any of the following while in the company of the perpetrator? (Please respond to all options.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
Physical assault (1)	❍	❍	❍
Sexual assault (2)	❍	❍	❍
Neglect of basic needs (food, shelter, supervision, etc.) (3)	❍	❍	❍
Neglect of medical needs (4)	❍	❍	❍
Other health problem (5)	❍	❍	❍
Physical injury (6)	❍	❍	❍

FA11 Please <u>describe</u> briefly what happened during this episode. To the best of your knowledge, how did it take place and why? What happened to the child or children during and after the incident?

[TEXT ENTRY]_____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT 1 PAGE]

FA12 Did your agency ultimately determine that this incident was a <u>criminal</u> matter or a <u>civil</u> matter?

❍ Criminal matter (1)
❍ Civil matter (2) → **GO TO FA15**
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → **GO TO FA15**

FA13 Did your agency consider this to be an <u>abduction or kidnapping</u>?

❍ Yes (1) →**GO TO FA15**
❍ No (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA14 What <u>type of criminal incident</u> did your agency consider this to be?

❍ Custodial interference (1)
❍ Child endangerment (2)
❍ Denial of access to a child (3)
❍ Something else (4) FA14-4_OS Please describe _____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT 4 LINES]
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (5)

CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

FA15 Did this incident involve more than one child victim?

      1. Yes, 2 child victims

      2. Yes, 3 or more child victims

           FA15-2_NUM Enter number of child victims: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).

      3. No, 1 child → **GO TO FA16**

     -8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO FA16**

FA15.1 We will be asking you a set of questions for each child victim in this incident (up to 5 child victims). In order to make it clear which child victim you are answering questions about, we would like for you to give a label or code for up to 5 child victims in the table below. We will use the label/code you provide to identify the victim (for the purposes of this survey only).

Please start with the oldest child.

FA15.1R1	
FA15.1R2	
FA15.1R3	
FA15.1R4	
FA15.1R5	

FA16 INTRODUCTION FOR MORE THAN ONE CHILD: The next questions ask about the child victims in this incident. Since there is more than one victim in this incident please start with [TEXT FROM FA15.1R1].

FA16 Is this child a boy or a girl?

❍ Boy (1)

❍ Girl (2)

❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA17 How <u>old</u> was this child when this incident was first reported to police? (Please give your best estimate if not sure.)

❍ Less than 1 year old (1)

❍ 1 year old or older (2) **FA17-2 AGE** Please enter age in years (whole numbers only) _____

❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA18 Is this child <u>Hispanic or Latino/a</u>?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA19 What is this child's <u>race</u>? Please select all that apply.

❍ White (1)
❍ Black or African American (2)
❍ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
❍ Asian (4)
❍ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
❍ Other (6) **FA19-6_OS** Please describe) _____
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (7)

FA20 Did the <u>person who reported</u> this incident <u>have sole or joint custody</u> of this child based on a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding?

❍ Yes, sole custody (1)
❍ Yes, joint custody (2)
❍ No, did not have custody (3)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (4)

FA21 How was the <u>person who reported</u> this incident <u>related to this child</u>?

Biological or adoptive mother (1)

○ Biological or adoptive father (2)
○ Step-mother (3)
○ Step-father (4)
○ Other relative

[This option will pull up a pre-coded list.] (5)

Grandmother (or1)

Grandfather (or2)

Aunt (or3)

Uncle (or4)

Sister (including Half-sister or Step-sister) (or5)

Brother (including Half-brother or Step-brother) (or6)

Cousin (or7)

○ Foster parent (6)
○ Legal guardian (7)
○ Romantic partner of a parent, or (8)
○ Someone acting on behalf of a family member [This option will pull up a pre-coded list.] (9)

      Adult friend (ob1)
      Child's friend (other minor or youth) (ob2)
      Attorney (ob3)
      Social worker (ob4)
      Teacher or school official (ob5)
      Coach (ob6)
      Leader of extracurricular activity (troop leader, etc.) (ob7)

○ Someone else? (Please describe) (10) _____
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (11)

FA22 Was the <u>perpetrator</u> a biological, adoptive, step or foster <u>family member</u> of this child or <u>acting on behalf of such a family member of this child</u> or the romantic partner of a parent of this child?

❍ Yes, a biological, adoptive, step or foster family member (1)
❍ Yes, acting on behalf of a family member (2)
❍ Yes, the romantic partner of a parent (3)
❍ No (4)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (5)

_____

BOX 5

If FA15 = 1 or 2 (multiple children) and FA22 =4 (perpetrator not family member) or FA22 = 5 (don't know), → go to Box 8. [NOT FAMILY ABDUCTION]

If FA15 = 3 (one child) and FA22 = 4 or FA22 = 5 and respondent has no additional surveys, → go to ENDSURVEY1. [NOT FAMILY ABDUCTION]

If FA15 = 3 (one child) and FA22 = 4 or FA22 = 5 and respondent has additional surveys, → go to ENDSURVEY2. [NOT FAMILY ABDUCTION]

If FA20 = 2 (the reporter had joint custody) and FA22 = 1 (perpetrator was family member) or FA22 = 2 (perpetrator was acting on behalf of a family member) or FA22 = 3 (romantic partner), → go to FA23.

Otherwise, → go to FA25.

_____

FA23 Did the perpetrator responsible for this incident <u>share joint custody</u> of this child with the person who reported it? (Answer "Yes" if the person responsible was the romantic partner or another person <u>acting on behalf</u> of a family member who shared joint custody with the reporter of the incident.)

❍ Yes (1) → **GO TO** FA25
❍ No (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → **GO TO** FA25

FA24 Who had custody of this child?

[TEXT ENTRY] _____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT ONE LINE]

FA25 How was the <u>perpetrator</u> related to the child? Was the perpetrator a...

○ Biological or adoptive mother of the child (1)
○ Biological or adoptive father of the child (2)
○ Step-mother (3)
○ Step-father (4)
○ Other relative

[This option will pull up a pre-coded list.] (5)

Grandmother (or1)

Grandfather (or2)

Aunt (or3)

Uncle (or4)

Sister (including Half-sister or Step-sister) (or5)

Brother (including Half-brother or Step-brother) (or6)

Cousin (or7)

○ Foster parent (6)
○ Legal guardian (7)
○ Romantic partner of a parent (8)
○ Someone acting on behalf of a family member? [This option will pull up a pre-coded list.] (9)

  Adult friend (ob1)
  Child's friend (other minor or youth) (ob2)
  Attorney (ob3)
  Social worker (ob4)
  Teacher or school official (ob5)
  Coach (ob6)
  Leader of extracurricular activity (troop leader, etc.) (ob7)

○ Don't know/Cannot determine (10)

FA26 Who did this child <u>live with</u> when this incident began?

- ○ Two married biological parents (1)
- ○ Two married parents, one or both not biological, but both having a legal relationship to the child, such as adoption (2)
- ○ Two unmarried parents, biological or other (3)
- ○ One unmarried parent with a live-in partner who was not the child's parent (4)
- ○ A single parent (no live-in partner) (5)
- ○ No parent (6)
- ○ Other situation (9) FA26-9_OS Please describe _____
- ○ Don't know/Cannot determine (10)

FA27 <u>Prior to the incident</u>, as far as you know, did this child have any serious or permanent <u>physical or mental disabilities</u>, <u>impairments</u> or life threatening <u>medical conditions</u> when this incident was reported to police?

- ○ Yes (Please describe) (1) _____
- ○ No (2)
- ○ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA28 What was the <u>outcome</u> of this incident for this child?
- ○ Returned home (1) → GO TO FA31
- ○ Located, but not returned (2) → GO TO FA30
- ○ Not located and not returned (3) → GO TO FA33
- ○ Don't know/Cannot determine (4) → GO TO FA34

NOTE: THERE IS NO FA29

FA30 Please explain why the child was not returned. [Go to FA32]

[TEXT ENTRY]_____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT HALF PAGE]

FA31 How <u>long</u> did the perpetrator keep the child in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation <u>before the child was returned home</u>? (Your best estimate is fine.) Please enter the number of hours, days, weeks or months below.

○ Hours (1) _____
○ Days (2) _____
○ Weeks (3) _____
○ Months (4) _____
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (5)

FA32 How <u>long</u> did the perpetrator keep the child in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation <u>before the child was located</u>? (Your best estimate is fine.) Please enter the number of hours, days, weeks or months below.

○ Hours (1) _____
○ Days (2) _____
○ Weeks (3) _____
○ Months (4) _____
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (5)

FA33 How <u>long</u> has the perpetrator kept the child in violation of a court order, written agreement or mutual understanding about custody or visitation? (Your best estimate is fine.) Please enter the number of hours, days, weeks or months below.

○ Hours (1) _____
○ Days (2) _____
○ Weeks (3) _____
○ Months (4) _____
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (5)

FA34 To the best of your knowledge, did this child suffer any <u>physical or sexual abuse</u>, <u>neglect</u> or <u>injury</u> during this episode?

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2) → GO TO BOX 8
○ Don't know/Cannot determine (3) → GO TO BOX 8

FA35 Did any of the following occur? (Please respond to all statements.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
The child was <u>sexually abused</u> (1)	❍	❍	❍
The child was <u>physically abused</u> (2)	❍	❍	❍
The child's <u>basic needs</u> were <u>neglected</u> (food, supervision) (3)	❍	❍	❍
The child's <u>medical needs</u> were <u>neglected</u> (medications, medical care) (4)	❍	❍	❍
The child suffered an <u>accidental injury</u> that required medical attention (5)	❍	❍	❍
Something else (Please describe) (6)	❍	❍	❍

_____

BOX 8

If FA15=1 (multiple children), questions FA16—FA35 will repeat for each child. After last child, → go to FA36

_____

PERPETRATOR CHARACTERISTICS

FA36 Did this incident involve more than one perpetrator?

❍ Yes (1) <small>FA36-1_NUM</small> Enter number of perpetrators _____ → GO TO BOX 9
❍ No, 1 perpetrator (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

_____

BOX 9

IF FA36 = 1 (more than one perpetrator), → <small>FA37</small> INTRODUCTION.

_____

FA37 INTRODUCTION [MORE THAN 1 PERPETRATOR]: Please answer the following questions about the perpetrator <u>most responsible</u> for the incident.

FA37 Was the perpetrator male or female?

❍ Male (1)
❍ Female (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA38 As far as you know, what was this perpetrator's <u>age</u> at the time of the report?

❍ Teens (1)
❍ 20s (2)
❍ 30s (3)
❍ 40s (4)
❍ 50s (5)
❍ 60s (6)
❍ 70s (7)
❍ 80s (8)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (9)

FA39 Is he/she of <u>Hispanic or Latino origin</u>?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (3)

FA40 What is his/her <u>race</u>? Please select all that apply.

❍ White (1)
❍ Black or African American (2)
❍ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
❍ Asian (4)
❍ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
❍ Other (Please describe) (6) _____
❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (7)

CRIME CHARACTERISTICS

FA41 As part of this incident, did the perpetrator take a child to another state or country? [IF FA15 = 1 OR 2: Please answer the next questions about all the children involved in the incident.]

- ❍ Yes, another state (1)
- ❍ Yes, another country (2)
- ❍ No (3) → GO TO FA43
- ❍ Don't know/Cannot determine (4) → GO TO FA43

FA42 Did the perpetrator take a child to another state or country for any of these reasons? (Please respond to all options.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
To take a vacation (1)	❍	❍	❍
To go to the perpetrator's residence (2)	❍	❍	❍
To visit relatives (3)	❍	❍	❍
To make the recovery or return of a child more difficult (4)	❍	❍	❍
To make contact with a child more difficult for someone else (5)	❍	❍	❍

FA43 Did the perpetrator do any of the following at any point during this incident? (Please respond to all options.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
Threaten violence to a child (1)	○	○	○
Use force against a child (2)	○	○	○
Use a weapon to threaten or harm a child (3)	○	○	○
Threaten violence to any other person (4)	○	○	○
Use force against any other person (5)	○	○	○
Use a weapon to threaten or harm any other person (6)	○	○	○

POLICE INVESTIGATION

FA44 How did your agency respond to the report? (Please respond to all options.)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know/Cannot determine (3)
Took a report over the telephone (1)	❍	❍	❍
Sent officers to the child's household or to the scene (2)	❍	❍	❍
Interviewed household members (3)	❍	❍	❍
Made a written report (4)	❍	❍	❍
Obtained photos of the child or children (5)	❍	❍	❍
Collected evidence such as fingerprints or inventory (6)	❍	❍	❍
Questioned witnesses or suspects (7)	❍	❍	❍
Conducted a search for the child/children (8)	❍	❍	❍
Contacted the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) (11)	❍	❍	❍
Made an arrest (12)	❍	❍	❍
Investigated or responded in other ways (Please describe) (13)	❍	❍	❍

FA45 Did your agency bring <u>other agencies</u> into the investigation or <u>refer</u> the case to another agency?

- ○ Yes, brought other agency or agencies into the investigation (1)
- ○ Yes, referred the case to another agency (2)
- ○ No (3) → GO TO INTRO FA47
- ○ Don't know/Cannot determine (4) → GO TO INTRO FA47

FA46 What agencies were brought into the investigation or did you refer the case to? Please <u>list</u> each agency by <u>name, county and state</u>. **DO NOT ENFORCE**

> **FA46_AGENCYNM[1-10]** Agency, county, state
> [CAN ALL BE IN ONE BOX FOR THE PILOT.]
> **NOTE: UP TO 10 AGENCIES (WITH ASSOCIATED COUNTIES AND STATES) MAY BE NAMED**

INTRODUCTION FA47: Finally, we would now like to ask you just a few questions about your experiences answering questions about this case.

FA47 First, did you find any questions difficult to answer? If so, which ones and what them difficult?

[TEXT ENTRY]_____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT HALF PAGE]

FA48 Are there any questions I should have asked about this case but didn't? If yes, what other parts of the case should we know about?

[TEXT ENTRY]_____[ALLOW EQUIVALENT HALF PAGE]

FA49 How did you feel about the length of the survey?
[TEXT ENTRY]_____ [ALLOW EQUIVALENT 4 LINES]

After FA49:

If R has only one case, go to ENDSURVEY3.

If R has more than one case, go to ENDSURVEY4.

ENDSURVEY1 We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not qualify. There are no further questions about this case. Thank you for your time.

ENDSURVEY2 We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not qualify. Please use the link provided to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

ENDSURVEY3 Thank you for completing this survey. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of children abducted by family members.

ENDSURVEY4 Thank you for completing this survey. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of children abducted by family members. Please use the link provided to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.