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

## Law Enforcement Survey – Stereotypical Kidnapping (LES-SK) Technical Report

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The research undertaken for the *Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children* (NISMART-4) constitutes the fourth cycle of studies in this series, conducted in response to the Congressional mandate in the 1984 Missing Children’s Assistance Act (Pub. L. 98–473). As amended in 2013 [Pub. L. 113–38], the Act now 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 response to the legislative mandate, OJJDP implemented three prior iterations of NISMART, each of which involved multiple studies. These distinct studies differentiated five types of events or episodes that can cause a child to be missing (family abduction; nonfamily abduction; runaway/throwaway; missing lost, stranded, or injured; and missing for benign reasons). They also differentiated a rare and especially serious subtype of nonfamily abduction called “stereotypical kidnapping” and defined two categories of actually missing children: children missing to their parents/caretakers and children reported missing to authorities. All previous cycles included a national household survey of parents, a survey of youth in these households, a juvenile facilities agency survey, and a law enforcement survey.

For reasons described in Chapter 3, NISMART–4 departed from the methodologies and studies used in previous cycles, focusing solely on law enforcement data on kidnapped and missing children. Chapter 3, (NISMART–4 Design and Objectives), gives an overview of this new approach.

The remaining chapters 4 – 12 cover the NISMART–4 Law Enforcement Survey of Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK), which adapted the previous LES-SK telephone interview to an online survey for greater economy.

Companion reports for the three NISMART-4 pilot studies – the *Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping* (LES-SK), the *Law Enforcement Survey on Family Abduction* (LES-FA), and the *Law Enforcement Survey on Missing Children* (LES-MC) – are available as separate reports. The LES-SK Pilot Study Report can also be found in Appendix A of this report.

## 2. NISMART BACKGROUND

The NISMART research program was created in the 1980s to establish clear definitions and provide scientifically-based estimates of abducted children and children missing for other reasons.

NISMART–1 (Finkelhor, Hotaling, & Sedlak, 1990) defined major types of events or episodes that could cause a child to become missing and examined the numbers of children who experienced each type in 1988. NISMART–2 (Sedlak, Finkelhor, Hammer, & Schultz, 2002; Hammer, Finkelhor, Sedlak, & Porcellini, 2004) refined the episode types and their definitions, formulating the definitions given in Exhibit 2.1, which all NISMARTs have used since. That second cycle also established two standardized definitions of missing children and produced unified estimates of the numbers of children in these categories: children who were in fact missing to their caretakers and children who were reported as missing to authorities. Not all children who have episodes of a given type are missing and not all children who are missing to their parents/caretakers are reported missing to authorities, as shown in Exhibit 2-1. That second cycle also assessed changes in the incidence of various episode types since the first cycle. NISMART–3 (Sedlak, Brick & Brock, 2016; Sedlak, Finkelhor & Brick, 2017) replicated the NISMART–2 approach, aiming to provide estimates comparable to the previous cycle.

### Exhibit 2-1. NISMART Definitions of Episode Types

Episode Type	Requirements
Family abduction	<p>A member of the child’s family or someone acting on behalf of a family member takes or fails to return a child in violation of a custody order or other legitimate custodial rights, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceals the child, or</li> <li>• Transports the child out of state with the intent to prevent contact, or</li> <li>• Expresses the intent to deprive the caretaker of custodial rights permanently or indefinitely.</li> </ul> <p>For children age 15 or older and not mentally impaired, use of physical force or threat of bodily harm is required.</p>
Nonfamily abduction	<p>A nonfamily perpetrator, without lawful authority or parental permission, uses force or threat to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a child (at least 20 feet or into a vehicle or building), or</li> <li>• Detain a child in a place where the child cannot leave or appeal for help for a least one hour.</li> </ul> <p>For children under age 15 or mentally impaired, force or threat is not needed if the perpetrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceals the child’s whereabouts, or</li> <li>• Demands ransom, or</li> <li>• Expresses the intent to keep the child permanently.</li> </ul>

## Exhibit 2-1. NISMART Definitions of Episode Types (continued)

Episode Type	Requirements
Stereotypical kidnapping (Nonfamily abduction subtype)	<p>A nonfamily abduction perpetrated by a stranger, person of unknown identity, or slight acquaintance, in which the perpetrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detains the child overnight, or</li> <li>• Kills the child, or</li> <li>• Transports the child at least 50 miles, or</li> <li>• Demands ransom, or</li> <li>• Expresses the intent to keep the child permanently.</li> </ul>
Runaway/ throwaway	<p>Runaway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child who leaves home without permission and stays away overnight, or</li> <li>• Is away with permission, but chooses not to come home and stays away for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One night (if 14 or younger or mentally incompetent), or</li> <li>• Two or more nights (if 15-17).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Throwaway: A child whom adult household member tells to leave or prevents from returning home, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not arrange for adequate alternative care, and</li> <li>• The child is gone overnight.</li> </ul>
Missing involuntary, lost, stranded or injured	<p>A child whose whereabouts are unknown to caretaker, causing the caretaker to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact law enforcement or a missing children’s agency to locate the missing child, or</li> <li>• Become alarmed for at least one hour and try to locate the child,</li> </ul> <p>and the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was trying to get home or make contact but was unable to do so because the child was lost, stranded, or injured, or</li> <li>• Was mentally impaired or too young to know how to return home or contact the caretaker.</li> </ul>
Missing benign explanation	<p>A child whose whereabouts are unknown to caretaker, causing caretaker to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become alarmed for at least 1 hour, and</li> <li>• Try to locate the child, and</li> <li>• Contact the police about the episode for any reason, as long as the child did not fit one of the above episode types.</li> </ul>

All previous NISMART cycles have used four methodologies: a national household survey of parents/caretakers, a national survey of youth in these households, a survey of juvenile residential facilities, and a study of law enforcement data. Estimates of episode children have relied on data from these multiple surveys, but NISMART–2 instituted several changes in the uses of the data from these component studies.

NISMART–1 used a police records study to collect data about stereotypical kidnappings and other nonfamily child abductions (Finkelhor, Hotaling, & Sedlak, 1990). However, that methodology was labor-intensive and costly, with uncertain coverage of the population of interest. Moreover, it identified only a handful of stereotypical kidnapping cases, and yielded imprecise estimates. These

drawbacks prompted the NISMART–2 redesign of the law enforcement methodology, which abandoned the effort to obtain the general nonfamily abduction estimate from this source. NISMART–1 also used the youth survey simply to follow up on returned runaway youth to compare their reports of the episodes with the reports of their parents/caretakers. In subsequent NISMARTs, the youth interviews provided data to supplement parent/caretaker reports of all main episode types.

Thus, for NISMART–2 and NISMART–3, survey data from both parents/caretakers and youth contributed to the estimates of family abducted; nonfamily abducted; missing involuntary, lost, stranded or injured; and missing benign explanation children. Estimates of runaway/throwaway children relied on these household survey sources as well as on the data from the survey of juvenile facilities. The stereotypical kidnapping estimate relied solely on the law enforcement sampling and interviews.

The NISMART–2 and NISMART–3 law enforcement surveys collected data about stereotypical kidnappings from a national sample of law enforcement agencies (LEAs). They used a two-stage methodology that ensured effective national coverage of these abductions, efficiently located the cases and their data sources, and efficiently obtained substantial details about the cases in interviews with the investigating officers. The NISMART–2 results determined that stereotypical kidnappings were quite rare. An estimated 115 children experienced incidents nationwide in 1997.

NISMART–3, conducted in 2012, replicated the law enforcement survey methodology used in NISMART–2. The NISMART-3 LES introduced a new relationship category: online meeting. Cases in which perpetrators met victims online were defined as involving strangers or slight acquaintances so that telephone interviews could be completed for such cases. An item was added to ask respondents whether technology such as cell phones or the internet played a role in the investigation.

### 3. NISMART-4 DESIGN AND OBJECTIVES

Upon the completion of the NISMART-3 studies, it was evident that household survey methodology, which had served as the principal data source for NISMART’s estimates of episode children and missing children, was no longer an efficient and cost-effective method for obtaining the data OJJDP required to respond to the legislative mandate. The multiple-survey methodology provided too few cases of nonfamily abductions to provide a reliable estimate of children with that episode type and the juvenile facilities study provided too few cases of runaways from those institutions to contribute to the household survey estimate. The relatively low numbers of missing children and the large samples of households needed to identify adequate samples of qualifying cases through those interviews, combined with the seriously declining response rates for household surveys and the concomitant greater cost of achieving acceptable response rates, made it infeasible to estimate numbers of episode children and missing children with data from household surveys of parents (and youth). Thus, the redesign of NISMART–4 focused on basing all estimates on law enforcement data—abandoning efforts to collect episodes of caretaker missing children and episode children directly from households and relying instead on those reported to law enforcement agencies.

The rationale for this redirection hinged on the fact that the law enforcement survey (LES) had been a successful element of NISMART in that it had been accomplished at a reasonable cost and yielded high participation rates in an era of declining participation rates through other methodologies. It had produced a result that comports with other sources of information about serious nonfamily kidnappings, like data from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), has been widely cited in the media, and is the topic of the most queries for updated data from policymakers, social scientists, and the public. However, this redirection faced two major limitations:

- The primary goal of the LES has been estimating stereotypical kidnappings (SK), which does not fully meet the statutory language requiring information about the “number of children reported missing each year, the number of children who are victims of abduction by strangers, the number of children who are victims of parental kidnappings, and the number of children who are recovered.”

- The LES produces SK estimates that have very large confidence intervals. This meant that, although the order of magnitude is clear, the estimate was very imprecise. Of particular importance, a fairly large underlying change in incidence could not be detected with statistical confidence.

These developments and limitations framed the goals of this NISMART-4: reliable and cost-effective study designs that would allow for more frequent replication, and the use of law enforcement data – which has been consistently one of the most successful elements of past NISMARTs – to produce reliable and accurate estimates on the number of child victims of stereotypical (stranger) kidnapping, and to advance the field’s understanding of our Nation’s missing children problem.

The primary objectives of NISMART-4 were to (1) design and pilot test a more efficient methodology for collecting national data on the child victims of stereotypical kidnappings known to law enforcement (LES-SK); (2) implement the redesigned LES-SK survey to produce national estimates; (3) develop and pilot test instruments and sampling methods to collect information from law enforcement agencies on family abductions (FA) and other types of missing children (MC), and returned children in preparation for a national survey; and (4) produce statistical products, methodological reports, and other scholarly research reports for dissemination to the public.

**NISMART-4 comprised three pilot studies and a full national survey:**

- The Law Enforcement Survey on Missing Children (LES-MC) – pilot study\*
- The Law Enforcement Survey on Family Abduction (LES-FA) – pilot study\*
- The Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping (LES-SK) – pilot study\*
- The Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping (LES-SK) – full national survey

\*Companion reports for the three NISMART-4 pilot studies – the *Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping* (LES-SK), the *Law Enforcement Survey on Family Abduction* (LES-FA), and the *Law Enforcement Survey on Missing Children* (LES-MC) – are available as separate reports.

## 4. THE LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVEY ON STEREOTYPICAL KIDNAPPING (LES-SK)

*The Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping* (LES-SK) component of NISMART-4 was designed to measure the national incidence of stereotypical kidnappings – the most severe subtype of nonfamily abduction – that occurred between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. Sufficiently rare to be uncountable in a reasonably-sized household survey, researchers have, since NISMART-2, gone directly to law enforcement to collect these data. Prior to NISMART-4, earlier cycles of the stereotypical kidnapping survey were conducted solely through telephone interviews with investigators. The LES-SK attempted to gather much of the same information from an abbreviated, self-administered online survey. An earlier pilot study, conducted in the winter of 2019/2020, was an effort to ensure the new web questionnaire was clear, user-friendly, and gathered all of the relevant important information needed for classification and analysis of stereotypical kidnappings. (See LES-SK Pilot Report, Appendix A).

NISMART limits the definition of stereotypical kidnappings to cases where children were abducted under especially ominous circumstances. This definition includes cases in which a child (age 0 to 17) was taken by a stranger<sup>1</sup> or slight acquaintance,<sup>2</sup> moved at least 20 feet or held for at least 1 hour, and one or more of the following serious circumstances applied: the child was kept overnight or longer, taken 50 miles or more, held for ransom, killed (or the abductor attempted to kill the child<sup>3</sup>), or the perpetrator intended to keep the child permanently.

This report presents technical details about the NISMART-4 LES-SK methodology, including the sample selection (Chapter 5), the instrument design (Chapter 6), the methodology used to collect the data (Chapter 7), the assessment of cases against the study criteria for stereotypical kidnappings to determine eligibility for inclusion (Chapter 8), the procedures used in weighting the data and computing variances on the study estimates (Chapter 9), the findings and trends (Chapter 10), the challenges encountered in the conduct of NISMART-4 LES-SK (Chapter 11), and the recommendations for future cycles (Chapter 12).

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<sup>1</sup> Stranger is defined as: A perpetrator whom the child or family does not know or a perpetrator of unknown identity whom law enforcement investigators reasonably believe is a stranger.

<sup>2</sup> Slight acquaintance is defined as: A nonfamily perpetrator whose name is unknown to the child or family prior to the abduction and whom the child or family did not know well enough to speak to, or a recent acquaintance who the child or family have known for less than 6 months, or someone the family or child have known for longer than 6 months but have seen less than once a month.

<sup>3</sup> Following the LES-SK Pilot Study, “Attempted to kill but the child lived” was added to the SK criteria.

## 5. LES-SK SAMPLE SELECTION

The NISMART-4 LES agencies were sampled according to a stratified cluster design, where the clusters were primary sampling units (PSUs) consisting of a single county or a group of small counties. The sampling frame was created from a national list of all counties in the United States and stratified by Census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West) and metro status (Core Based Statistical Areas, or CBSA vs non CBSA). Counties on the list with an age 0-17 population of less than 2,500 were grouped within the same stratum and state to form PSUs until the minimum size criteria of 2,500 was met. This resulted in a sampling frame of 2,528 PSUs from the national list of 3,143 counties. The sample size of 400 PSUs was allocated proportionally to eight strata based on age 0-17 population from the 2009 Census Population Estimates. Prior to sampling, 75 PSUs on the frame were identified that would be sampled with certainty because their measure of size exceeded 186, 370, the overall sampling interval ( $\sum_{i=1}^N mos_i / n$ ). These certainty PSUs were placed in their own stratum. PSUs in the remaining strata were then selected with probability proportional to the number of children age 0 to 17 years old using systematic sampling. Of the 400 PSUs sampled, 26 consisted of more than one county for a total of 433 counties. Table 5-1 below summarizes the PSU sampling for the NISMART-4 LES-SK.

**Table 5-1. Stratum Definitions and Allocation for Sample of 400 PSUs**

Stratum	CBSA Status	Census Region	PSUs in Frame	Counties in Frame	2010 Population Age 0-17	PSUs Sampled	Counties Sampled
Certainty	CBSA		75	75	28,233,731	75	75
Noncertainty	CBSA	Northeast	157	159	7,098,705	50	50
		Midwest	466	512	9,978,837	70	76
		South	772	829	17,903,377	126	136
		West	204	213	6,930,016	49	50
	nonCBSA	Northeast	36	41	293,299	2	2
		Midwest	306	529	1,468,096	10	19
		South	411	571	2,115,457	15	19
		West	101	214	526,689	3	6
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,528</b>	<b>3,143</b>	<b>74,548,207</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>433</b>



We identified the law enforcement agencies located in the sampled counties using the 2016 Law Enforcement Agency Roster (LEAR) database, downloaded from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/36697>), as well as the USACOPS database (<https://www.usacops.com>). In addition, the 47 state police records for the 47 states represented by the sampled PSUs were included, with instructions to respond to the questionnaire only related to the 433 sampled counties. Person-level contact information for the law enforcement agencies was not present on LEAR or in this combined database; thus, to obtain this information, we linked the combined database with the National Directory of Law Enforcement Agencies (NPSIB).

These sources provided a database listing all of the municipal and county law enforcement agencies and state criminal investigation agencies in the United States by address, county, and other details. We used this database to identify all the municipal and county law enforcement agencies and state criminal investigation agencies within each of the 433 sampled counties, resulting in a total of 4,719 agencies in the sample. All of these agencies received mail surveys. Agencies were determined to be in scope if they had jurisdiction to investigate child abductions. Jurisdiction was determined by a question in the mail survey which asked, “Does your agency have jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of cases in which a child is reported as missing or abducted?”

## 6. LES-SK SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Three survey instruments were used in the national LES-SK: the survey screener, a short form (Phase 1) and the full (case) survey (Phase 2).

**Phase 1: Screener survey (Appendix B).** Data collection for the LES-SK commenced with the identification of potential SK cases. These “candidate cases” were collected by completion of a screener survey, which was mailed to agencies but also available on the web. The screener instrument included two main sections: one that asked whether the agency had investigated any child abductions that met the definition of a stereotypical kidnapping, and a second section that asked whether it had investigated any child homicides (which may have originated as a stereotypical kidnapping). If agencies had such cases, the screener asked them to provide case numbers along with name and contact information, including email address, for the primary investigating officer for each case. If respondents reported no qualifying cases, they were asked the year in which their agency last investigated a case that would have met the LES-SK criteria (if ever) and whether they were aware of any cases of stereotypical kidnapping in their area or state during the study period. Finally, the survey asked respondents to verify their answers by checking investigation records and/or discussing the survey questions with the agency’s investigative unit(s) and to check off the verification methods they used.

Formatted for TeleForm optical scanning, the mail screener provided navigational guides that defined how respondents should move through the screener survey. Arrows were placed at junctures so that respondents could easily follow correct pathways through the survey. Instructions and clarifications were clearly distinguishable from the survey questions themselves and placed where they were relevant. We included a list of frequently asked questions and a glossary of study terms, the toll-free number for the Westat Human Subjects Protection Office (Westat’s Institutional Review Board), as well as the study’s toll-free line so that respondents could call if they had questions for the researchers.

**Phase 1: Short 4-question form (Appendix C).** This short form was sent to nonresponding agencies and included four essential questions, including whether the agency: (1) had jurisdiction to conduct investigations of missing children, (2) between January 1 and December 31, 2019 had investigated any cases where a child was abducted by a stranger, slight acquaintance or unknown person, (3) had

investigated any child homicides in the same timeframe that met these criteria, or (4) had any child abductions from prior years that were open for investigation during the study timeframe.

**Phase 2: Full case survey (Appendix D).** A primary objective of NISMART-4 was to implement a newly abbreviated LES-SK case survey. Comprised of five sections, the full survey instrument was designed to capture details surrounding a single case.<sup>4</sup> An earlier LES-SK pilot test (Appendix A) had included post-survey debriefings with investigator respondents during which research staff actively solicited problems encountered with question language and the ability of the survey to accurately collect the details required to understand and classify a case. As a result of the pilot, researchers identified definitional issues and, as noted elsewhere, marginally expanded the definition of SK to include not just episodes resulting in the death of a child but also any attempt to kill the child (even if not successful).<sup>5</sup> Comments from responding investigators around the growing importance of technology as a crime solving tool also prompted researchers to update existing questions on technology.

- **1. Preliminary Questions:** This first section was designed to confirm the case under question met the criteria for stereotypical kidnapping, and captured the current case status, agency role in the investigation, any involvement of other agencies, and the number of perpetrators and victims. Cases screened out by the survey logic and presumed ineligible were reviewed by staff before receiving a final disposition code of OOS.
- **2. Child Characteristics:** This survey section was designed to collect victim demographics and living arrangements, and probed more thoroughly into the relationship, if any, of the victim to the perpetrator, and details of the abduction. There were loops to record information for up to five child victims. Eligible cases had at least one victim-perpetrator pair in which the perpetrator was a stranger or slight acquaintance.

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<sup>4</sup> A single survey was designed to cover one case. Investigators handling more than one case were asked to complete a survey for each case.

<sup>5</sup> Two of the pilot cases involved episodes in which the perpetrator tried unsuccessfully to kill the child, in one case via strangulation and in another by throwing the child into a body of water. Under the old criteria, a death in these cases would have qualified the cases for inclusion, but both children miraculously survived.

- **3. Perpetrator Characteristics:** This section of the survey included information about perpetrator demographic characteristics, life circumstances at the time of the crime, prior offenses, and current status in the criminal justice system. In cases with multiple perpetrators, respondents were instructed to answer about the perpetrator most responsible for the incident.
- **4. Crime Characteristics:** This section of the survey included questions about the site where the victim was last seen; presence of other children in the vicinity of the abduction; initial contact between the victim and perpetrator(s); connection of the abduction with other crimes (gang activity, drug or sex trafficking, criminal networks, serial killings); and whether the internet played a role in prior contact or in leading up to the abduction.
- **5. Investigation:** This section gathered data on the investigative activities and tools, including new language on the expanding use of digital and technological resources, including social media, in providing evidence, leads, or other information.

## 7. LES-SK DATA COLLECTION

The methodology of the LES–SK departed from that of the two previous NISMART law enforcement surveys (LES-2, 1997 and LES-3, 2011) in two key ways:

- In Phase 1, prompted in part by uncertainty around COVID-19-related workplace conditions in LEA offices, an online screener – an alternative to the traditional mail screener survey – was offered for the first time.
- In Phase 2, as originally planned and in place of collecting case-level data from investigators via lengthy telephone interviews, NISMART-4 offered investigators the opportunity to complete the Phase 2 case survey online, obviating the need to schedule an interview. This self-administered survey was available 24/7 and had been shortened to streamline the survey experience for respondents.

**Phase 1: Screener Survey.** In Phase 1 of data collection, each agency was asked to complete a brief screener, asking (1) if the agency had jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of missing children<sup>6</sup> and, (2) if the agency had any relevant cases between January 1 and December 31, 2019. All sampled agencies were initially contacted via a series of mailings. All mail was addressed by name to the chief law enforcement officer in each agency. Where a name was not available, mailings were addressed to the Chief of Police, Sheriff, Marshal or Chief Law Enforcement Officer, dependent on the agency type. Addressees were advised, *“You have been identified as the most knowledgeable person to respond to this request. If not, please forward to the person most able to respond.”* (See Appendix E for Phase 1 letters and postcard.)

- In Week 1, screener survey packets were mailed to the law enforcement agencies in the NISMART-4 sample. Included in each packet was an invitation letter (signed by the project’s co-principal investigators, Drs. Andrea Sedlak and David Finkelhor); the TeleForm screener survey in booklet form (including a glossary of terms and frequently asked questions); and two letters of support: one from the National Institute of Justice/Department of Justice of (signed by the project officer, Benjamin Adams), and a second letter from NCMEC (signed by John E. Bischoff III, vice president, Missing Children Division)

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<sup>6</sup> Agencies without jurisdiction were deemed ineligible and removed from the sample.

- In Week 3, a postcard – the first of three reminders – was mailed to all sampled agencies.
- In Weeks 6 and 8, nonrespondents received up to two more reminder letters. Both reminder letters included fresh copies of the TeleForm screener (with glossary and FAQs), and a letter from the co-principal investigators, together with postage-paid return envelopes. The third reminder (Week 8) also included a second letter of support from the NIJ/DOJ project officer.

**COVID-19 and LEA Workplaces.** Notably, the Week 6 reminder letter introduced the new option of completing the screener survey online. This impromptu alternative to the mail screener was a response to uncertainty around the impact of COVID-19 in law enforcement offices. Project staff asked themselves: Who is coming into LEA offices during the pandemic? How is the mail handled during COVID? Would it be harder to pass mail forward or route it to the addressee or another respondent in the agency? This online screener was a hedge against these unknown conditions.

- In Week 11, an abbreviated, 4-question short form screener was sent to all nonresponding agencies.

### **Phase 1 follow-up calls to nonresponding agencies**

In early February 2021, after the last mailing was delivered and agencies had been given a final period to respond to the mail campaign, research assistants at UNH began telephoning nonresponding agencies to obtain completed mail screeners. (Prior to calling, research staff were trained on the screener content and participated in a variety of mock role plays with other team members to ensure each RA was comfortable with the instrument and process.) Agency respondents were asked to either complete the online screener or (at least) to answer the four basic questions on the short form – optimally over the phone. Where needed, special arrangements were made to assist agencies, including contacting sub-stations or multiple departments within an agency, and retrieving and compiling information from different units, such as homicide, missing persons, or criminal investigations. A total of 2,153 agencies were contacted for follow-up. In total, research staff completed 187 screener interviews with agencies, and follow-up efforts to encourage participation contributed to the completion of screeners by another 456 agencies. Calling was completed by April 26, 2021.

Table 7-1 shows the final dispositions of the screener surveys. The Phase 1 response rate was 72.33 percent.

**Table 7-1. Final Disposition of the LES-SK Screener and Short Form**

DISPOSITION Agency sample (N) 4,700	Count	Percent	Response rate
<b>Phase 1 – Screener: Agency level</b>			
TeleForm completes	1,981	43.43%	
Web completes	784	17.19%	
Telephone completes	187	4.17%	
Short form (4-quex)	591	12.96%	
<i>Total completed TeleForm, web, phone and short form</i>	<i>3,543</i>		
<b>Total agencies unduplicated<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,299</b>	<b>72.33%</b>	<b>72.33%</b>
Nonresponse/Refusals	1,261	27.65%	27.65%
<b>Out of scope agencies</b>	<b>139</b>		
No jurisdiction	118		
Dissolved agency	21		
<b>Adjusted N</b>	<b>4,561</b>		<b>100.00%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Total agencies submitting one or more screener: 3059 agencies that responded once, 233 that responded twice, and 7 that responded 3 times.

**Phase 2: Full Case Survey.** In Phase 2 of data collection, researchers contacted the LE officer identified in the Phase 1 screener survey as the “*key investigating officer or who in your agency is now the most knowledgeable person about the case.*” This was done on a flow basis, in batches, beginning in Week 7, as Phase 1 screeners with candidate cases were processed, to contact the investigator while memory within the agency of the earlier screener survey might have proved helpful. (See Appendix F for Phase 2 letters and emails.)

Although the emails of investigators were collected (along with names) in Phase 1, the initial attempt to contact investigators was through the mail. Subsequent contact efforts – up to three reminders for nonrespondents – were sent via email every 2 weeks. All hard copy and digital correspondence referenced the candidate case(s) by case ID and provided a link to the web survey, together with a unique access key. Once on the survey website, an IRB-approved explanation of the survey, together with FAQs, a glossary of key terms, and the Federal Assurances of Confidentiality and Other Notices, were provided. The website also provided contact information for the Westat Human Subjects

Protection Office (Westat's IRB) and the research team (email, telephone) if the respondent had questions.

### **Phase 2 follow-up calls to nonresponding investigators**

Once again, research assistants followed up by phone with nonrespondents, i.e., investigators who did not respond to mail or email requests to fill out the online questionnaire. Both RAs had worked on other police case survey studies, and were trained by UNH data collection lead and co-investigator Dr. Kimberly Mitchell. In preparation, the RAs were trained to administer the web survey as a telephone interview: reading the questions from the web survey and entering responses directly into the web application. The RAs participated in role plays designed to anticipate various respondent scenarios, including responding to questions from participants. Telephone follow-up continued until the survey was completed or the Phase 2 field period ended. In some instance, interviewing staff attempted to reach someone else in the agency. In other instances, staff filed Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to get records from the agency about the case and then completed the questionnaire from the case records.

**Further Efforts to Locate Eligible Cases.** In addition to identifying candidate cases using the Phase 1 screener survey, we undertook further efforts to identify eligible cases.

- The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) provided spreadsheets with information about nonfamily abductions during the LES-SK timeframe. NCMEC case information included: the LEA case ID, case status (all listed cases were “Recovered” status), date of the call to LE (to report the child missing), date of last contact (DLC), age of the missing child, missing state, recovery state, date of recovery, as well as the name of the LEA, officer, phone and/or email, when available. Interviewers communicated with law enforcement agencies to assess whether the NCMEC cases fell into the eligible criteria for NISMART-4 LES-SK and, if so, conducted a phone interview with those who were willing to do so. A total of 15 cases were received from NCMEC of which eight cases qualified for follow-up.



- A similar process was used to identify and gather data about cases investigated by the FBI during the study timeframe, although FBI officials were willing to provide information only about closed cases. Of the 15 FBI-provided cases, eight cases qualified for follow-up.
- We also used the internet to conduct a systematic search of newspaper databases, including kProQuest US Newsstream, EbscoHost, and Google News. We searched for articles from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 using combinations of the following keywords: *abduction, kidnapping, stranger, nonfamily, and nonfamilial*. A comparable search was conducted for news articles through January 31, 2020 to capture any cases that may have occurred in late 2019 and did not receive media attention or the victim was not recovered until January of 2020. A total of 32 cases were identified through the newspaper search of which eight cases were qualified for follow-up.

We contacted law enforcement agencies about cases found in newspaper searches if they appeared to involve the abduction of a minor by a stranger or slight acquaintance that met other NISMART criteria for stereotypical kidnapping, and they occurred in a sampled county. When we confirmed with law enforcement investigators that these cases met LES-SK eligibility criteria, we conducted follow-up telephone interviews, where possible.

Table 7-2 shows the number of cases identified for follow-up through each source because they appeared to meet NISMART LES-SK eligibility criteria.

**Table 7-2. Candidate Cases Identified From Sources Other Than Screener (Other Sources)**

Other-sourced cases	FBI	NCMEC	Newspapers	Total
Outside sample area	3	4	6	13
Outside of study time frame	1			1
In sample area – already identified through screener	3	3	6	12
In sample area – failed SK definition			12	12
In sample area – follow-up*	8	8	8	24 (21*)
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>62</b>

\*Adjustment for three duplicate cases.

Table 7-3 shows the number of disposition of all cases identified through the screener and from outside sources.

**Table 7-3. Disposition of Candidate Cases from All Sources: Screener and Other Sources**

Phase 2 – Full Survey: case level	Cases from agency screener	Cases from outside sources	Total	%
<i>n</i>	113	21	134	
<b>Case surveys completed</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>77.61%</b>
<i>Self-administered surveys (in-scope)</i>	15		15	
<i>Self-administered surveys (OOS)</i>	56		56	
<i>Interviewer-administered (phone) surveys (in-scope)</i>	4	1	5	
<i>Interviewer-administered (phone) survey (OOS)</i>	17	2	19	
<i>Survey completed from information in public sources (in-scope)</i>		7	7	
<i>Survey completed from information in public sources (OOS)</i>		2	2	
<b>No case survey completed but case finalized as OOS<sup>1</sup></b>				
Direct refusals	7		7	
Max contact/nonresponse	6	2	8	
<i>All confirmed in scope cases</i>	19	8	27	<b>20.15%</b>
<i>All out of scope cases</i>	81	11	92	<b>68.66%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Found to be OOS through correspondence, other contact with LEA; survey not completed.

## 8. LES-SK DATA CLEANING AND CODING

Data were downloaded from respective SQL Server databases, coded and cleaned for analysis. Screener data captured by TeleForm were exported and securely stored, together with data downloaded from the web screener and extracted Phase 2 case survey data.

**Phase 1: Multiple Screener Submissions by an Agency.** During Phase 1, 240 agencies submitted more than one screener.<sup>7</sup> Our original thinking, and a common practice in the instance of multiple submissions by a single entity, was to take the earliest submission by date. However, a program feature of the web screener allowed us to determine, upon submission, the percentage of completeness (fully answered) and partial completeness (fully answered + partially answered<sup>8</sup>) of each web screener completed. Whereas a TeleForm screener coded **complete** did not necessarily mean the respondent completed every question, a web status of **Submitted, complete** did. Consequently, presented with a TeleForm **complete** and a web **Submitted, complete**, we opted for the web submission. Moreover, since we were testing the use of the web with this iteration, we decided there might be added value in taking the web screener over the mail, where both were submitted.

Consequently, the following rules were applied for multiple screener submissions:

- If TeleForm screener and web screener, *Submitted, complete*, take web.
- If TeleForm screener and web screener, *Submitted, incomplete*, take earliest submission by date.
- If Short Form and TeleForm screener, take TeleForm.
- If Short Form and web screener, take web.
- If Short Form and web screener, *Started, not completed*, review data string to determine most complete record.

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<sup>7</sup>Total agencies submitting one or more screener: 3,059 agencies that responded once, 233 that responded twice, and 7 that responded three times.

<sup>8</sup>Partially answered is usually relevant for table-like questions where respondents may leave one or more rows blank.

## Phase 2: Pre-evaluative Coding

For Phase 2, researchers relied on the web survey pathways to identify and screen out two classes of ineligible cases: 30 cases that did not meet the basic features of nonfamily abductions (SK1.2),<sup>9</sup> and 17 cases that did not occur during the study timeframe (SK1.3). The latter were largely cases from prior years involving children who had vanished or unsolved homicides, which police considered open.

Another 11 respondents had answered “no” to the six key SK conditions (SK1.4a-e); responding no to all six of these markers of severity jumps the respondent ahead in the survey to SK1.19. (*Please describe briefly what occurred in this incident, as far as you know. How did the abduction begin? What did the perpetrator(s) do to the child victim(s)? How did it end?*), where a narrative of the case is collected. These 11 cases, with their narratives, were set aside for further review. After additional examination of the case narratives by a co-principal investigator and the project director, 10 of these cases were also disqualified. This reduced the number of completed surveys (n = 104) for further review to 47. Table 8-1 depicts cases disqualified in the pre-evaluative coding phase and cases remaining for evaluative coding.

**Table 8-1. Cases Disqualified in Pre-Evaluative Coding Phase**

Coding	Cases
<i>Completed surveys</i>	<b>104</b>
<b>Reasons for Disqualification:</b>	
Case did not meet nonfamily abduction criteria (SK1.2 = no)	30
Case did not occur during study timeframe (SK1.3 = no)	17
Case did not meet SK criteria (SK1.4a-e = no)	10
<i>Cases remaining for evaluative coding</i>	<b>47</b>

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<sup>9</sup>For example, a case involved a child 17 or younger, abducted by someone who was not a family member, AND was either moved at least 20 feet or held for at least 1 hour.

## Phase 2: Evaluative Coding

The primary function of the evaluative coding was to identify whether a perpetrator's actions in relation to a specific victim qualified as a stereotypical abduction based on the definitions of stereotypical abduction established for NISMART. The evaluative coding was conducted by a co-principal investigator and the project director. The process entailed reviewing documentation associated with each case and applying NISMART criteria to determine whether perpetrator's actions toward a specific victim qualified as (1) a nonfamily abduction and (2) a stereotypical abduction (a subset of NFA) under the NISMART definitions of such. Both qualifications had to be met before the victim/perpetrator pair was considered "countable" for the NISMART-4 LES-SK.

**Qualifying as a Nonfamily Abduction.** Under NISMART definitions, there are two principal types of nonfamily abductions: Nonfamily Abduction Type 1 (NFA1), which involved a forcible taking or detention, and Nonfamily Abduction Type 2 (NFA2), which did not require force. For NFA1, the child had to be taken by the use of force or threat, or detained by the use of force or threat for a substantial period and in a place of isolation<sup>10</sup> by a nonfamily member without lawful authority or parental permission. For the second type (NFA2), the child (14 or younger, or 17 or younger and mentally incompetent at the time of the crime) had to be lured, taken, or detained by a nonfamily member in an isolated place for a substantial period of time, without either lawful authority or parental permission, and the perpetrator had to have (a) concealed the child's whereabouts; (b) required ransom, goods, or services; or (c) expressed an intention to keep the child permanently. In general, "intent to keep" the child included (1) the abduction of very young children where the perpetrator appeared to intend to raise the child as his or her own, or (2) cases where a perpetrator intended to keep the child indefinitely for sexual purposes, such as prostitution.

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<sup>10</sup>Isolated means the child was not able to leave on his or her own and had no opportunity to appeal for help.

**Qualifying as a Stereotypical Kidnapping.** To also qualify as a stereotypical kidnapping, a nonfamily abduction had to fulfill additional requirements: (a) the perpetrator and child must have been strangers, recent or only slight acquaintances, or still of unknown identity but a stranger or slight acquaintance was a likely suspect; and (b) at least one of the following markers of severity must have applied:

- The child was detained overnight or longer,
- The child was killed,
- The child was transported at least 50 miles,
- The child was held for ransom,
- The perpetrator intended to keep the child permanently, or
- The perpetrator attempted to kill the child, but the child lived (this criterion was added in NISMART-4).

Table 8-2 depicts “failure” numbers for 20 cases disqualified through this evaluation process.

**Table 8-2. Cases Disqualified in Evaluative Coding Phase**

Reasons for Disqualification	Cases
failure of child-perpetrator relationship to qualify	11
failure to meet one of the required markers of severity	6
failure to qualify as an NFA	3
<b>Total dropped</b>	<b>20</b>

**Countability.** Classification as SK began with the victim-perpetrator pair, the focus of all evaluative coding decisions. The first decision was whether the victim-perpetrator pair met the NISMART stereotypical kidnapping criteria. If so, then the pair was considered to be countable in the stereotypical kidnapping incidence estimates. Following from this, any victim in a countable victim-perpetrator pair was classified as a countable victim and any perpetrator in a countable pair was classified as a countable perpetrator. Finally, cases with any countable victim-perpetrator pair were classified as countable cases.

Table 8-3 depicts the countability decisions on the numbers of cases, victims, and perpetrators. Of the 47 cases remaining after pre-evaluative coding, 27 were classified as countable based on these requirements. These 27 cases involved a total of 28 countable victims and 34 countable perpetrators.

**Table 8-3. Number of Countable Cases, Victims, and Perpetrators**

Unit	Countable after evaluative coding
Cases	27
Victims	28
Perpetrators	34

## 9. LES-SK WEIGHTING AND VARIANCE ESTIMATION

A weight was created for each agency and case to allow the responding agencies and case interviews to represent all law enforcement agencies in the United States. A set of 80 jackknife replicate weights was also created for each agency and case for estimating variances.

**Agency Weights.** The agency weight reflects the PSU probability of selection and adjusts for nonresponse at the agency level. Since there was no sampling of agencies within the PSU, the agency base weight = PSU weight. The agency base weight was adjusted for agency level nonresponse by Census region and agency size, because response rates were lower for smaller agencies and those of unknown size, and for those in the south. Four size classes were defined by the quartiles of the distribution of number of officers, plus an additional category for agencies of unknown size. The nonresponse adjustment factor was calculated separately for the 20 region x size cells. The final agency weight can be written as:

Final agency weight = PSU weight x agency nonresponse adjustment factor

$$= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N_h} MOS_i}{n_h * MOS_i} \times \frac{\sum_{j \in eligible} agencybase\ wt_j}{\sum_{j \in elig, resp} agencybase\ wt_j}$$

Where  $MOS_i$  is the age 0-17 pop for the  $i$ -th PSU,  $N_h$  is the number of PSUs in the stratum on the frame, and  $n_h$  is the number of PSUs sampled in stratum h. The numerator of the nonresponse adjustment factor is summed over the eligible agencies within the nonresponse adjustment cell, and the denominator is summed over the eligible responding agencies in the cell. The nonresponse adjustment factor distributes the agency base weights of the eligible agencies that refused or did not respond to the eligible agencies within the same region/size class who did respond. The final agency weight is zero for nonresponding agencies, and is equal to the agency base weight for ineligible agencies.

**Case Weights.** The case base weight is equal to the final agency weight from which the case originated, since there was no sampling of cases within agencies.



The case base weights were adjusted for case interview nonresponse by PSU status (certainty PSUs, noncertainty PSUs) and region. The nonresponse case weight can be written as:

Nonresponse case weight = final agency weight x case nonresponse adjustment factor

$$= \text{final agency weight} \times \frac{\sum_{k \in \text{eligible}} \text{casebasewt}_k}{\sum_{k \in \text{elig, resp}} \text{casebasewt}_k}$$

where the case interview nonresponse adjustment factor is calculated within PSU status/region class. The numerator is summed over cases that were eligible (in-scope) for NISMART-4; the denominator is summed over the eligible cases that had a completed interview.

Finally, the nonresponse case weights were trimmed to create the final case weights. The trimming threshold was set at 4.5 times the mean nonresponse case weights. That is, if the nonresponse case weight is greater than the trimming threshold, the final case weight is set to the trimming threshold.

The LES sample of eligible NISMART4 cases includes 28 victims. This number reflects 15 percent of the estimated national total of victims of abductions occurring during the study year; i.e., the 28 cases weight up to a national estimate of 182 victims.

**Replicate Weights.** To account for the stratification, clustering and unequal weighting in the LES sample design, special procedures are required to produce correct standard errors for the survey estimates. Replication techniques compute standard errors by measuring the variability among “replicates” of the full sample (Krewski & Rao, 1981). The replicate samples are subsets of the full sample created to mirror the design of the full sample. As in NISMART-3, the jackknife replication method was used to create a set of replicate weights for this purpose. The paired stratified jackknife method (JK2) was used to create a set of 80 replicate weights for each agency and for each case to estimate agency level and case level standard errors.

To create 80 replicate weights for each LES PSU, the 400 sampled PSUs were sorted by stratum, then by state and PSU measure of size within stratum to reflect the sort order used at the time of sampling. Adjacent noncertainty PSUs were paired in the sorted list within each stratum and the pairs were numbered within each stratum from 1 to 80 (beginning with 1 again if there were more than 80 pairs). This defined 80 “variance strata” (or pseudo strata) with two “variance units” within each one, where variance unit 1 consisted of the PSUs that were first in their pair and variance unit 2 the PSUs that were second. The k-th replicate weight was created by randomly dropping one variance unit in variance stratum k and multiplying the weights of the PSUs in the remaining variance unit by 2. PSUs in the variance unit that was dropped had their k-th replicate weight set to 0. PSUs in the remaining variance strata had their k-th replicate weight set to the full-sample PSU weight. By repeating this algorithm from k = 1 to 80, 80 replicate weights were generated.

There were 75 certainty PSUs identified prior to sampling that were placed in their own stratum, and 31 additional PSUs identified as certainties during sampling after removing the 75 PSUs from the original eight sampling strata. Since certainty PSUs do not contribute any sampling error to the variance estimates, their replicate weights were all set equal to the PSU full-sample weight so there is no variation among them and they contribute 0 to the variance estimates.

The 80 agency replicate weights were created by multiplying the k-th PSU replicate weight by the agency full-sample weight. Similarly, 80 case replicate weights were created by multiplying the k-th agency replicate weight by the case weight. The agency and case interview nonresponse adjustments were recalculated for each replicate so the sampling error contributed by these adjustments is included in the variance estimates.

**Variance Estimation.** The formula for calculating standard errors using the jackknife replicate weights is:

$$v(\hat{\theta}) = \sum_{k=1}^{80} (\hat{\theta}_{(k)} - \hat{\theta})^2 ; k = 1, 2, \dots, 80, \text{ where } \hat{\theta}_{(k)} \text{ is the estimate of } \theta \text{ based on the k-th}$$

replicate and  $\hat{\theta}$  is the estimate of  $\theta$  based on the full-sample.

## 10. LES-SK TRENDS

The findings reported in this chapter are from the stereotypical kidnapping component of *the Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children* (NISMART-4). The NISMART research program was undertaken in response to the mandate of the 1984 Missing Children’s Assistance Act (Pub. L. 98-473), which requires OJJDP to periodically conduct national incidence studies to determine, for a given year, the actual number of children who are reported missing, abducted by strangers, or kidnapped by a parent as well as the number of children who are recovered. (The Act was amended in 2013 to require such incidence studies to be conducted triennially [Pub. L. 113-38].)

### **Estimated Number of Child Victims of 2019 Stereotypical Kidnappings**

When estimating the number of events from a national sample of law enforcement agencies, it is important to recognize that, although sampling theory and practice provide a point estimate, it is also surrounded by a certain amount of uncertainty. For relatively rare events, the window of uncertainty is relatively wide and the best one can conclude is that the true number falls within a range. Based on the NISMART-4 LES-SK, the number of stereotypically kidnapped children in the year from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, likely fell between 52 and 306. In statistical terms, this means that the true number of victims would fall within this range in 95 out of 100 replicable attempts using the same methodology to estimate the size of the problem. The “point estimate,” the midpoint of this range, was 182 victims. This estimate includes episodes with a stranger or slight acquaintance perpetrator in which a child was moved at least 20 feet or held for at least 1 hour and, additionally, taken or detained overnight, transported 50 or more miles, held for ransom or with the intent to keep the child permanently, or killed (or perpetrator attempted to kill but the child lived).

### **Trend 2011 to 2019**

A key question of interest is whether the number of such kidnappings in 2019 differed from the number estimated in NISMART-3, which was conducted in 2011. The answer to this question is complicated because of the lack of precision in both estimates.

The number of events calculated from the NISMART-3 study for stereotypical kidnapping victims was estimated to be 102, with a range between 32 and 165 (the 95% confidence interval). Although the NISMART-3 point estimate appears lower when compared to the 2019 estimate from NISMART-4, it would be misleading to conclude there was any true change in the incidence of these extreme events. More intensive analysis of the study data and related source information leads to strong cautions about inferring any trends from the comparison of these findings. The cautions stem from three sources: first, the overlapping ranges of the two estimates; second, the distributions of the cases collected in the NISMART-4 study; and third, the comparison of study findings with data from other sources.

First, when analyzing trends based on samples of cases, the range of an estimate is as important as its midpoint. Even though the 2011 estimate was lower, its range (confidence interval 32-165 victims) overlaps substantially with the 2019 interval (52-306 victims), indicating that the estimates are likely not statistically different.<sup>11</sup> The most one can say is that the two estimates are in the same range.

Second, as to the distribution of cases, the NISMART samples of law enforcement agencies consist of different categories or “strata.” Agencies are sampled at different rates based on the sizes of their child populations. Some agency jurisdictions are extremely large, and these are included in the study without any subsampling (i.e., with certainty), the so-called “certainty stratum.” The remaining thousands of U.S. jurisdictions are sampled systematically so that a subset stands in to represent all the agencies in jurisdictions of their size. Some of the sampled subsets stand in for dozens or hundreds of small jurisdictions which are numerous across the country. In NISMART-4 there were cases reported from four smaller jurisdictions that represented unusually large numbers of others that were not included in the study (either because they were not sampled or did not participate). The “weighted” contribution of these smaller jurisdictions added 117 cases to the estimate. This large contribution from small jurisdictions, while the result of systematic sampling calculation, is part of the components of variability that contribute to the wide confidence interval. To check for this possibility, researchers examined the pattern of change over time from the “certainty stratum,” the jurisdictions that were included with certainty in each and not subject to such sampling error. The NISMART-3 estimated total from the certainty stratum was 49 and the NISMART-4 estimated total was 27. This shows a

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<sup>11</sup>Formal estimates of change use the appropriate statistical tests, which have been done here, rather than simply comparing confidence intervals for overlap.

decreased incidence—quite a different pattern of change than the comparison based on the full sample. It appears that cases in some small jurisdictions with large sampling weights may have artificially inflated the overall NISMART-4 point estimate. Adding to the concern, the inclusion of proportionally more cases from smaller jurisdictions in NISMART-4 might have been exacerbated by a technological change: some of the search for cases in recent NISMARTs was augmented by electronic searches in newspaper databases. While it was not possible in the current study to determine if news sources from smaller jurisdictions have become more available due to improved internet access, this might have artificially inflated the NISMART-4 estimates.

Third, to check trend consistency with other evidence, researchers looked at two other data sources with information on stranger kidnappings, albeit sources without the careful definitional and statistical rigor of the NISMART studies. These sources were the FBI's Missing Person data from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the FBI National Incidence Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data on reported crimes. The Missing Persons reports from the NCIC show stranger kidnappings trending from 384 to 322 in 2011 to 2019. The analysis of stranger kidnappings in the NIBRS crime reporting system (whose scope of jurisdictions increased in number from 2011 to 2019) showed rates of stranger kidnappings trending from 5.4 to 4.1 per million children. Both of these sources suggested a decrease in stranger kidnappings of children.

Based on these various lines of inquiry, it is the conclusion of the study that it be would misleading to interpret NISMART-4 as finding an increase in stranger kidnappings. The proper interpretation is that the data do not demonstrate any change in rates.

Statistical tables summarizing estimates of the incidence and characteristics of stereotypical kidnappings of children in NISMART-4 and with comparisons to NISMART-3 can be found in Appendix G. When referencing these tables, the reader should note that some of these estimates are based on small sample sizes and/or have large standard errors, and caution with such estimates is in order. Accordingly, estimates were flagged if there were fewer than 5 cases (and might thereby also be recommended for suppression) or if the coefficient of variation (CV – the ratio of the standard error to the estimate itself) was greater than 50 percent.

## 11. LES-SK CHALLENGES

As reported in the foregoing sections, NISMART-4 focused on methodological revisions prompted by increased reporting requirements and other practical considerations. Although previous NISMART LES-SK cycles were highly successful in achieving high participation rates at reasonable cost, and producing estimates of stereotypical stranger abductions that comported with other sources of information about serious nonfamily kidnapping, the amended Missing Children's Assistance Act required more frequent (triennial) reporting of rates which, in turn, spurred the development of a more cost-effective approach. Consequently, the revised LES-SK moved to web-based implementation with a dramatically shortened questionnaire.

While this LES-SK benefited from an earlier pilot of the Phase 2 survey instrument, a number of new challenges presented themselves – some of which have implications for future, successful data collection.

**Overview: A Year Like None Other.** Data collection for the LES-SK took longer than previous cycles and resulted in a lower response rate. Two events coincided with this timeframe that may have made the survey requirements more burdensome than in the past, despite efforts to facilitate participation through the new online survey.

First, an unforeseen and unprecedented pandemic upended the routines of daily life, worldwide. While COVID-19 restrictions and quarantine protocols varied by state and localities, most workplaces were highly impacted, often resulting in staffing shortages and service workarounds.

Second, social unrest – much of it aimed directly at law enforcement officers – may have been an even more salient event, absorbing the attention of law enforcement agencies and possibly detracting from resources available to respond to the survey. The impact of the COVID-19 disruption and social unrest, both of which captured and held the attention of national media, is suggested in the decreased rates of hiring and increased rates of resignations and retirements among law enforcement officers in this period. Key findings from the *June 2021 Survey on Police Work Force Trends* for the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) found an 18 percent increase in resignations during the 2020-21 period from the previous year (2019-20), and a 45 percent increase in the retirement rate from the previous year.

Hiring rates by responding agencies varied by agency size, with the most “dramatic reductions” in hiring reported by the larger departments: a 29 percent reduction in the hiring rate for agencies with 250-499 officers, and a 36 percent reduction in the hiring rate for agencies with 500 or more officers.<sup>12</sup> (Also of note during this period was a reported pattern of employee resignations across an array of agencies and industries – dubbed the “Great Resignation.”<sup>13</sup> At the time of this report, current theory suggests that trend “is less about resignation than it is about hesitation – worries over COVID-related factors...”<sup>14</sup>).

Neither of the above conditions are likely to reoccur in the future in the same way: unprecedented, unheralded, and simultaneous. However, other, nontransitory challenges came forward during data collection, and prompt us to think ahead to future rounds and possible implications.

1. The first challenge was capturing SK episode details sufficient to understand and count (or disqualify) a case, and which require direct or substantial knowledge by the survey respondent. Details about the cases obtained via the online web survey sometimes lacked sufficient information needed for a ready determination of countability under the NISMART SK definition.
2. The second challenge was accounting for the growing role and reach of the internet and social media in human relationships. (This may be seen as a subset of the first challenge.) Perpetrator/victim relationships formed on the internet are a particular challenge to LES-SK due to the stranger/acquaintance criterion and respondent perception of the perpetrator/victim relationship.
3. Finally, the small number of qualifying cases reported by respondents, as well as lower response rates, made estimating the total number of such rare events nationwide via a probability sample increasingly challenging, and revealed how the usual methods, including nonresponse adjustment, may become less robust under such circumstances.

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<sup>12</sup><https://www.policeforum.org/workforcesurveyjune2021>

<sup>13</sup><https://time.com/6106322/the-great-resignation-jobs/>

<sup>14</sup><https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/18/why-the-great-resignation-may-not-last-very-long.html>

These three challenges are discussed below and motivate the recommendations in the subsequent chapter.

**1. Capturing Case Details.** NISMART-4 LES-SK data may have been compromised by less informed respondents in Phase 1 and thinner case detail in Phase 2. In both phases of data collection, LES-SK depended on informed respondents: in Phase 1, respondents to identify qualifying cases; and in Phase 2, respondents with significant knowledge of the candidate case to respond to a range of questions about the episode.

An Increase in Out-of-scope Cases. Phase 1 respondents listed a number of cases that were ultimately judged to be ineligible. At the end of data collection for LES-SK, 77 out of 104 cases provided in Phase 2 surveys (77.0%) were determined to be out-of-scope upon review<sup>15</sup>; this compares to 65 out of 145 completed and disqualified cases (44.8%) in NISMART-3. The appearance and subsequent disqualification of so many candidate cases confounded the research team: Were the high number of out-of-scope cases a consequence of busy Phase 1 respondents simply not reading our letters and survey directives closely – or did these respondents simply want to tell us about cases they believed were important, irrespective of the criteria specified in the study materials? Could this increase in out-of-scope cases be a consequence of less knowledgeable Phase 2 respondents and/or barer case detail?

Titles, Not Roles. A review of respondent job titles for the Phase 1 screener revealed a wide array of LE personnel, including records clerks and executive assistants who may have little-to-no firsthand knowledge of the case or investigative contact, if any, with the victim or victim’s family. These individuals may also have incompletely canvassed their agency’s cases, omitting potentially countable cases that respondents in earlier NISMART cycles might have enumerated.

Given the impact of unrest on law enforcement staffing for this period, in hindsight, we also wished we knew more about the Phase 2 respondents. While the Phase 1 survey screener specifically requested the name (and email) of the “*key investigating officer or who in your agency is now the most knowledgeable person about the case,*” the screening questionnaire did not ask the role of the proposed respondent for the Phase 2 Survey. We have no way of knowing (simply by title) whether a responding detective or other

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<sup>15</sup>Another eight Phase 2 cases were declared out-of-scope before a survey could be started.



officer was in any way connected to the case in question. All in all, it is reasonable to suspect that some Phase 2 surveys may have been filled out by personnel at some remove from the cases in question.

In Their Own Words. Additionally, the Phase 2 web survey was designed for ease of self-administration. Researchers deliberately kept to a minimum the number of mandatory questions, thereby allowing respondents to proceed in the survey, answering as many questions as possible. Survey completeness by respondents was generally high, yet the study team felt the surveys overall were missing the richness of narrative captured in earlier cycles by interviewers. Open questions – those that allowed the respondent to write freely in text boxes – were generally less utilized or contained less content than we had anticipated or hoped to see. The research team attributed some of this to an absence of human interaction and to writing-averse (or just rushed) respondents. As suggested earlier, the possibility that some respondents lacked in-depth knowledge of the case may have also contributed.

The following example illustrates the importance of a knowledgeable respondent. In the Phase 2 case survey, the term *acquaintance* is discarded and replaced by a series of questions that capture the degree of knowing between the perpetrator and victim(s) and family of victim(s). Respondents answering No, Possibly or Don't know/Cannot determine to ***SK1.12 (Was the perpetrator [most responsible for this incident] a stranger to [the/any] child victim? and/or SK2.5 Was the [most responsible] perpetrator in this incident a stranger to this child or their family?)*** advance in the survey and encounter up to five additional questions that seek to define the degree of knowing (***SK2.7A-E***):

***SK2.7A Before the abduction, was the [most responsible] perpetrator's name known to this child victim or this victim's family?***

***SK2.7B Before the abduction, did this child or family know the [most responsible] perpetrator well enough to speak to?***

***SK2.7C Before the abduction, did this child victim meet the [most responsible] perpetrator on the internet but not in person?***

***SK2.7D Before the abduction, did this child victim or family know the [most responsible] perpetrator for 6 months or less?***

***SK2.7E Before the abduction, did this child victim or family see the [most responsible] perpetrator less than once a month?***

These questions require an uncommon depth of respondent knowledge about the victim/perpetrator relationship. Case investigators may know the answers but also may not – and anyone only passingly familiar with a case may be guessing at these answers. Nor is it likely this level of information can be readily gleaned from a case file.

**2. Defining Relationship in a Digital World.** A distinguishing feature of stereotypical kidnapping is the unfamiliarity of the perpetrator to the victim or victim’s family. During the screener survey phase (Phase 1), sampled agencies were asked for cases where the perpetrator is either a *stranger* or a *slight acquaintance*. NISMART defines the latter as a person with whom the child or family has limited previous contact—a nonfamily perpetrator who “was a recent acquaintance whom the child or family have known for less than 6 months, or someone the family or child have known for longer than 6 months but have seen infrequently (e.g., less than once a month).” While the term *stranger* is almost universally understood, anyone falling short of *stranger* requires the screener respondent to weigh the degree of knowing between the perpetrator and the child and child’s family.

Researchers studying social media and relationship formation have observed the potential of social media sites “to enable relationships that otherwise would be difficult or impossible,” describing online relationships as “new opportunities” (Matook & Butler, 2015). Sadly, these opportunities are all-too-apparent to predators as well as their victims. Instagram, Reddit, Tumblr, Facebook, SnapChat, Kik, and Omegle were all named by investigators in this study, and social media was cited as a relationship formation factor in 28.6 percent (8/28) of countable SK cases. Not surprisingly, respondent perception of these relationships varied, with three SK case respondents answering “no” to SK1.12 (*Was the perpetrator [most responsible for this incident] a stranger to [the/ any] child victim?*) and citing social media as how the perpetrator/victim knew each other. This raises the question: What does it mean to know someone else? In a digital age, a better, more interesting question may be: Can you know someone you have only met virtually (and “gotten to know”) through social media? Judging from internal discussions, this question has as many answers as respondents willing to reply to it. While a consensus on an answer may be difficult to achieve, we agree the question is not going away, and obtaining considerable information about the degree of the child’s and family’s acquaintance with the perpetrator will remain critical to applying the established SK definitions.

**3. Estimating Relatively Rare Events, like Stereotypical Kidnappings, Tests the Limits of Probability Sampling and Inference.** Probability samples generally work quite well for estimating most statistics – totals, means, proportions – courtesy of the Central Limit Theorem and one hundred years of sampling theory and practice. When challenged to estimate relatively rare events, additional information for sample design is useful if not necessary – in this case, population aged 0-17. The efficiency of a sample design can be improved via such population information – or measure of size (MOS) – even if it is not exactly equivalent to the target population or case definition, a correlation alone can be helpful. That correlation is weaker, and behaves less predictably, when designing for relatively rare events like stereotypical kidnappings.

The variation in weights that comes with a stratified, probability proportional to size (PPS) single stage cluster sample, like NISMART, can have somewhat unpredictable effects on estimates and estimates of variance. Nonresponse and the corresponding nonresponse adjustments add to this variation in weights, and run the risk of inflating already large weights. These effects manifest themselves in the variance of the variance, which is a theoretically useful, but practically speaking an immeasurable design characteristic. It can, however, be seen in repeated cross-sectional surveys and samples of the same design, as we have with NISMART, in the variances of estimates within and across (i.e., in comparison) cycles.

Both NISMART-3 and NISMART-4 estimates have fairly large variances associated with them, and therefore wide confidence intervals. In the case of NISMART 4, a large percentage of the weighted estimate can be attributed to a very few cases with large base weights (because of the small PSU MOS, small probability of selection, and resulting large base weights) or cases with large nonresponse adjusted base weights (which result from adjusting for other nonresponding cases from PSUs with small MOS, etc.). Although the final weights were trimmed, we did not consider removing cases with large base weights from the analysis as the latter might be expected by design. In comparison, when restricting analysis and comparison to certainty PSUs, for which there is no sampling error and less weighting effects, the percentage of the weighted estimate is much smaller, and in line with expectations based on NISMART-3 and other external indicators.

## 12. LES-SK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE CYCLES

**1. Incorporate Telephone Follow-up for all Completed Phase 2 Web Surveys.** The benefits of a self-administered web survey – its 24-7 availability, speed and spontaneity (i.e., no fixed appointment) – seem obvious; yet, after review and assessment, our conclusion is that interaction with an interviewer may, in some circumstances, be necessary to acquire the level of detail needed for this subtype of missing children crimes. While we cannot know what we may have missed by relying on the new web instrument, we can read through the collected surveys and see where human interaction might have clarified some answers or brought forth richer detail. We know from experience that investigators are often interested in talking about these cases. Certainly, an interviewer could probe the level of respondent knowledge. The criteria for SK cases are complex and a trained interviewer, listening carefully to an investigator’s responses, can clarify and probe, as needed, to understand these cases sufficiently and, in some instances, to flip a case into (or out of) the SK category. Given the relatively small number of cases, the time required for phone interviews is not prohibitive. Therefore, we recommend considering a modification to the web survey to include a part two follow-up interview after the web submission. We would also recommend adding a question about the role of the respondent in relation to the case.

**2. Collect More Detail About Perpetrator/Victim Relationships that were Formed Online.** The use of social media by perpetrators to engage and lure potential victims is common to many missing child episodes. Consequently, we recommend greater attention to this area, moving forward an existing question (*SK2.7C Before the abduction, did this child victim meet the [most responsible] perpetrator on the internet but not in person?*) and expanding to capture other details that may help law enforcement and the public better understand these episodes. It would, for example, be helpful to know more about the time between the first face-to-face meeting and the abduction. We would also be interested in capturing, if known, who initiated the first online contact: the predator or the victim? What do those approaches look like? We also recognize that family members may have scant knowledge of the relationship between the child and abductor: a preteen or teen meeting someone online can hide that relationship from their parents more easily than with in-person relationships. Consequently, the family’s awareness of the relationship would be an interesting area to explore.

**3. Consider Alternative Sample and/or Study Designs.** Given the difficulty of precisely estimating rare events via a probability sample, and taking into account statutory requirements and the need for continuing information about stranger kidnappings, alternative strategies should be considered for the future.

- While we cannot know the full extent of COVID-19 and social unrest on this cycle of data collection, one option would be to proceed with the next LES-SK study along the lines of NISMART-4 but in a post-COVID-19 period (incorporating the aforementioned recommendation to couple the web survey with telephone follow-up). This would provide an additional, important cycle of survey experience without the disrupting elements of the COVID-19 epidemic and concomitant staffing pressures on law enforcement agencies that impacted, to some degree, NISMART-4.
- A second option would be to conduct the next LES-SK with a broader scope for case qualification. Our recommendation would be to ask agencies to refer all nonfamily kidnappings to the study. We would gather investigator information from all such cases and report that broad estimate as well as the sub-estimate of stereotypical kidnappings using the criteria applied in previous NISMARTs.

The original rationale for limiting the collection from the LES to only stranger kidnappings was based on the particular fears that stranger kidnapping evoked among the public and a need to identify and describe the most serious child abductions of public interest. The original NISMART design anticipated that the broader category of nonfamily abduction could be estimated through the household survey, which is no longer a part of the NISMART design. Under the current design, conducting a large national survey to identify a mere two dozen cases does not seem efficient. In fact, a larger sample would help refine the distinctions among perpetrator types: for example, it would become possible to consider the question of how different or not the characteristics of stranger and other nonfamily abductions are. Based on NIBRS data from 2019, we estimate the national prevalence of all stranger kidnappings of children to be at ~ 1,000. Based on previous NISMARTs, this suggests a sample size for a typical NISMART would receive 200 to 500 countable cases from agencies in the sample. The cost of such a study would be greater than the SK portion of previous NISMARTs, but should not be enormously greater. This definitional expansion could be piloted in the first year of a 3-year cycle.

- As an adjunct to both options we recommend the establishment of a task force, and with it a process of longer-term discussion and planning for the future epidemiology of missing children and kidnapping (and fulfillment of the statute). A number of data collection agencies in DOJ are in possession of data that could be better utilized for estimating missing child and abduction cases: these include NIBRS, NCIC, state clearinghouses, state police data collection centers and statistical analysis centers (SACs). While an earlier effort to explore the use of auxiliary data in planning the LES-based on NISMART studies found auxiliary variable use not to be effective, this finding was not absolute in that it was based on the status of auxiliary data available at the time the 2016 report, which concluded: *"If NIBRS or UCR were to change the structure and coverage of their programs, more investigations of their utility in improving LES precision might be worthwhile. For example, if the completeness or the level of detail in these systems improves, a new evaluation of the usefulness of these systems could yield different results. Furthermore, we only considered sampling and estimation strategies for LES in this study, and have not investigated how other approaches might totally change the system such as relying on administrative records and modeling rather than probability sampling. However, such drastic changes would require substantial design work and might make tracking changes in estimates of stereotypical kidnapping over time more difficult."* (Sedlak, Finkelhor, Brick, & Wolak, 2016). Historically, participation in NIBRS has been relatively thin, thus limiting its utility for researchers. The National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X), an initiative to acquire a national representation of jurisdictions to participate so national statistics could be developed, expanding coverage of NIBRS. If successful in capturing relevant auxiliary data, NCS-X would be an important future source of child abduction data.

A plan to investigate the role these various DOJ data collection agencies could play to facilitate timely and valid national NISMART statistics could be explored by convening meetings with stakeholders to identify opportunities and barriers.

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# **Appendix A**

## **LES-SK Pilot Study Report**



## **National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Throwaway Children (NISMART-4)**

### **Law Enforcement Survey - Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK) Pilot Study Report**

**Deliverable 13 (Grant No. 2017-MC-FX-K011)**



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National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and  
Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4)  
Law Enforcement Survey - Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)  
Pilot Study Report

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the *Law Enforcement Survey – Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)* pilot study was to assess the new, self-administered, LES-SK online questionnaire and related procedures for gathering data from law enforcement investigators about the incidence and dynamics of stereotypical kidnapping (SK) episodes.

This assessment was motivated by a change in methodology for the LES-SK from its last administration conducted in 2011. Previous National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMART)s had interviewed investigators by phone to collect details about cases. The upcoming full (national) NISMART is planning to gather much of the same information from an abbreviated, self-administered online survey. This pilot study was an effort to ensure the new web questionnaire was clear, user-friendly, and gathered all of the relevant important information needed for classification and analysis of stereotypical kidnappings.

This report is in fulfillment of Deliverable 13. *“Following completion of the pilot test, a report on the pilot test implementation and results will be prepared and delivered to NIJ. The report will incorporate insights and comments gleaned from participating investigators with regard to content, language, and functionality of the web survey, as well as a complete item response analysis of problematic or unnecessary questions.”*

## 2. METHODOLOGY

There were 3 stages to the data collection for the LES-SK pilot study:

- 1) Case recruitment: SK cases were identified (recruited) by two sources,
- 2) Investigator recruitment: Investigators were invited to take the web survey through emails containing a unique access code and secure web survey link, and
- 3) Investigator debriefing: Investigators who completed the survey were debriefed by a telephone interviewer about the web questionnaire experience.

## 2.1. Case Recruitment

The pilot used two recruitment sources to identify cases: 1) the Missing Children’s Assistance Agencies (MCAA), and 2) the National Center on Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).<sup>1</sup> Sources were asked to provide the following for each known or suspected stranger kidnapping case between 2016 and 2018:

Case number:  
Date reported:  
Investigating agency:  
City, State:  
Name of key investigating officer:  
Phone number:  
Email:

MCAAs. MCAAs exist by statute in every state to collect reports of missing children and assist in their recovery. Emails requesting cases of non-family abduction occurring in 2016-18 were sent to MCAA agencies in the 50 states and District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands and the Navaho Nation, based on a comprehensive list of state MCAA’s and their coordinators. (See Appendix A for email.) These letters were followed up by two additional recruitment reminders. This recruitment effort yielded these results: 9 states and the District of Columbia provided cases (total number of cases 16), 18 states and territories reported no cases during the time period meeting the definitional criteria, and 27 failed to respond to the request.

NCMEC. NCMEC is a national agency that provides help to local law enforcement to find missing children, and thus receives many case referrals from local agencies. An email was also sent to NCMEC requesting cases of non-family abductions occurring between 2016 and 2018. (See Appendix B for email.) After a three-week delay following the request, NCMEC was able to provide 30 cases from their files.

The number of cases recruited from MCAAs and NCMEC totaled 46.

## 2.2. Investigator Recruitment

Case information that was needed to contact investigators was unavailable or incomplete for some cases, so additional research was needed to obtain correct emails, phone numbers and, in some instances, case IDs.<sup>2</sup> In the end, 41 cases were fielded and email invitations containing

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<sup>1</sup> The recruitment method used to identify cases (solicit SK cases from MCAA and NCMEC) was unique to the pilot and not intended for use with the full (national) study.

<sup>2</sup> A total of five cases could not be fielded due to incomplete contact information or missing LEA case numbers.

unique survey access codes were sent to 38 investigators.<sup>3</sup> All emails provided the case ID and referenced the source (MCAA or NCMEC) that identified the case as a known or suspected SK case. Three rounds of follow-up requests to complete the online questionnaire were subsequently sent to nonresponding investigators. (Appendix C shows the survey invitation and reminder email.) Individual reminder phone calls were made to 37 investigators.

By the end of the data collection period, questionnaires were completed by 19 investigators about 22 cases. Note that six completed cases had minimal information because the skip pattern terminated the questionnaire near the beginning since the case was deemed out of scope. (However, see Section 3.2.2, for a recommended revision regarding this issue, specifically to item SK1.19.)

### 2.3. Investigator Debriefing

The goal of the post-survey debriefing process was to discover any problems respondents encountered with the survey in terms of its clarity and ability to accurately represent the details of a case. (See Appendix D for the Post-survey Debrief Questions.) A study interviewer called study participants for debriefing within a few days of the respondents completing the online survey. Sixteen completed cases were eligible for follow-up interviews, which were completed with all respondents.

Given previously high rates of investigator response in earlier NISMARTs and other police surveys (91%, Wolak et al., 2016), we were somewhat surprised about the amount of time it took to collect 20+ questionnaires and how slow the investigator response was, occupying more than 14 weeks in some cases. We suspect that the sluggish response may have been related to a number of factors such as:

- 1) The method of identifying cases for the pilot – which was intended **only** for the pilot – departed from the full study recruitment protocol.
- 2) The method of initial contact with the investigators for the pilot (email invitation) – which was intended **only** for the pilot – departed from the previously successful full study contact methodology (hard-copy advance mailing).
- 3) The response was delayed in many cases because we did not get accurate or complete information about the cases, i.e., missing case numbers and unknown investigators. This was particularly true among the cases from NCMEC.
- 4) One concern, not voiced by investigators but emerging from staff discussion, concerns the branding of the request email. Some investigators may not have grasped the authoritative sponsorship of the study and may have been put off by the salience of

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<sup>3</sup> While most investigators were asked about a single case, one investigator was assigned two cases and another investigator assigned three cases.

logos from UNH and Westat. A possible solution is to make the USDOJ sponsorship more dominant. This may also be an effect of using email (for the pilot) in place of an advance mailing.

- 5) These were not fresh cases, as in previous NISMARTs, but were as much as 3 or 4 years old in order to avoid involving cases pertinent to the upcoming full study. Consequently, the investigators may have felt these cases were no longer interesting or relevant, they may not have been well remembered, or investigators had a harder time accessing the information.
- 6) Because of the age of cases, there may have been more cases where the investigator was no longer available and other officers less interested in responding.
- 7) In some of the NCMEC cases, which may have been high profile given their involvement, the investigators felt they had already provided too many interviews about the case with NCMEC, press and other agencies.
- 8) In a few cases, investigators balked at participation because they believed that they did not have authorization to give out information.
- 9) Aside from these issues, as is frequently the case, the investigator responsiveness was hampered no doubt by investigator work burden and not seeing benefit for themselves from survey participation.
- 10) Finally, it is worth noting that data collection continued into a period during which Covid-19 was disrupting routine habits and practices, including those of law enforcement.

Three differences will likely make cooperation better in the full LES-SK study than in the pilot. These include:

- 1) The cases will be more recent, making access to these cases easier and more salient.
- 2) The investigator's own superior will be the person that identifies the case that the investigator will be asked about.
- 3) The cases may be less notorious cases, not involving NCMEC, for example. This may mean the investigators will not be tired of talking about the case.

### 3. RESULTS

What follows is a detailed item analysis based on comments that 16 investigators made during the debriefing interviews and/or in the survey comment sections. These comments were taken



into consideration and discussed among the study team. Below we provide a description of the issues raised by the investigators and our recommended solutions. Following the overall feedback and timing results, the recommended survey revisions are categorized into two groups, Definitional and Nondefinitional Issues. The original LES-SK pilot test survey and the revised LES-SK survey with our recommended revisions (shown using track changes) are presented in Appendices G and H.

### 3.1. Overall Feedback and Timing

In responses from the debrief interviews, respondents generally saw the questionnaire as easy to follow and complete, well-designed for capturing the relevant case information, and of reasonable length. The investigators who were interviewed universally reported that the questions made sense and were appropriate.

The time it took respondents to complete the online survey<sup>4</sup> ranged from 25 minutes to 1 hour and 42 minutes. A reliable time-to-complete estimate is hampered by the inability to distinguish active time vs time when the survey remained open but idle (not actively worked by the respondent). Among those taking over an hour to complete the survey, in post-survey interviews, all but one respondent reported taking a break while filling out the survey. For those reporting no break, the average time to complete the survey was 35 minutes.

### 3.2. Recommended Survey Revisions

#### 3.2.1. Definitional Issues

Some questions arose about whether cases qualified as stereotypical kidnappings under the criteria that have been used in the past (Wolak, et al., 2016).

*To be counted as a stereotypical kidnapping, an incident first has to qualify under the NISMART definition of a nonfamily abduction and then meet the criteria for a stereotypical kidnapping.*

*Nonfamily abduction is defined as: (1) An episode in which a nonfamily perpetrator uses physical force or threats of bodily harm to take a child or uses physical force or threats of bodily harm without lawful authority or parental permission to detain a child for a substantial period of time (at least 1 hour) in an isolated place, or (2) an episode in which a child who is younger than 15 or mentally incompetent and, without lawful authority or parental permission, is taken or detained or voluntarily accompanies a nonfamily perpetrator who conceals the child's whereabouts, demands a ransom, or expresses the intention to keep the child permanently.*

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<sup>4</sup> For in-scope cases.

*Stereotypical kidnapping is defined as: A nonfamily abduction in which a slight acquaintance or stranger moves a child (age 0–17) at least 20 feet or holds the child at least 1 hour, and in which one or more of the following circumstances occurs: The child is detained overnight, transported at least 50 miles, held for ransom, abducted with intent to keep the child permanently, or killed.*

*Stranger is defined as: A perpetrator whom the child or family does not know or a perpetrator of unknown identity whom law enforcement investigators reasonably believe is a stranger.*

*Slight acquaintance is defined as: A nonfamily perpetrator whose name is unknown to the child or family prior to the abduction and whom the child or family did not know well enough to speak to or a recent acquaintance who the child or family have known for less than 6 months, or someone the family or child have known for longer than 6 months but have seen less than once a month.*

#### Death of Child Criteria

Two of the pilot cases involved episodes that did not have enough distance or time to qualify as a stereotypical kidnapping, but in which the perpetrator tried unsuccessfully to kill the child, in one case via strangulation (Case CFS 16117080) and in another by dumping the child into a pond (Case 32-17-032715). A death in these cases would have qualified the case for inclusion, but both children miraculously survived.

Our proposal is to marginally enlarge the definition of SK to include not just episodes involving deaths of the child but also *a clear attempt to kill the child even if not successful*. This would involve the modification of SK1.4 as shown below in red:

**MODIFIED SK1.4** Did any of the following happen in this case? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Possibly	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK1.4A	A child was <u>held overnight</u> OR between 12 midnight & 5am?				
SK1.4B	A child was <u>transported 50 miles</u> or more?				
SK1.4C	A child was <u>held for ransom</u> ?				
SK1.4D	A child was <u>killed</u> ?				
SK1.4DD	A perpetrator <u>attempted to kill a child (but the child lived)</u> ?				
SK1.4E	A perpetrator apparently intended to <u>keep a child permanently</u> ?				

Since homicides make up a small portion (8%) of the SKs, we do not think a slight expansion of the definition will much inflate the estimate. For comparison with previous years, we can calculate the estimate with and without the attempts.

#### Age of the Child Criteria

Because of some uncertainty about the age of the victim or perpetrator (Case 16-200468), the investigator may not provide an age for question SK2.2. Because age is important to at least one of the definitional criteria, we need to ensure that we get some age estimate, even if inexact. We will make this answer mandatory and bolster an instruction to SK2.2 as shown below:

**MODIFIED SK2.2** How old was this child at the time of the incident? **If you are unsure of the child's age, please give your best guess.**

1. Less than 1 year old
2. 1 year old or older

Please enter age in years (whole number only) \_\_\_\_\_ and check here  if your answer is an estimate or best guess

- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

#### Circumstances around the Child's Death

During a debrief interview with one of the respondents, a discussion ensued about various circumstances surrounding a child's death during a kidnapping. This brought up the situation in which a child could be killed during a carjacking. The respondent explained that there have been cases where a child was kidnapped accidentally because the child was in the back of a car when a carjacking took place. This prompted a discussion by the study team about the need to understand the circumstances surrounding a child's death, just as there is a need to understand the circumstances surrounding a kidnapping in order to correctly classify the case. Therefore, we propose adding the following item:

**NEW QUESTION [SK2.19A]** **Earlier you said this child was killed. Please describe the circumstances around this child's death.**

[TEXT BOX]



Detention Criteria

Two cases entailed teens who were recruited online to go off with an adult and did so voluntarily (Case 17-01776 and Case 18-013281). To distinguish a kidnapping from a runaway, a key definitional criterion in these cases is whether for a child 15 or older there were any forms of “force” or “detention,” which we operationalize as being detained against their will. This detention issue may be difficult for investigators to assess. In one case the investigator reported he, “*did not know exactly how much isolation or forced detention took place.*” Another said the perpetrator was a paraplegic in a wheelchair and “*he kept her overnight but it was not against her will. The victim did not want to be found or to go home.*”

This may continue to be a challenging issue due to limited information investigators have on the case. We suggest supplementing the information available by adding a new question after SK4.4 as shown:

**NEW QUESTION [SK4.4A]: Is there any reason to believe that the victim wanted to leave the company of the perpetrator but was unable or prevented from doing so?**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

3.2.2. Nondefinitional Issues

Agency Name

The questionnaire does not currently capture the agency where the investigator works. This is an oversight and should be added to SK1.1 as shown below.

**MODIFIED SK1.1** Thank you for participating in the NISMART pilot survey. After your survey is completed and reviewed, we would like to talk with you about your experience taking the survey. Please provide your contact information here so the researchers can reach you later. This information will be deleted as soon as the research team verifies that your survey is complete.

SK1.1\_NAME    Name \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.1\_TITLE    Title \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.1\_AGENCY    Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.1\_PHONE    Telephone number (    ) \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.1\_EMAIL    Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Perpetrators

There was one case (W16-33662) where the investigator was unsure how many total perpetrators there were, because there may have been others who were not identified. As a result, the investigator was unsure about how to respond to SK1.5. To make the item more clear, we recommend inserting the word “confirmed” to SK1.5 as follows:

**MODIFIED SK1.5** Did this case involve more than one confirmed perpetrator?

- 1. Yes  
Enter number of perpetrators: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. No, there was only 1 perpetrator
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

More Information on Suspended Investigation

In item SK1.18 (*What is the current status of this case in your agency?*) the investigator in case W16-33662 said the case was suspended, but without a text box, could not say why. We recommend adding optional text boxes that the investigators can use to explain their responses for options 4, 5, and Don't know/Cannot determine categories as shown below:

**MODIFIED SK1.18** What is the current status of this case in your agency?

- 1. Open (under active investigation)
- 2. Open (arrest warrant issued)
- 3. Cleared by arrest
- 4. Closed for reasons other than arrest (exceptional clearance)  
SK1.18\_OS.4 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Suspended (inactive investigation)  
SK1.18\_OS.5 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Some other status  
SK1.18\_OS.6 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine  
SK1.18\_OS.-8 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Failure to Get Adequate Description of Case

In four cases (Cases 17-192549, 18-3350426, 16-169 and 16-020391), the investigator gave answers that skipped the questionnaire into closure (SK1.4a-e = No) without getting any narrative information about the case. In these situations we could not confirm that the cases were non-qualifying.

For the full survey (national study), we want to get a narrative description of every case, whether it results in the respondent skipping to the end of the survey or not due to the not qualifying as a stereotypical kidnapping. Consequently, programming specifications will be revised to ask all investigators, including those who seemingly have cases that do not qualify as a stereotypical kidnapping (i.e., SK1.4a-e = No), to respond to SK1.19 before exiting the survey.

**MODIFIED SKIP PATTERN THAT WOULD ROUTE ALL INVESTIGATORS TO SK1.19:**

SK1.19 Please describe briefly what occurred in this incident, as far as you know. How did the abduction begin? What did the perpetrator[s] do to the child victim[s]? How did it end?

[TEXT BOX]

Skip Pattern for "Child Killed"

If a child was killed in the episode (this is captured in SK1.4D) some of the subsequent questions may feel irrelevant or confusing. For example, SK2.24 (*Did [the/any] perpetrator use force or threaten this victim in any of the following ways during the crime?*) and SK2.25 (*At any time in this episode, during the abduction or detention, did [the/any] perpetrator. . . ?* Comments from an interviewee (Case TR-2016-012) suggested it may be helpful to review the questionnaire and possibly reference the earlier (killed) response.

Thus, we suggest the following modifications:

**MODIFIED SK2.24 Earlier you said this child was killed.** Did [the/any] perpetrator use force or threaten this victim in any of the following ways during the crime? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.24A	Threaten this child with or use a weapon?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24B	Harm or threaten to harm this child's family or pets?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24C	Force this child to walk somewhere?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24D SK2.24D_OS	Other use of force? Please describe the other use of force or threat by the perpetrator during the crime [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**MODIFIED SK2.25 Earlier you said this child was killed.** During the abduction or detainment, did [the/any] perpetrator...

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.25A	Physically assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25B	Neglect this victim's basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical treatment, etc.)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25C	Sexually assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25D	Drug this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25E	Rob this child victim or damage or destroy their belongings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25F SK2.25F_OS	Harm this child some other way? Please describe the other way the perpetrator harmed this child [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

Mistaken Answer to SK2.25 "Child Assaulted"

The child in case 121549-16 was suffocated, and that information was captured, but the respondent indicated "no" on a closed-ended question that asked if the child was assaulted. His comment was that he read the question wrong and thought it meant prior to the incident. To clarify, we suggest adding "at any time in this episode..." to SK2.25.

**MODIFIED SK2.25 Earlier you said this child was killed. At any time in this episode,** during the abduction or detainment, did [the/any] perpetrator... (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.25A	Physically assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25B	Neglect this victim's basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical treatment, etc.)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25C	Sexually assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25D	Drug this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25E	Rob this child victim or damage or destroy their belongings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25F SK2.25F_OS	Harm this child some other way? Please describe the other way the perpetrator harmed this child [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

Taken from a Group of Children

In case TR-2016-012, the victim was near other children but had moved away from the group and gone into the street. To clarify this question, we recommend question SK4.2 be changed to:

**MODIFIED SK4.2** Was ~~[the/any] victim taken from a group of children?~~ Were there other children in the vicinity of the abduction where it occurred, that is, within hearing or viewing distance?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

Characterizing Perpetrator Tactics

In case 2018-1767, the perpetrator initially tried a non-forcible lure, but then switched to a forcible tactic. This can create ambivalence about how to respond to SK4.3 because it asks specifically about the “initial approach.” We recommend removing the word “initial” so the question pertains to all aspects of the approach.

**MODIFIED SK4.3** How would you characterize the perpetrator's ~~initial~~ approach?

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK4.3A	Deceptive or non- threatening pretext?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK4.3B	Surprise (lying in wait, using stealth) or blitz (sudden, overwhelming force)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK4.3C SK4.3C_OS	Other type of approach? Please characterize the perpetrator's initial approach. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

Use of Technology

Several investigators commented upon the role that technology played in solving the case or recovering the child and suggested the survey include more questions related to technology. In post-survey interviews, investigators exhibited a pronounced interest in sharing details of tech tools, either alone or used in combination with other investigative activities. For example, one mentioned a license plate reader as key in solving a case when combined with witness testimony. In another example, an investigator, who had answered “no” to question SK5.9 (*Did the Amber Alert result in any information that helped to locate or recover the child or identify the perpetrator?*) told the interviewer the Amber Alert was helpful in another way: i.e., gaining the cooperation of people who had previously been reluctant to let him inside their homes.



Technological aspects of the case may be very important to investigators because of the time and expertise applied to these efforts. In one post-survey interview, the investigator suggested adding the question *'Did you use any other method of getting the information out, like social media, etc., in addition to the Amber Alert?'* This investigator had created a Facebook page for the investigation and posted a picture of the interior of the truck the victim was found in and someone recognized it. He felt the victim would never have been found alive without the Facebook page and Amber Alert. Another investigator said, *"Technology is such an important piece of how LEA's solve crimes today and needs to be included in this research especially if the data is to be used for training purposes."*

Upon reviewing this area of the survey, we suggest a modification to SK5.11 and followup item SK5.12 to better tap into this issue:

**MODIFIED SK5.11** Did ~~electronic devices such as cell phones or computers~~ digital or technological resources, including social media, provide evidence, leads, or other information that was ~~key to recovering [the/any] victim or identifying the perpetrator~~ of particular importance in the solution of this case or the recovery of the victim?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**MODIFIED SK5.12** Please describe how ~~electronic devices~~ digital or technological resources, including social media provided evidence, leads or other information.

[TEXT BOX]

Investigator Solutions

The respondent in case 62-4792-18 reported he was hoping for an opportunity to describe the crucial break-throughs in solving the case. This is important to investigators and reflects their desire to help other investigators. We suggest adding the following language to SK5.13:

**MODIFIED SK5.13** Is there anything else that would be important to know about this case? (If applicable: What was most important in solving this case or recovering the child?)

[TEXT BOX]

### Perpetrator Living Situation

One interviewee (Case 2018-1767) suggested adding a question about the perpetrator’s living situation. This may be a risk factor that investigators think is important. However, it is not crucial to any of the issues typically covered by NISMART. Therefore, we do not think it is worth the additional response time burden.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The pilot study achieved its intended goals. As indicated in the NISMART OMB Supporting Statement Part B, an estimated 20 stereotypical kidnapping cases were needed to conduct a solid pilot test of the feasibility of collecting detailed case information from an online survey. The pilot study resulted in 22 cases completed by 19 investigators. As specified in the OMB Supporting Statement Part A, there was an expectation that the investigators would spend an average of 40 minutes completing the online survey, including time to read the advance letter and provide comments on problem questions in the instrument (which the web survey allowed). The pilot study showed the average time to complete the survey was 35 minutes.

Based on the debrief interviews, the questionnaire was well received and obtained the necessary information from investigators in a reasonable amount of time. Through the online survey comments and debriefing interviews, we learned that minor modifications would improve the survey. These include adding two new survey questions, and modifying 12 questions plus one skip pattern. See Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of Recommended Changes to LES-SK Survey

Survey Item Number	Type of Change Recommended	Specific Item
Definitional Items		
SK1.4	Modify	Add “attempted to kill a child” response option
SK2.2	Modify	Add instructions to give best guess for age
SK2.19	New	Ask to describe the circumstances around child’s death
SK4.4	New	Ask if victim wanted to leave the company of the perpetrator but was unable or prevented from doing so
Nondefinitional Items		
SK1.1	Modify	Ask name of law enforcement agency
SK1.5	Modify	Add word “confirmed” (more than one confirmed perpetrator)
SK1.18	Modify	Add opportunity to give description of case status
SK1.19	Modify	Modify skip pattern

Table 1. Summary of Recommended Changes to LES-SK Survey *(continued)*

Survey Item Number	Type of Change Recommended	Specific Item
Nondefinitional Items		
SK2.24	Modify	Add statement that child was killed before asking question
SK2.25	Modify	Add statement that child was killed before asking question Add, "At any time in this episode,"
SK4.2	Modify	To clarify item, change question to, "Were there other children in the vicinity of the abduction where it occurred, that is, within hearing or viewing distance?"
SK4.3	Modify	Remove the word "initial"
SK5.11	Modify	Update question to ask about, "digital or technological resources including social media"; Ask if this information was, "of particular importance in the solution of this case or the recovery of the victim."
SK5.12	Modify	Update question to ask about, "digital or technological resources including social media";
SK5.13	Modify	Add instruction, "(If applicable: What was most important in solving this case or recovering the child?)"

As part of the pilot study, we also learned that more time and effort than anticipated may be needed for following up with investigators in the full LES-SK Study.



## REFERENCES

Wolak, Finkelhor & Sedlak (2016). Child Victims of Stereotypical Kidnappings Known to Law Enforcement in 2011, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.  
<http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/Child%20Kidnapping%20LE%20Report.pdf>

## LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Email to Missing Children’s Assistance Agencies (MCAAs) (State Clearinghouses)
- Appendix B – Email to National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
- Appendix C – Survey Invitation and Reminder Email to State Investigators
- Appendix D – Post-survey Debrief Questions
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Questionnaire for Full Study – Track Changes

Appendix A  
Email to Missing Children's Assistance Agencies (MCAAs)  
(State Clearinghouses)

Appendix A – Email to Missing Children’s Assistance Agencies (MCAAs) (State Clearinghouses)

**From:** Finkelhor, David <[David.Finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:David.Finkelhor@unh.edu)>

**Subject:** Your assistance is needed for an upcoming NISMART study

Dear [NAME],

As part of the federally-funded NISMART (National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children) we are preparing to conduct another National Incidence Study of Stranger Kidnapping. As in the past, we are working together with our partners at Westat.

Before we start collecting the official data, however, we need to test our new online, self-administered questionnaire.

To test the questionnaire, we would like to identify 30 cases nationwide and their investigators to whom we can send a test link and ask to participate to make sure the questions make sense. We are doing this by reaching out to state MCAAs. We expect **only a case or two** from each agency.

Could you please help us by finding any known and suspected **stranger kidnapping cases involving child victims from the files in your jurisdiction that occurred during the calendar years 2016-2018?**

For each known or suspected stranger kidnapping case (2016-2018), we are requesting:

Case number:  
Date reported:  
Investigating agency:  
City, State:  
Name of key investigating officer:  
Phone number:  
Email:

If you do not have that information, we would at least like to have the name and contact information for the local agency that was involved in the investigation.

We would appreciate if you could respond to our request by the end of December.

We would also appreciate if you could send a note to the investigator or investigating agency supporting our request for information. The note could read as follows:

*“We have received a request for help in a US Department of Justice-funded study on child victims of stranger kidnapping being carried out by Westat and the University of New Hampshire. Someone from the research team will be getting in touch with you for information about a case that you investigated that is also in our files. We would greatly appreciate it if you could cooperate with them.”*

Thank you very much for your help. If you have any questions please respond to this email or contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,

David Finkelhor  
Crimes against Children Research Center  
Family Research Laboratory  
Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire  
Durham, NH 03824  
Tel 603 862-2761\* Fax 603 862-1122  
email: [david.finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:david.finkelhor@unh.edu)  
Web: <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/>



## Appendix B

### Email to National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)

Appendix B – Email to National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)

**From:** Finkelhor, David <[David.Finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:David.Finkelhor@unh.edu)>  
**To:** Alan S. Nanavaty  
**Subject:** Your assistance is needed for an upcoming NISMART study  
**Attachments:** NCMEC cases 1st solicit.docx

Hi Alan,

As part of the federally-funded NISMART (*National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children*) we are preparing to conduct another *National Incidence Study of Stranger Kidnapping*. As in the past, we are working together with our partners at Westat.

Before we start collecting the official data, however, we need to test our new online, self-administered questionnaire.

To test the questionnaire, we would like to identify 30 cases nationwide and their investigators to whom we can send a test link and ask to participate to make sure the questions make sense. Could you please help us by finding any known and suspected stranger kidnapping cases involving child victims from the files that occurred during the calendar years 2016-2018?

For each known or suspected stranger kidnapping case (2016-2018), we are requesting:

Case number:  
Date reported:  
Investigating agency:  
City, State:  
Name of key investigating officer:  
Phone number:  
Email:

If you do not have that information, we would at least like to have the name and contact information for the local agency that was involved in the investigation.

We would appreciate if you could respond to our request by the end of December.

Bob previously sent us a list of cases before we had firmed up our plans. Most of these cases were too old to be eligible for this pilot study. For the ones in the attached file, we would appreciate if you could check to find if you have an investigator's name or their agency's name.

Thank you very much for your help. If you have any questions please respond to this email or contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,

David Finkelhor  
Crimes against Children Research Center  
Family Research Laboratory  
Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire  
Durham, NH 03824  
Tel 603 862-2761\* Fax 603 862-1122  
email: [david.finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:david.finkelhor@unh.edu)  
Web: <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/>





## Appendix C

### Survey Invitation and Reminder Email to State Investigators

Appendix C – Survey invitation and reminder email to state investigators

EMAIL INVITATION TO INVESTIGATORS

**From:** Missing Children Study

**Subject:** Welcome to the pilot test for the Law Enforcement Survey on Stranger Kidnapping

Dear «Name\_of\_key\_Investigating\_Officer»:

Your agency is being asked to participate in a pilot test for the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMA<sup>RT</sup>). The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. NISMA<sup>RT</sup> was created in response to the Missing Children’s Assistance Act for the purpose of estimating the number of missing children nationwide. Findings from the last survey are available on the OJJDP website [here](#). As Westat and the University of New Hampshire prepare to conduct NISMA<sup>RT</sup>-4, we are asking for your assistance in pilot testing a new method of collecting case information on cases where children are abducted by strangers.

**The following case has been identified by the «SOURCE» as an episode of stranger abduction:  
«Case\_number»**

To participate, you or the most knowledgeable investigator will be asked to answer questions about the case identified above using a web survey. The survey is estimated to take 40 minutes, and may be completed in parts. After the survey is completed, 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.

The pilot survey is available on our secure website. You may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential access key a (below) to begin the survey. **We ask you to complete the web survey by [DEADLINE].**

**Survey address:** <https://MissingChildrenStudy.org>

**Access key:** «Access\_code»

Your agency’s participation is voluntary and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. The survey and post-survey phone call will be used to evaluate the utility of the survey process only. Your name and the name of your agency will remain confidential and will not be used in any reports. We understand how busy you are and appreciate your assistance in this important project. If you have questions about the pilot or your participation, please call our toll free number, 1-855-942-0406, or email [NISMA<sup>RT</sup>@Westat.com](mailto:NISMA<sup>RT</sup>@Westat.com).

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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



EMAIL REMINDER TO INVESTIGATORS

**From:** Missing Children Study

**Subject:** Reminder: Your participation requested for the Law Enforcement Survey on Stranger Kidnapping

Dear «Name\_of\_key\_Investigating\_Officer»:

We recently sent you an email asking for your participation in a pilot test for the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMA<sup>RT</sup>). As Westat and the University of New Hampshire prepare to conduct NISMA<sup>RT</sup>-4, we are asking for your assistance in pilot testing a new method of collecting case information on cases where children are abducted by strangers.

The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. NISMA<sup>RT</sup> was created in response to the Missing Children's Assistance Act for the purpose of estimating the number of missing children nationwide. Findings from the last survey are available on the OJJDP website [here](#).

**The following case has been identified by the «SOURCE»: «Case\_number»**

To participate, you or the most knowledgeable investigator will be asked to answer questions about the case(s) identified above using a web survey. The survey is estimated to take 40 minutes, and may be completed in parts. After the survey is completed, 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.

The pilot survey is available on our secure website. You may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential access key a (below) to begin the survey. **We ask you to please complete the web survey by [DEADLINE].**

**Survey address:** <https://MissingChildrenStudy.org>

**Access key:** «Access\_code»

We know you are extremely busy, but your voluntary participation in this pilot will help law enforcement in the future.

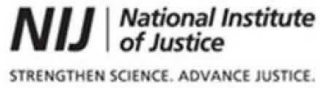
Your agency's participation is voluntary and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. The survey and post-survey phone call will be used to evaluate the utility of the survey process only. Your name and the name of your agency will remain confidential and will not be used in any reports. We understand how busy you are and appreciate your assistance in this important

project. If you have questions about the pilot or your participation, please call our toll free number, 1-855-942-0406, or email [NISMART@Westat.com](mailto:NISMART@Westat.com).

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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



Appendix D  
Post-survey Debrief Questions

Appendix D– Post-survey debrief questions

1. What did you think about the time it took to do this survey?
2. Was it hard to find time to do the interview?
3. Did you take breaks or have interruptions?
4. Were any questions confusing because of how they were worded?
5. Were multiple choice questions complete and did they have the right response categories to answer the question correctly?
6. Were any questions left out of the survey that you think should have been asked?
7. Did you feel you had the opportunity to say everything you wanted to about this case?

Appendix E  
Law Enforcement Survey – Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)  
Pilot Questionnaire



**NISMART-4:**

**Law Enforcement Survey-Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)**

**I. PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS**

**SK1.1** Thank you for participating in the NISMART pilot survey. After your survey is completed and reviewed, we would like to talk with you about your experience taking the survey. Please provide your contact information here so the researchers can reach you later. This information will be deleted as soon as the research team verifies that your survey is complete.

SK1.1\_NAME Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_TITLE Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_PHONE Telephone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_EMAIL Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**SK1.2** Your agency’s case number for this investigation is [CASE NUMBER FILL].

Please confirm that this case involved a child age 17 or younger abducted by someone who was not a family member AND the child was:

- Moved at least 20 feet **OR**
- Held for at least one hour

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK1.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.3 QUESTION REMOVED FOR PILOT**

**SK1.4** Did any of the following happen in this case? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Possibly	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.4A</b>	A child was <u>held overnight</u> OR between 12 midnight & 5am?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4B</b>	A child was <u>transported 50 miles</u> or more?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4C</b>	A child was <u>held for ransom</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4D</b>	A child was <u>killed</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4E</b>	A perpetrator apparently intended to <u>keep a child permanently</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)

IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d & e are all No → GO TO ENDSURVEY1 or ENDSURVEY2  
 IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d & e are all Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.19  
 IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d & e are either Yes or Possibly → CONTINUE TO SK1.4F  
 ELSE GO TO SK1.5

**SK1.4F** Please confirm that the case number {CASE NUMBER} is correct.

1. This case number is correct
2. No, this is not the correct case number → GO TO END
- 8. I don't know if this is the correct case number → GO TO END

**SK1.5** Did this case involve more than one perpetrator? **HARD EDIT**

*If number of perpetrators is not known for certain, please enter the number believed to have been involved if more than one.*

1. Yes  
 SK1.5-1\_NUM Enter number of perpetrators: **SOFT EDIT (value > 10)**.
2. No, there was only 1 perpetrator → GO TO SK1.9
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.9

**SK1.6** How did the perpetrators know each other? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.6A</b>	Married or romantic or sexual partners?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6B</b>	Other members of a family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6C</b>	Members of a gang?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6D</b>	Involved together in selling or buying drugs?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6E</b>	Involved together in sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6F</b>	Involved in some other type of criminal enterprise?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6G</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6H</b> <b>SK1.6H_OS</b>	Something else? Please describe how the perpetrators knew each other: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK1.7** Did any of the perpetrators have a close relationship with a victim or victim's family? This could involve a blood or legal tie to the family, a romantic partnership with a relative of a victim, a longstanding friendship, or another relationship that would make a perpetrator well-known to a child victim or their family.

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.9
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.9

**SK1.8** Please describe this close relationship between a perpetrator and child victim or victim's family.

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

**SK1.9** Did this case involve more than one child victim? HARD EDIT

1. Yes, 2 child victims
2. Yes, 3 or more child victims  
SK1.9-2\_NUM Enter number of child victims: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).
3. No, 1 child → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.12

**SK1.9R** In Section 2 of this survey 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).

SK1.9R1	
SK1.9R2	
SK1.9R3	
SK1.9R4	
SK1.9R5	

**SK1.10** Did any of the victims know each other?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.12

**SK1.11** How did the victims know each other? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.11A</b>	Siblings or step-siblings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11B</b>	Related as family some other way, such as cousins?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11C</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11D</b>	Something else?			
<b>SK1.11D_OS</b>	Please describe how the victims knew each other: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK1.12** Was the perpetrator [most responsible for this incident] a stranger to [the/any] child victim?

*Stranger means a non-family perpetrator whom the child or child's family did not know OR the perpetrator's identity is unknown but investigators reasonably believe the perpetrator is a stranger.*

1. Yes, the perpetrator was a stranger → **GO TO SK1.14**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.13** Please briefly describe how the [most responsible] perpetrator knew [the child victim or the victim's family/any of the child victims or victims' families].

[TEXT BOX] **SOFT EDIT**

**SK1.14** Were other law enforcement agencies involved in this case?

1. Yes  
SK1.14\_NUM Please specify number of other agencies involved \_\_\_\_\_
2. No → **GO TO SK1.18**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.15** Did your agency receive the first report of this case?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK1.17**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.17**

SK1.16 What agency received the first report? (Please enter the agency name, county and state.)

SK1.16\_AGENCYNM Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.16\_AGENCYCY County \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.16\_AGENCYST State \_\_\_\_\_

SK1.17 Please list [what you know about] the other agencies involved in this case. Please list each agency by name, county and state. **DO NOT ENFORCE**

SK1.17\_AGENCYNM[1-10] Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.17\_AGENCYCY [1-10] County \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.17\_AGENCYST [1-10] State \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: UP TO 10 AGENCIES (WITH ASSOCIATED COUNTIES AND STATES) MAY BE NAMED**

SK1.18 What is the current status of this case in your agency?

1. Open (under active investigation)
2. Open (arrest warrant issued)
3. Cleared by arrest
4. Closed for reasons other than arrest (exceptional clearance)
5. Suspended (inactive investigation)
6. Some other status  
SK1.18\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK1.19 Please describe briefly what occurred in this incident, as far as you know. How did the abduction begin? What did the perpetrator[s] do to the child victim[s]? How did it end?

[TEXT BOX] **SOFT EDIT**

---

IF SK1.2 = 2 (No) → GO TO ENDSURVEY5 or ENDSURVEY6

---

## II. CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

This section asks questions about [the child victim in this incident/ up to 5 child victims in this incident. Since there is more than one victim in this incident please start with [TEXT FROM SK1.9R1].

**SK2.1** Is this child male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.2** How old was this child at the time of the incident? (Please give your best estimate if not sure.)

1. Less than 1 year old
2. 1 year old or older

SK2.2\_AGE Please enter age in years (whole number only) \_\_\_\_\_

- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.2E**  Please check here if your answer to SK2.2 above is an estimate of the child's age

**SK2.3** Is this child Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.4** What is this child's race? Please check all that apply.

		Checked	Unchecked
<b>SK2.4A</b>	White	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4B</b>	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4C</b>	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4D</b>	Asian	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4E</b>	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4F</b>	Other		
<b>SK2.4F_OS</b>	Please describe this child's race: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4G</b>	Don't know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF ONLY ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK2.7**  
**IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM → CONTINUE TO SK2.5**

---

**SK2.5** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator in this incident a stranger to this child or their family?

*Stranger means that the child or the child's family did not know the perpetrator OR the identity of the perpetrator is unknown but law enforcement reasonably believes it is a stranger.*

1. Yes → **GO TO BOX A**
2. No
3. Possibly
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.6** Please briefly describe how this child knew the [most responsible] perpetrator.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.7** Please respond to both statements in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.7A</b>	...was the [most responsible] <u>perpetrator's name known</u> to this child victim or this victim's family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.7B</b>	...did this child or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>well enough to speak to?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF SK2.7A and SK2.7B are No or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A**  
**ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7C**

---



Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7C	...did this child victim <u>meet</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>on the Internet but not in person?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7C is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A  
ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7D

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7D	...did this child victim or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator for <u>6 months or less?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7D is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A  
ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7E

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7E	...did this child victim or family <u>see</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>less than once a month?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7E is No AND there are additional victims, loop back to SK2.1 for next child victim  
IF SK2.7E is Don't know/Cannot determine → **Specs Box 2.6**  
IF SK2.7E is No AND there are NO additional victims → GO TO ENDSURVEY

**BOX A (Specs Box 2.6)**

Answer item SK2.8 below only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) a child was held for ransom.  
ELSE → GO TO BOX B



**SK2.8** Was this child held for ransom?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX B (Specs Box 2.7)**

(Answer item **SK2.9** below only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) there was intent to keep permanently)

**ELSE → GO TO SK10.**

**SK2.9** Did [the/ a] perpetrator intend to keep this child permanently?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.10** How far did [the/ any] perpetrator move this victim from the beginning of the abduction to the time the victim was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. 20 feet or less
2. More than 20 feet but less than 1 mile
3. 1 to 9 miles
4. 10 to 49 miles
5. 50 miles or more
6. Child was not moved
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.11** How long did [the/ any] perpetrator keep or detain this victim before he or she was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. Less than 1 hour → **GO TO SK2.13**
2. 1 hour to less than 24 hours
3. 1 to 3 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
4. 4 to 7 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
5. More than 1 week → **GO TO SK2.13**
6. Child was not detained → **GO TO SK2.13**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.13**

**SK2.12** Was this victim held or detained overnight OR for at least one hour between midnight and 5am?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.13** What parents did this child live with when this incident began?

1. Two married, biological parents
2. Two married parents, one or both not biological, but both having a legal relationship to the child, such as adoption
3. Two unmarried parents, biological or other
4. One unmarried parent with a live-in partner who was not the child's parent
5. A single parent (no live-in partner)
6. Other situation

SK2.13\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.14** What type of housing did this child live in at the time of the incident?

1. Single family dwelling
2. Multi-family dwelling (duplex, apartment building, for example)
3. Other situation such as shelter, institution, etc.
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.15** Did a parent or other caretaker of this child victim contact the police for help to locate their missing child?

1. Yes, contacted police to locate this child who was missing → **GO TO SK2.16**
2. No, contacted police for other reason → **GO TO SK2.16**  
SK2.15OS1 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_ → **GO TO SK2.16**
3. No, a parent or other caretaker of this child did not contact police → **GO TO SK2.15OS2**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.16**

**SK2.15OS2** Who was it that contacted the police about this case? (e.g., another child's parent/caretaker, a neighbor, child's friend, etc.)

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.16** At the time of the abduction, was this child impaired by any serious or permanent physical or mental disabilities, life threatening medical conditions or other problems such as drug or alcohol use?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK2.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.19**

**SK2.17** Please describe this child's disabilities, medical conditions or other impairments at the time of the incident.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.18** Would you say that this child was mentally incompetent at the time of the episode?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.19** Was this victim...

1. Recovered?
2. Killed?
3. Still missing?
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.20** During the incident did [the/ any] perpetrator take or move this victim in or to any of the following places? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.20A</b>	A vehicle?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20B</b>	A building?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20C</b>	The perpetrator's home?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20D</b>	An outside area, like woods?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK2.21** Did [the/any] perpetrator use physical force or any kind of threat in taking or moving this victim from their original location?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

---

**IF CHILD WAS NOT DETAINED (SK2.11 = 6, Child was not detained) → GO TO BOX C**  
**IF CHILD WAS DETAINED, CONTINUE TO SK2.22**

---

**SK2.22** Did [the/any] perpetrator use any kind of force or threat during the time this victim was detained?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.23** How *isolated* was the location where this victim was detained?

*Isolated means the child was not able to leave on his or her own and had no opportunity to appeal for help.*

- 1. Very isolated
- 2. Probably isolated
- 3. Not isolated
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX C (Specs Box 2.9)**  
**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS NOT USED (SK2.21 =2, No or SK2.22 = 2, No) → GO TO SK2.25**  
**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS USED, CONTINUE TO SK2.24**

**SK2.24** Did [the/any] perpetrator use force or threaten this victim in any of the following ways during the crime?  
(Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.24A</b>	Threaten this child with or use a weapon?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24B</b>	Harm or threaten to harm this child's family or pets?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24C</b>	Force this child to walk somewhere?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24D</b> <b>SK2.24D_OS</b>	Other use of force? Please describe the other use of force or threat by the perpetrator during the crime [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

SK2.25 During the abduction or detainment, did [the/any] perpetrator...? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.25A	Physically assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25B	Neglect this victim's basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical treatment, etc.)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25C	Sexually assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25D	Drug this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25E	Rob this child victim or damage or destroy their belongings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25F SK2.25F_OS	Harm this child some other way? Please describe the other way the perpetrator harmed this child [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

IF CASE INVOLVED A SINGLE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK3.1

IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 1 or 2), loop back to SK2.1—SK2.25 and repeat for each child victim. After last child victim, → GO TO SK3.1

---

### III. PERPETRATOR CHARACTERISTICS

The next questions ask about the perpetrator. [Please answer about the perpetrator most responsible for the incident.]

**SK3.1** Is the identity of this perpetrator known?

1. Yes → GO TO SK3.3
2. No

**SK3.2** Do you have any information at all, like sex, race or approximate age?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]

**SK3.3** How old was the [most responsible] perpetrator at the time of the incident.

Please enter age in years. **SOFT EDIT (value <= 14 or value >= 80).**

**SK3.3\_DK** Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.4** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.5** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.6** What is the [most responsible] perpetrator's race? (Please check all that apply.)

		Checked	Unchecked
<b>SK3.6A</b>	White	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6B</b>	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6C</b>	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6D</b>	Asian	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6E</b>	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6F</b>	Other		
<b>SK3.6F_OS</b>	Please describe:	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6G</b>	Don't know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF PERPETRATOR'S IDENTITY IS KNOWN (SK3.1 = 1) → GO TO SK3.8.**

---

**SK3.7** Do you have any information about the perpetrator's life circumstances, like marital status, employment or involvement with the criminal justice system?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.8** What was the [most responsible] perpetrator's marital status at the time of the crime?

1. Single
2. Married
3. Separated, divorced or widowed
4. Living with a partner
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.9** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator employed either full- or part-time at the time of the crime?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.10** At the time of this crime, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have any active or ongoing involvement with the legal system or any treatment programs?

1. Yes  
SK3.10\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.11** At the time of the episode, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have a diagnosed mental illness?

1. Yes  
SK3.11\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.12** Is there any indication that the [most responsible] perpetrator has any problems with drugs or alcohol?

1. Yes  
SK3.12\_OS Please describe type of problem: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.13** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.14** Were any of these arrests for crimes of violence?

1. Yes  
SK3.14\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.15** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Registry before this abduction?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine



**SK3.16** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Public Website before this abduction?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.17** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests for crimes against juveniles?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.18** Did any of these prior arrests involve any of the following? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK3.18A</b>	Homicide of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18B</b>	A sex crime against a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18C</b>	Child abduction?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18D</b>	Battery or assault of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18E</b>	Something else?			
<b>SK3.18E_OS</b>	Please describe what else was involved in these prior arrests. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK3.19** What is this perpetrator's current situation?

1. Still at large
2. In custody
3. Free
4. Something else
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**IV. CRIME CHARACTERISTICS**

**SK4.1** Where [was the victim/were the victims] last seen before the abduction occurred?

- 1. Victim's residence or place child was staying at night, includes yard
- 2. Outdoor area with public access (sidewalk, park, street, beach, etc.)
- 3. Indoor area with public access (shopping mall, store, theater, etc.)
- 4. Perpetrator's residence or yard
- 5. Common area of apartment complex
- 6. School or daycare, indoors or outdoors
- 7. Vehicle
- 8. Other place

SK4.1\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

-8. Don't know/Not sure

**SK4.2** Was [the/any] victim taken from a group of children?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.3** How would you characterize the perpetrator's initial approach? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK4.3A</b>	Deceptive or non- threatening pretext?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.3B</b>	Surprise (lying in wait, using stealth) or blitz (sudden, overwhelming force)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.3C</b> <b>SK4.3C_OS</b>	Other type of approach? Please characterize the perpetrator's initial approach. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK4.4** Did [the/ any] victim go with the perpetrator voluntarily (even if duped)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.5** Is there any indication that this crime was connected with ...? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK4.5A</b>	Youth gang activity?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5B</b>	Drug trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5C</b>	Sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5D</b>	Serial killings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5E</b> <b>SK4.5E_OS</b>	Other criminal networks or conspiracies? Please describe the other criminal networks or conspiracies indicated. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK4.6** Is there any indication that the internet played a role in prior contact between a perpetrator and victim or in leading up to the abduction encounter?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**

**SK4.7** Please describe the role the internet played.

[TEXT BOX]

**V. INVESTIGATION**

**SK5.1** Was this case submitted to ... (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.1A</b>	FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension system (VICAP)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1B</b>	National Crime Information Center (NCIC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1C</b>	National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK5.2** Did a NCMEC Project Alert team participate in the investigation?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.3** Was a DNA profile entered into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No → **GO TO SK5.5**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.5**

**SK5.4** Was a match found?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.5** Was a telephone hotline established?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.6** Was a leads management system established?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.7** Was an Amber Alert issued?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK5.9**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.8** Why wasn't an Amber Alert issued? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.8A</b>	Child was quickly recovered	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8B</b>	No reasonable belief an abduction had occurred	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8C</b>	Child was not in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8D</b>	Insufficient information about child, vehicle, etc., to issue Amber Alert	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8E</b> <b>SK5.8E_OS</b>	Other reason Please describe the other reason an Amber Alert was not issued [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF NO AMBER ALERT WAS ISSUED (SK5.7 = 2) → GO TO SK5.11.**

---

**SK5.9** Did the Amber Alert result in any information that helped to locate or recover the child or identify the perpetrator?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.11**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.10** Please describe how the Amber Alert helped to locate and recover the child?

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.11** Did electronic devices such as cell phones or computers provide evidence, leads, or other information that was key to recovering [the/any] victim or identifying the perpetrator?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.13**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.13**

**SK5.12** Please describe how electronic devices provided evidence, leads or other information.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.13** Is there anything else that would be important to know about this case?

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.14** If you want to clarify your answers to any of the close-ended responses above, please do so here:

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.15**

IF SK1.19 IS NULL: If you feel a narrative description of the kidnapping episode would help us better understand this case, please provide a description here:

[If SK1.19 HAS TEXT: Your response to an earlier item regarding details of this incident is presented below. Do you have anything to add to help us better understand this case?

[SK1.19 RESPONSE REPEATS HERE]

[TEXT BOX]

---

**IF RESPONDENT HAS NO ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY3.**

**IF RESPONDENT HAS ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY4.**

---

## **ENDSURVEY**

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

**ENDSURVEY2** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not qualify. Please use this link 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 child kidnapping.

**ENDSURVEY4** Thank you for completing this survey. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

**ENDSURVEY5** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. There are no further questions at this time. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Thank you for your time.

**ENDSURVEY6** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

## Appendix F

### Law Enforcement Survey – Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)

#### Revised Questionnaire for Full Study – Track Changes



**NISMART-4:**

**Law Enforcement Survey-Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)**

**1. PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS**

**SK1.1** Thank you for participating in the NISMART pilot survey. After your survey is completed and reviewed, we would like to talk with you about your experience taking the survey. Please provide your contact information here so the researchers can reach you later. This information will be deleted as soon as the research team verifies that your survey is complete.

SK1.1\_NAME Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_TITLE Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_AGENCY Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_PHONE Telephone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 SK1.1\_EMAIL Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**SK1.2** Your agency’s case number for this investigation is [CASE NUMBER FILL].

Please confirm that this case involved a child age 17 or younger abducted by someone who was not a family member AND the child was:

- Moved at least 20 feet *OR*
- Held for at least one hour

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK1.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.3 QUESTION REMOVED FOR PILOT**

**SK1.4** Did any of the following happen in this case? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Possibly	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.4A</b>	A child was <u>held overnight</u> OR between 12 midnight & 5am?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4B</b>	A child was <u>transported 50 miles</u> or more?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4C</b>	A child was <u>held for ransom</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4D</b>	A child was <u>killed</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4DDE</b>	<u>A perpetrator attempted to kill a child (but the child lived)?</u>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4E</b>	A perpetrator apparently intended to <u>keep a child permanently</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)

IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, **dd**, & e are **all** No → GO TO **SK1.19 ENDSURVEY1 or ENDSURVEY2**  
 IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, **dd** & e are **all** Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.19  
 IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, **dd** & e are either Yes **or** Possibly → CONTINUE TO SK1.4F  
 ELSE GO TO SK1.5

**SK1.4F** Please confirm that the case number {CASE NUMBER} is correct.

1. This case number is correct
2. No, this is not the correct case number → **GO TO END**
- 8. I don't know if this is the correct case number → **GO TO END**

**SK1.5** Did this case involve **more than one confirmed perpetrator**? HARD EDIT

*If number of perpetrators is not known for certain, please enter the number believed to have been involved if more than one.*

1. Yes  
SK1.5-1\_NUM Enter number of perpetrators: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).
2. No, there was only 1 perpetrator → **GO TO SK1.9**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.9**

**SK1.6** How did the perpetrators know each other? (Please respond to **all** items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.6A</b>	Married or romantic or sexual partners?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6B</b>	Other members of a family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6C</b>	Members of a gang?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6D</b>	Involved together in selling or buying drugs?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6E</b>	Involved together in sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6F</b>	Involved in some other type of criminal enterprise?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6G</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6H</b> <b>SK1.6H_OS</b>	Something else? Please describe how the perpetrators knew each other: <b>[TEXT BOX]</b>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK1.7** Did any of the perpetrators have a close relationship with a victim or victim’s family? This could involve a blood or legal tie to the family, a romantic partnership with a relative of a victim, a longstanding friendship, or another relationship that would make a perpetrator well-known to a child victim or their family.

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.9
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.9

**SK1.8** Please describe this close relationship between a perpetrator and child victim or victim’s family.

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

**SK1.9** Did this case involve more than one child victim? HARD EDIT

1. Yes, 2 child victims
2. Yes, 3 or more child victims  
SK1.9-2\_NUM Enter number of child victims: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).
3. No, 1 child → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.12

**SK1.9R** In Section 2 of this survey 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).

<b>SK1.9R1</b>	
<b>SK1.9R2</b>	
<b>SK1.9R3</b>	
<b>SK1.9R4</b>	
<b>SK1.9R5</b>	

**SK1.10** Did any of the victims know each other?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.12

**SK1.11** How did the victims know each other? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.11A</b>	Siblings or step-siblings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11B</b>	Related as family some other way, such as cousins?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11C</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11D</b>	Something else?			
<b>SK1.11D_OS</b>	Please describe how the victims knew each other: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK1.12** Was the perpetrator [most responsible for this incident] a stranger to [the/any] child victim?

*Stranger means a non-family perpetrator whom the child or child's family did not know OR the perpetrator's identity is unknown but investigators reasonably believe the perpetrator is a stranger.*

1. Yes, the perpetrator was a stranger → **GO TO SK1.14**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.13** Please briefly describe how the [most responsible] perpetrator knew [the child victim or the victim's family/any of the child victims or victims' families].

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

**SK1.14** Were other law enforcement agencies involved in this case?

1. Yes  
SK1.14\_NUM Please specify number of other agencies involved \_\_\_\_\_
2. No → **GO TO SK1.18**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.15** Did your agency receive the first report of this case?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK1.17**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.17**

SK1.16 What agency received the first report? (Please enter the agency name, county and state.)

SK1.16\_AGENCYNM Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.16\_AGENCYCY County \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.16\_AGENCYST State \_\_\_\_\_

SK1.17 Please list [what you know about] the other agencies involved in this case. Please list each agency by name, county and state. **DO NOT ENFORCE**

SK1.17\_AGENCYNM[1-10] Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.17\_AGENCYCY [1-10] County \_\_\_\_\_  
SK1.17\_AGENCYST [1-10] State \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: UP TO 10 AGENCIES (WITH ASSOCIATED COUNTIES AND STATES) MAY BE NAMED**

SK1.18 What is the current status of this case in your agency?

1. Open (under active investigation)
2. Open (arrest warrant issued)
3. Cleared by arrest
4. Closed for reasons other than arrest (exceptional clearance)  
SK1.18\_OS.4 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Suspended (inactive investigation)  
SK1.18\_OS.5 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Some other status  
SK1.18\_OS.6 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine  
SK1.18\_OS.-8 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

[PROGRAMMING NOTE: SK1.18\_OS.4, OS.5, OS.6, and OS.-8 FILLS ARE OPTIONAL].

SK1.19 Please describe briefly what occurred in this incident, as far as you know. How did the abduction begin? What did the perpetrator[s] do to the child victim[s]? How did it end?

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

---

IF SK1.2 = 2 (No) OR IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, dd & e are all No → GO TO ENDSURVEY5 or ENDSURVEY6

---

## 2. CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

This section asks questions about [the child victim in this incident/ up to 5 child victims in this incident. Since there is more than one victim in this incident please start with [TEXT FROM SK1.9R1].

SK2.1 Is this child male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK2.2 How old was this child at the time of the incident? If you are unsure of the child's age, please give your best guess. (Please give your best estimate if not sure.)

1. Less than 1 year old
  2. 1 year old or older
- SK2.2\_AGE Please enter age in years (whole number only) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK2.2E  Please check here if your answer ~~to SK2.2 above~~ is an estimate or guess of the child's age  
[PROGRAMMING NOTE: MOVE BOX TO BE ADJACENT TO SK2.2\_AGE]

SK2.3 Is this child Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK2.4 What is this child's race? Please check all that apply.

		Checked	Unchecked
SK2.4A	White	(1)	(0)
SK2.4B	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
SK2.4C	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
SK2.4D	Asian	(1)	(0)
SK2.4E	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
SK2.4F	Other		
SK2.4F_OS	Please describe this child's race: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(0)
SK2.4G	Don't know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF ONLY ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK2.7**  
**IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM → CONTINUE TO SK2.5**

---

**SK2.5** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator in this incident a stranger to this child or their family?

*Stranger means that the child or the child's family did not know the perpetrator OR the identity of the perpetrator is unknown but law enforcement reasonably believes it is a stranger.*

1. Yes → **GO TO BOX A**
2. No
3. Possibly
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.6** Please briefly describe how this child knew the [most responsible] perpetrator.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.7** Please respond to both statements in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.7A</b>	...was the [most responsible] <u>perpetrator's name known</u> to this child victim or this victim's family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.7B</b>	...did this child or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>well enough to speak to?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF SK2.7A and SK2.7B are No or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A**  
**ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7C**

---



Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7C	...did this child victim <u>meet</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>on the Internet but not in person?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7C is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A  
ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7D

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7D	...did this child victim or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator for <u>6 months or less?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7D is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A  
ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7E

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7E	...did this child victim or family <u>see</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>less than once a month?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

IF SK2.7E is No AND there are additional victims, loop back to SK2.1 for next child victim  
IF SK2.7E is Don't know/Cannot determine → Specs Box 2.6  
IF SK2.7E is No AND there are NO additional victims → GO TO ENDSURVEY

**BOX A (Specs Box 2.6)**

Answer item SK2.8 below only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) a child was held for ransom.  
ELSE → GO TO BOX B



**SK2.8** Was this child held for ransom?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX B (Specs Box 2.7)**

(Answer item **SK2.9** below only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) there was intent to keep permanently)

**ELSE → GO TO SK10.**

**SK2.9** Did [the/ a] perpetrator intend to keep this child permanently?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.10** How far did [the/ any] perpetrator move this victim from the beginning of the abduction to the time the victim was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. 20 feet or less
2. More than 20 feet but less than 1 mile
3. 1 to 9 miles
4. 10 to 49 miles
5. 50 miles or more
6. Child was not moved
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.11** How long did [the/ any] perpetrator keep or detain this victim before he or she was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. Less than 1 hour → **GO TO SK2.13**
2. 1 hour to less than 24 hours
3. 1 to 3 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
4. 4 to 7 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
5. More than 1 week → **GO TO SK2.13**
6. Child was not detained → **GO TO SK2.13**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.13**

**SK2.12** Was this victim held or detained overnight OR for at least one hour between midnight and 5am?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.13** What parents did this child live with when this incident began?

1. Two married, biological parents
2. Two married parents, one or both not biological, but both having a legal relationship to the child, such as adoption
3. Two unmarried parents, biological or other
4. One unmarried parent with a live-in partner who was not the child's parent
5. A single parent (no live-in partner)
6. Other situation  
SK2.13\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.14** What type of housing did this child live in at the time of the incident?

1. Single family dwelling
2. Multi-family dwelling (duplex, apartment building, for example)
3. Other situation such as shelter, institution, etc.
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.15** Did a parent or other caretaker of this child victim contact the police for help to locate their missing child?

1. Yes, contacted police to locate this child who was missing → **GO TO SK2.16**
2. No, contacted police for other reason → **GO TO SK2.16**  
SK2.15OS1 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_ → **GO TO SK2.16**
3. No, a parent or other caretaker of this child did not contact police → **GO TO SK2.15OS2**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.16**

**SK2.15OS2** Who was it that contacted the police about this case? (e.g., another child's parent/caretaker, a neighbor, child's friend, etc.)

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.16** At the time of the abduction, was this child impaired by any serious or permanent physical or mental disabilities, life threatening medical conditions or other problems such as drug or alcohol use?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK2.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.19**

**SK2.17** Please describe this child's disabilities, medical conditions or other impairments at the time of the incident.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.18** Would you say that this child was mentally incompetent at the time of the episode?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**[IF CHILD WAS KILLED (SK1.4d = 1) AND CASE INVOLVED ONLY 1 CHILD (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK2.19a]**

**SK2.19** **[IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8: Earlier you said a child was killed.]** Was this **[SK1.9R1-5]** victim...

1. Recovered? → **GO TO SK2.20**
2. Killed? → **GO TO SK2.19b**
3. Still missing? → **GO TO SK2.20**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.20**

**SK2.19a** **Earlier you said this child was killed. Please describe the circumstances around this child's death.**

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.19b** **Please describe the circumstances around this child's death.**

[TEXT BOX]

SK2.20 During the incident did [the/-any] perpetrator take or move this victim in or to any of the following places? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.20A	A vehicle?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.20B	A building?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.20C	The perpetrator's home?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.20D	An outside area, like woods?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

SK2.21 Did [the/any] perpetrator use physical force or any kind of threat in taking or moving this victim from their original location?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

---

IF CHILD WAS NOT DETAINED (SK2.11 = 6, Child was not detained) → GO TO BOX C  
 IF CHILD WAS DETAINED or DK (SK2.11 = 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or -8), CONTINUE TO SK2.22

---

SK2.22 Did [the/any] perpetrator use any kind of force or threat during the time this victim was detained?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK2.23 How *isolated* was the location where this victim was detained?

*Isolated* means the child was not able to leave on his or her own and had no opportunity to appeal for help.

1. Very isolated
2. Probably isolated
3. Not isolated
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX C (Specs Box 2.9)**  
**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS NOT USED (SK2.21 =2, No or SK2.22 = 2, No) → GO TO SK2.25**  
**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS USED, CONTINUE TO SK2.24**

**SK2.24** **[IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 3 OR IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8 AND SK2.19 = 2] Earlier you said this child was killed.]** Did [the/any] perpetrator use force or threaten this victim in any of the following ways during the crime? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.24A	Threaten this child with or use a weapon?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24B	Harm or threaten to harm this child's family or pets?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24C	Force this child to walk somewhere?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.24D SK2.24D_OS	Other use of force? Please describe the other use of force or threat by the perpetrator during the crime [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK2.25** **[IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 3 OR IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8 AND SK2.19 = 2] Earlier you said this child was killed.] At any time in this episode, d** During the abduction or detention, did [the/any] perpetrator ... (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.25A	Physically assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25B	Neglect this victim's basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical treatment, etc.)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25C	Sexually assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25D	Drug this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25E	Rob this child victim or damage or destroy their belongings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.25F SK2.25F_OS	Harm this child some other way? Please describe the other way the perpetrator harmed this child [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**IF CASE INVOLVED A SINGLE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK3.1**  
**IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 1 or 2), loop back to SK2.1—SK2.25 and repeat for each child victim. After last child victim, → GO TO SK3.1**

### 3. PERPETRATOR CHARACTERISTICS

The next questions ask about the perpetrator. [Please answer about the perpetrator most responsible for the incident.]

**SK3.1** Is the identity of this perpetrator known?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK3.3**
2. No

**SK3.2** Do you have any information at all, like sex, race or approximate age?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.3** How old was the [most responsible] perpetrator at the time of the incident.

Please enter age in years, SOFT EDIT (value <= 14 or value >= 80).

**SK3.3\_DK** Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.4** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.5** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.6** What is the [most responsible] perpetrator's race? (Please check all that apply.)

		Checked	Unchecked
<b>SK3.6A</b>	White	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6B</b>	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6C</b>	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6D</b>	Asian	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6E</b>	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6F</b>	Other		
<b>SK3.6F_OS</b>	Please describe:	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6G</b>	Don't know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF PERPETRATOR'S IDENTITY IS KNOWN (SK3.1 = 1) → GO TO SK3.8.**

---

**SK3.7** Do you have any information about the perpetrator's life circumstances, like marital status, employment or involvement with the criminal justice system?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.8** What was the [most responsible] perpetrator's marital status at the time of the crime?

1. Single
2. Married
3. Separated, divorced or widowed
4. Living with a partner
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.9** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator employed either full- or part-time at the time of the crime?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.10** At the time of this crime, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have any active or ongoing involvement with the legal system or any treatment programs?

1. Yes  
SK3.10\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.11** At the time of the episode, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have a diagnosed mental illness?

1. Yes  
SK3.11\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.12** Is there any indication that the [most responsible] perpetrator has any problems with drugs or alcohol?

1. Yes  
a. SK3.12\_OS Please describe type of problem: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.13** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.14** Were any of these arrests for crimes of violence?

1. Yes  
SK3.14\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.15** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Registry before this abduction?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine



**SK3.16** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Public Website before this abduction?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.17** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests for crimes against juveniles?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.18** Did any of these prior arrests involve any of the following? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK3.18A</b>	Homicide of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18B</b>	A sex crime against a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18C</b>	Child abduction?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18D</b>	Battery or assault of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18E</b>	Something else?			
<b>SK3.18E_OS</b>	Please describe what else was involved in these prior arrests. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK3.19** What is this perpetrator's current situation?

1. Still at large
2. In custody
3. Free
4. Something else
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

#### 4. CRIME CHARACTERISTICS

SK4.1 Where [was the victim/were the victims] last seen before the abduction occurred?

1. Victim's residence or place child was staying at night, includes yard
2. Outdoor area with public access (sidewalk, park, street, beach, etc.)
3. Indoor area with public access (shopping mall, store, theater, etc.)
4. Perpetrator's residence or yard
5. Common area of apartment complex
6. School or daycare, indoors or outdoors
7. Vehicle
8. Other place

SK4.1\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

-8. Don't know/Not sure

SK4.2 ~~Was [the/any] victim taken from a group of children? Were there other children in the vicinity of the abduction where it occurred, that is, within hearing or viewing distance?~~

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

SK4.3 How would you characterize the perpetrator's ~~initial~~ approach? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK4.3A	Deceptive or non- threatening pretext?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK4.3B	Surprise (lying in wait, using stealth) or blitz (sudden, overwhelming force)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK4.3C SK4.3C_OS	Other type of approach? Please characterize the perpetrator's initial approach. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

SK4.4 Did [the/ any] victim go with the perpetrator voluntarily (even if duped)?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.5**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.4A** Is there any reason to believe the victim wanted to leave the company of the perpetrator but was unable or prevented from doing so?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.5** Is there any indication that this crime was connected with ...? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK4.5A</b>	Youth gang activity?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5B</b>	Drug trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5C</b>	Sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5D</b>	Serial killings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5E</b> <b>SK4.5E_OS</b>	Other criminal networks or conspiracies? Please describe the other criminal networks or conspiracies indicated. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK4.6** Is there any indication that the internet played a role in prior contact between a perpetrator and victim or in leading up to the abduction encounter?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**

**SK4.7** Please describe the role the internet played.

[TEXT BOX]

## 5. INVESTIGATION

**SK5.1** Was this case submitted to ... (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.1A</b>	FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension system (VICAP)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1B</b>	National Crime Information Center (NCIC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1C</b>	National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK5.2** Did a NCMEC Project Alert team participate in the investigation?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.3** Was a DNA profile entered into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System)?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.5**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.5**

**SK5.4** Was a match found?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.5** Was a telephone hotline established?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.6** Was a leads management system established?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.7** Was an Amber Alert issued?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK5.9**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.8** Why wasn't an Amber Alert issued? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.8A</b>	Child was quickly recovered	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8B</b>	No reasonable belief an abduction had occurred	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8C</b>	Child was not in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8D</b>	Insufficient information about child, vehicle, etc., to issue Amber Alert	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8E</b> <b>SK5.8E_OS</b>	Other reason Please describe the other reason an Amber Alert was not issued [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF NO AMBER ALERT WAS ISSUED (SK5.7 = 2) → GO TO SK5.11.**

---

**SK5.9** Did the Amber Alert result in any information that helped to locate or recover the child or identify the perpetrator?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.11**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.10** Please describe how the Amber Alert helped to locate and recover the child?

[TEXT BOX]

SK5.11 Did digital or technological resources, including social media, electronic devices such as cell phones or computers provide evidence, leads, or other information that was of particular importance in the solution of this case or the recovery of the victim? key to recovering [the/any] victim or identifying the perpetrator?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK5.13
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK5.13

SK5.12 Please describe how digital or technological resources, including social media, electronic devices provided evidence, leads or other information.

[TEXT BOX]

SK5.13 Is there anything else that would be important to know about this case? (If applicable: What was most important in solving this case or recovering the child?)

[TEXT BOX]

SK5.14 If you want to clarify your answers to any of the close-ended responses above, please do so here:

[TEXT BOX]

SK5.15

IF SK1.19 IS NULL: If you feel a narrative description of the kidnapping episode would help us better understand this case, please provide a description here:

[If SK1.19 HAS TEXT: Your response to an earlier item regarding details of this incident is presented below. Do you have anything to add to help us better understand this case?

[SK1.19 RESPONSE REPEATS HERE]

[TEXT BOX]

---

IF RESPONDENT HAS NO ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY3.

IF RESPONDENT HAS ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY4.

---

## ENDSURVEY

ENDSURVEY1 We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not

qualify. There are no further questions. Thank you for your time.

**ENDSURVEY2** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not qualify. Please use this link 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 child kidnapping.

**ENDSURVEY4** Thank you for completing this survey. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

**ENDSURVEY5** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. There are no further questions at this time. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Thank you for your time.

**ENDSURVEY6** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

# **Appendix B**

## **Phase 1 Screener Survey**





# **NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVEY ON STEREOTYPICAL KIDNAPPING (LES-SK)**

**Part of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Incidence Studies of  
Missing, Abducted, Runaway & Throwaway  
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  
**Toll free: 1-855-942-0406**

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:**  /  /   
MM DD YYYY

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act, we cannot ask you to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the National Institute of Justice, 810 Seventh Street NW, Washington, DC 20531.

28144



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is NISMART-4?**

NISMART-4 is a research study created by the federal Missing Children's Assistance Act. Its goal is to estimate the number of missing children, including children who have been abducted. NISMART-4 is the fourth in a series of studies conducted between 1988 and 2011. It will update numbers from the three previous studies to determine whether there have been increases or decreases in the number of missing or abducted children. The findings will be reported to Congress and will guide the development of policies and programs for missing children. The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. Westat and the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) at the University of New Hampshire are conducting the study.

### **What is the National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping?**

NISMART includes a number of different studies. The National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping will estimate the number of children who were abducted by strangers between **January 1 and December 31, 2019**. Data will be collected in two phases from all law enforcement agencies with authority to investigate stereotypical kidnappings. In Phase 1, law enforcement agencies will complete a mail survey screener to identify relevant cases. Then in Phase 2, researchers will contact investigators of the relevant stereotypical kidnapping cases to ask them to complete a self-administered web survey to provide details about specific cases they investigated.

### **How did you choose this agency?**

This mail survey is being sent to all law enforcement agencies in a nationally representative sample of more than 400 U.S. counties, a total of **4,680** agencies.

### **Why is my agency's participation important?**

Participation is voluntary, and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. However, the sample of agencies has been carefully designed to be nationally representative, so your agency will make an important contribution to the accuracy and reliability of the final study estimates. This applies whether or not your agency investigated any relevant cases between **January 1 and December 31, 2019**.

Participating in this research will not entail any particular risks or benefits to you but it will contribute to knowledge about abducted children.

### **What if my agency has no cases?**

Please complete the survey even if your agency did not investigate any relevant cases during the study year **January 1 through December 31, 2019**. Whatever your agency's experiences, they represent the experiences of other law enforcement agencies like yours nationwide.

### **What does the mail survey screener involve?**

The mail survey screener asks about the agency's experience with cases in which a child is reported as abducted or missing. It takes about 15 minutes to complete.

### **What about security and confidentiality protections?**

In accordance with 28 CFR Part 22, the research team will provide administrative and physical security of identifiable data and preserve the anonymity of private persons participating in this project. 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.

### **What if I have questions?**

If you have questions about the research, please contact [GailThomas@westat.com](mailto:GailThomas@westat.com), or the study's toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Westat Human Subjects Protection Office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the study (NISMART-4) and a phone number, beginning with the area code. Someone will return your call as soon as possible.

## SECTION A

**A1.** 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 G, Page 7*

**A2.** Between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**, did your agency investigate any cases where a child under the age of 18 was abducted by a stranger, or a person with limited previous contact (a slight acquaintance) (see Glossary, Page 7), or by an unknown person?

Consider all cases where your agency performed any investigation activity between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**, including unsolved cases from previous years which remained open between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** including investigations that your agency turned over to another agency, if applicable.

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

**A3.** Were any of these cases where...

	Yes	No
<b>a.</b> The child was held overnight?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>b.</b> The child was transported 50 miles or more?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>c.</b> The child was held for ransom?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>d.</b> The child was killed?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>e.</b> The abductor attempted to kill a child (but the child lived)?...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>f.</b> The abductor apparently intended to keep the child?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A4.** Did you answer “yes” to any item in Question A3? ←

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

**A5.** Indicate the total number of cases that your agency investigated between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** that fit one or more of the criteria given in Question A3.

Remember to include all cases that fit the Question A3 criteria where your agency performed any investigation activity between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** regardless of when they were first reported and regardless of the involvement of another agency.

Total Number of Qualifying Cases Investigated Between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**

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



## SECTION B

For all abductions included in the total in Question A5 on the previous page, please provide the following information:

a) Case Number <i>Provide your agency's case number for reference in our follow-up call</i>	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: (Mark all that apply)
B1. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep
B2. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep
B3. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep
B4. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep
B5. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep
B6. <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ Miles <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom <input type="checkbox"/> Killed <input type="checkbox"/> Attempted to Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Intended to Keep

(Please use enclosed additional Section B page to continue this listing, if necessary).



## SECTION C

In order to ensure that NISMART-4 counts all abductions that qualify under its definition of stereotypical abduction (see Glossary, Page 7), this section asks you to take a different perspective. Here, we ask you to consider all the cases which your agency investigated as homicides of children between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**. Some of these cases might technically qualify under the NISMART definition because there was an element of abduction during the course of the incident.

**C1.** Between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**, did your agency investigate any homicides or presumed homicides where the victim was a child?

Yes  
 No → *Skip to Section E, Page 6*

**C2.** Were any of these cases where...

	Yes	No
<b>a.</b> The perpetrator or primary suspect was a stranger?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>b.</b> The perpetrator or primary suspect was a person with limited previous contact (a slight acquaintance) (see Glossary, Page 7)?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>c.</b> The perpetrator's identity has not yet been established?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C3.** Did you answer "yes" to any item in Question C2? ←

Yes  
 No → *Skip to Section E, Page 6*

**C4.** Indicate the total number of cases that your agency investigated between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** that fit the criteria given above in Questions C1 and C2?

Consider all cases where your agency performed any investigation activity between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**, including unsolved cases from previous years which remained open between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** and including investigations that your agency turned over to another agency, if applicable.

Total Number of Stranger Homicides Investigated between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**

**C5.** Were any of these cases where, prior to the killing, it appeared that the perpetrator had...

	Yes	No
<b>a.</b> Moved the child (by force, threat, or lure) 20 feet or more?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>b.</b> Detained the child for one hour or longer?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C6.** Did you answer "yes" to any item in Question C5? ←

Yes  
 No → *Skip to Section E, Page 6*

**C7.** Indicate the number of cases you included in your answer to Question C4 that involved one or the other of the elements listed in Question C5.

Total Number of Stranger Abduction Homicides Investigated between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**

**IMPORTANT:** Please provide specific information about each case by completing Section D on the next page. →



## SECTION D

For all stranger abduction homicides included in the total in Question C7 on the previous page, please provide the following information:

<b>a) Case Number</b> <i>Provide your agency's case number for reference in our follow-up call</i>	<b>b) Who was the key investigating officer or who in your agency is now the most knowledgeable person about the case?</b>	<b>c) Were any other law enforcement agencies involved?</b>	<b>d) When was the case reported?</b> (MM/DD/YY)	<b>e) Is the case still open?</b>	<b>f) Indicate which criteria this case appears to fit:</b> (Mark all that apply)
D1. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour
D2. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour
D3. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour
D4. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour
D5. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour
D6. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Last Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> / <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/> MM DD YY	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved 20+ Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Detained 1+ Hour

(Please use enclosed additional Section D page to continue this listing, if necessary).

**Skip to Section F, Page 6**

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**SECTION E**

**IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO QUESTION C1, C3 OR C6, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F BELOW.**

**E1.** You have indicated that your agency did not investigate any cases between **January 1 - December 31, 2019** that fit the NISMART criteria for a stereotypical abduction (see Glossary, Page 7). What year did your agency last investigate any case that fit those criteria?

--	--	--	--

**E2.** Are you aware of any cases of stereotypical abductions in your general area or in your state between **January 1 - December 31, 2019**?

Yes

→ Indicate the county (counties) where the abduction(s) took place

--

No

**SECTION F**

**F1.** 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:

	Yes	No
<b>a.</b> Checked with other staff in your department?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>b.</b> Checked with staff elsewhere in your agency?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>c.</b> Checked records?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>d.</b> Used a computerized information system?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**F2.** Is your specific department or unit responsible for...

	Yes	No
<b>a.</b> Investigating child abductions?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>b.</b> Maintaining data on child abductions?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Skip to Section H, Page 7*



**SECTION G**

**G1.** You indicated in Section A that your agency does not have the jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of child abductions. Please describe what responsibilities do come under your agency's jurisdiction.


**SECTION H**

**H1.** Feel free to comment on this survey to offer your suggestions about other information this research should consider.


**GLOSSARY OF STUDY TERMS**

**Child.** Person under the age of 18.

**Stereotypical Abduction.** An abduction by a stranger, a person with limited previous contact (a slight acquaintance), or an unidentified person where the child was held overnight, transported 50 miles or more, held for ransom, killed, or the abductor attempted to kill the child (but the child lived), or the abductor apparently intended to keep the child.

**Abduction.** An incident where the child was moved by force, threat, or lure for a distance of 20 feet or more or was detained for one hour or longer.

**Stranger.** Person not known by the child or family.

**Person with limited previous contact (Slight Acquaintance).** A nonfamily perpetrator who was a recent acquaintance whom the child or family have known for less than 6 months, or someone the family or child have known for longer than 6 months but have seen infrequently (e.g., less than once a month).

**Unknown Person.** Person whose identity has not yet been determined. Although this may ultimately turn out to be a family member or someone known well, it is equally likely that they turn out to be a stranger or a person with limited previous contact (slight acquaintance).

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY.**

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE POSTAGE-PAID ENVELOPE PROVIDED.**





# **Appendix C**

## **Phase 1 Short 4-Question Form**



### National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping

This is the fourth request for your agency's participation in the **National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping**. As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire.

The report we write from this study will help law enforcement in the future and give policymakers and legislators vital information about cases involving stranger abductions. Your agency was selected through *a scientific sampling process, along with more than 4,500 other law enforcement agencies*. In order for the study results to truly represent the experiences of all agencies, it is essential that each agency in the sample respond, even if you do not have any cases to report.

To make things easier for you, we have simplified the survey to four essential questions, listed below. Please answer them to the best of your knowledge and return this to us. If you have any questions about this project, please send an email to [NISMART@westat.com](mailto:NISMART@westat.com) or you can call our project's toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406, and someone will return your call promptly. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely, Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Does your agency have jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of cases in which a child is reported as abducted or missing?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 did your agency investigate any cases where a child under the age of 18 was abducted by a stranger, or a person with limited previous contact (slight acquaintance) or by unknown person?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply</p> | <p>3. Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 did your agency investigate any homicides or presumed homicides where the victim was a child under the age of 18 and the perpetrator or the primary suspect was a stranger, or a person with limited previous contact (slight acquaintance) or unknown person?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply</p> <p>4. Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 did your agency have any open cases of child abductions or presumed abductions from prior years?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

NAME:

TITLE:  Phone Number: (    )  -

**Thank you for your time.**  
**Please use the enclosed business reply envelope to return your completed survey.**

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act, we cannot ask you to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the National Institute of Justice, 810 Seventh Street NW, Washington, DC 20531.

**\*\*\*Please flip over to read important letter!\*\*\***

# **Appendix D**

## **Phase 2 Full Case Survey**

## NISMART-4: Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnappings (LES-SK)

### 1. PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

**SK1.1** Thank you for participating in the NISMART pilot survey. After your survey is completed and reviewed, we would like to talk with you about your experience taking the survey. Please provide your contact information here so the researchers can reach you later. This information will be deleted as soon as the research team verifies that your survey is complete.

**SK1.1\_NAME** Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.1\_TITLE** Title \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.1\_AGENCY** Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.1\_PHONE** Telephone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.1\_EMAIL** Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**SK1.2** Your agency's case number for this investigation is [CASE NUMBER FILL].

Please confirm that this case involved a child age 17 or younger abducted by someone who was not a family member AND the child was:

- Moved at least 20 feet **OR**
- Held for at least one hour

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK1.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.3** Did this incident occur between January 1 and December 31, 2019?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**If SK1.3=2 (No) or SK1.3=3 Don't know/Cannot determine AND respondent has no additional surveys to complete, → GO TO ENDSURVEY1.**

**If SK1.3=2 (No) or SK1.3=3 Don't know/Cannot determine AND respondent has additional surveys to complete. → GO TO ENDSURVEY2.**

**SK1.4** Did any of the following happen in this case? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Possibly	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.4A</b>	A child was <u>held overnight</u> OR between 12 midnight & 5am?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4B</b>	A child was <u>transported 50 miles</u> or more?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4C</b>	A child was <u>held for ransom</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4D</b>	A child was <u>killed</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4DD</b>	A perpetrator <u>attempted</u> to kill a child (but the child lived)?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)
<b>SK1.4E</b>	A perpetrator apparently intended to <u>keep a child permanently</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(-8)

**IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, dd, & e are all No → GO TO SK1.19**

**IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, dd & e are all Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO SK1.19**

**IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, dd & e are either Yes or Possibly → CONTINUE TO SK1.4F  
ELSE GO TO SK1.5**

**SK1.4F** Please confirm that the case number {CASE NUMBER} is correct.

1. This case number is correct
2. No, this is not the correct case number → **GO TO END**
- 8. I don't know if this is the correct case number → **GO TO END**

**SK1.5** Did this case involve more than one confirmed perpetrator? HARD EDIT

*If number of perpetrators is not known for certain, please enter the number believed to have been involved if more than one.*

1. Yes  
SK1.5-1\_NUM Enter number of perpetrators: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).
2. No, there was only 1 perpetrator → **GO TO SK1.9**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.9**

**SK1.6** How did the perpetrators know each other? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.6A</b>	Married or romantic or sexual partners?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6B</b>	Other members of a family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6C</b>	Members of a gang?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6D</b>	Involved together in selling or buying drugs?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6E</b>	Involved together in sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6F</b>	Involved in some other type of criminal enterprise?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6G</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.6H</b> <b>SK1.6H_OS</b>	Something else? Please describe how the perpetrators knew each other: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK1.7** Did any of the perpetrators have a close relationship with a victim or victim's family? This could involve a blood or legal tie to the family, a romantic partnership with a relative of a victim, a longstanding friendship, or another relationship that would make a perpetrator well-known to a child victim or their family.

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.9
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.9**

**SK1.8** Please describe this close relationship between a perpetrator and child victim or victim's family.

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

**SK1.9** Did this case involve more than one child victim? HARD EDIT

1. Yes, 2 child victims
2. Yes, 3 or more child victims  
SK1.9-2\_NUM Enter number of child victims: SOFT EDIT (value > 10).
3. No, 1 child → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.12**

**SK1.9R** In Section 2 of this survey 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).

<b>SK1.9R1</b>	
<b>SK1.9R2</b>	
<b>SK1.9R3</b>	
<b>SK1.9R4</b>	
<b>SK1.9R5</b>	

**SK1.10** Did any of the victims know each other?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO SK1.12
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.12**

**SK1.11** How did the victims know each other? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK1.11A</b>	Siblings or step-siblings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11B</b>	Related as family some other way, such as cousins?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11C</b>	Friends, acquaintances or schoolmates?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK1.11D</b> <b>SK1.11D_OS</b>	Something else? Please describe how the victims knew each other: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)



**SK1.12** Was the perpetrator [most responsible for this incident] a stranger to [the/any] child victim?

*Stranger means a non-family perpetrator whom the child or child's family did not know OR the perpetrator's identity is unknown but investigators reasonably believe the perpetrator is a stranger.*

1. Yes, the perpetrator was a stranger → **GO TO SK1.14**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.13** Please briefly describe how the [most responsible] perpetrator knew [the child victim or the victim's family/any of the child victims or victims' families].

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

**SK1.14** Were other law enforcement agencies involved in this case?

1. Yes  
SK1.14\_NUM Please specify number of other agencies involved \_\_\_\_\_
2. No → **GO TO SK1.18**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK1.15** Did your agency receive the first report of this case?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK1.17**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK1.17**

**SK1.16** What agency received the first report? (Please enter the agency name, county and state.)

**SK1.16\_AGENCYNM** Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.16\_AGENCYCY** County \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.16\_AGENCYST** State \_\_\_\_\_

**SK1.17** Please list [what you know about] the other agencies involved in this case.  
Please list each agency by name, county and state. **DO NOT ENFORCE**

**SK1.17\_AGENCYNM[1-10]** Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.17\_AGENCYCY [1-10]** County \_\_\_\_\_  
**SK1.17\_AGENCYST [1-10]** State \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: UP TO 10 AGENCIES (WITH ASSOCIATED COUNTIES AND STATES) MAY BE NAMED**

**SK1.18** What is the current status of this case in your agency?

1. Open (under active investigation)
2. Open (arrest warrant issued)
3. Cleared by arrest
4. Closed for reasons other than arrest (exceptional clearance)  
SK1.18\_OS.4 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Suspended (inactive investigation)  
SK1.18\_OS.5 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Some other status  
SK1.18\_OS.6 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine  
SK1.18\_OS.-8 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

[PROGRAMMING NOTE: SK1.18\_OS.4, OS.5, OS.6, and OS.-8 FILLS ARE OPTIONAL].

**SK1.19** Please describe briefly what occurred in this incident, as far as you know. How did the abduction begin? What did the perpetrator[s] do to the child victim[s]? How did it end?

[TEXT BOX] SOFT EDIT

---

**IF SK1.2 = 2 (No) OR IF SK1.4 a, b, c, d, dd & e are all No → GO TO ENDSURVEY5 or ENDSURVEY6**

---

## 2. CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

This section asks questions about [the child victim in this incident/ up to 5 child victims in this incident. Since there is more than one victim in this incident please start with [TEXT FROM SK1.9R1].

**SK2.1** Is this child male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.2** How old was this child at the time of the incident? If you are unsure of the child's age, please give your **best guess**.

1. Less than 1 year old
2. 1 year old or older

SK2.2\_AGE Please enter age in years (whole number only) \_\_\_\_\_

- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.2E**  Please check here if your answer is an estimate or guess of the child's age  
[PROGRAMMING NOTE: MOVE BOX TO BE ADJACENT TO **SK2.2\_AGE**]

**SK2.3** Is this child Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.4** What is this child’s race? Please check all that apply.

		Checked	Unchecked
<b>SK2.4A</b>	White	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4B</b>	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4C</b>	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4D</b>	Asian	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4E</b>	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4F</b>	Other		
<b>SK2.4F_OS</b>	Please describe this child’s race: [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(0)
<b>SK2.4G</b>	Don’t know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF ONLY ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK2.7**  
**IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM → CONTINUE TO SK2.5**

---

**SK2.5** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator in this incident a stranger to this child or their

*Stranger means that the child or the child's family did not know the perpetrator OR the identity of the perpetrator is unknown but law enforcement reasonably believes it is a stranger.*

family?

1. Yes → **GO TO BOX A**
2. No
3. Possibly
- 8. Don’t know/Cannot determine

**SK2.6** Please briefly describe how this child knew the [most responsible] perpetrator.

[TEXT BOX]

SK2.7 Please respond to both statements in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7A	...was the [most responsible] <u>perpetrator's name known</u> to this child victim or this victim's family?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
SK2.7B	...did this child or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>well enough to speak to?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF SK2.7A and SK2.7B are No or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7C**

---

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7C	...did this child victim <u>meet</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>on the Internet but not in person?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**IF SK2.7C is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7D**

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
SK2.7D	...did this child victim or family <u>know</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator for <u>6 months or less?</u>	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**IF SK2.7D is Yes or Don't know/Cannot determine → GO TO BOX A ELSE CONTINUE TO SK2.7E**

Please respond to the statement in the table below. Before the abduction...

	Before the abduction.....	Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.7E</b>	...did this child victim or family <u>see</u> the [most responsible] perpetrator <u>less than once a month</u> ?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**IF SK2.7E is No AND there are additional victims, loop back to SK2.1 for next child victim**

**IF SK2.7E is Don't know/Cannot determine → Specs Box 2.6)**

**IF SK2.7E is No AND there are NO additional victims → GO TO ENDSURVEY**

**BOX A (Specs Box 2.6)**

Answer item **SK2.8 below** only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) a child was held for ransom.

**SK2.8** Was this child held for ransom?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX B (Specs Box 2.7)**

(Answer item **SK2.9 below** only in cases with all three of the following: (1) there are multiple victims, (2) the/a perpetrator is or could be a stranger or slight acquaintance, and (3) there was intent to keep permanently)

**SK2.9** Did [the/ a] perpetrator intend to keep this child permanently?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.10** How far did [the/ any] perpetrator move this victim from the beginning of the abduction to the time the victim was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. 20 feet or less
2. More than 20 feet but less than 1 mile
3. 1 to 9 miles
4. 10 to 49 miles
5. 50 miles or more
6. Child was not moved
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.11** How long did [the/ any] perpetrator keep or detain this victim before he or she was released, found, escaped or killed?

1. Less than 1 hour → **GO TO SK2.13**
2. 1 hour to less than 24 hours
3. 1 to 3 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
4. 4 to 7 days → **GO TO SK2.13**
5. More than 1 week → **GO TO SK2.13**
6. Child was not detained → **GO TO SK2.13**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.13**

**SK2.12** Was this victim held or detained overnight OR for at least one hour between midnight and 5am?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.13** What parents did this child live with when this incident began?

1. Two married, biological parents
2. Two married parents, one or both not biological, but both having a legal relationship to the child, such as adoption
3. Two unmarried parents, biological or other
4. One unmarried parent with a live-in partner who was not the child's parent
5. A single parent (no live-in partner)
6. Other situation

SK2.13\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.14** What type of housing did this child live in at the time of the incident?

1. Single family dwelling
2. Multi-family dwelling (duplex, apartment building, for example)
3. Other situation such as shelter, institution, etc.

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.15** Did a parent or other caretaker of this child victim contact the police for help to locate their missing child?

1. Yes, contacted police to locate this child who was missing → **GO TO SK2.16**
  2. No, contacted police for other reason → **GO TO SK2.16**  
SK2.15OS1 Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_ → **GO TO SK2.16**
  3. No, a parent or other caretaker of this child did not contact police → **GO TO SK2.15OS2**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.16**

**SK2.15OS2** Who was it that contacted the police about this case? (e.g., another child's parent/caretaker, a neighbor, child's friend, etc.)

[TEXT BOX]



**SK2.16** At the time of the abduction, was this child impaired by any serious or permanent physical or mental disabilities, life threatening medical conditions or other problems such as drug or alcohol use?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK2.19**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.19**

**SK2.17** Please describe this child's disabilities, medical conditions or other impairments at the time of the incident.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.18** Would you say that this child was mentally incompetent at the time of the episode?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**[IF CHILD WAS KILLED (SK1.4d = 1) AND CASE INVOLVED ONLY 1 CHILD (SK1.9 = 3)  
→GO TO SK2.19a]**

**SK2.19 [IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8: Earlier you said a child was killed.]** Was [SK1.9R1-5]...

1. Recovered? → **GO TO SK2.20**
2. Killed? → **GO TO SK2.19b**
3. Still missing? → **GO TO SK2.20**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK2.20**

**SK2.19a** Earlier you said this child was killed. Please describe the circumstances around this child's death.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.19b Please describe the circumstances around this child's death.**

[TEXT BOX]

**SK2.20** During the incident did [the/any] perpetrator take or move this victim in or to any of the following places? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.20A</b>	A vehicle?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20B</b>	A building?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20C</b>	The perpetrator's home?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.20D</b>	An outside area, like woods?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK2.21** Did [the/any] perpetrator use physical force or any kind of threat in taking or moving this victim from their original location?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

---

**IF CHILD WAS NOT DETAINED (SK2.11 = 6, Child was not detained) → GO TO BOX C**  
**IF CHILD WAS DETAINED or DK (SK2.11 = 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or -8), CONTINUE TO SK2.22**

---

**SK2.22** Did [the/any] perpetrator use any kind of force or threat during the time this victim was detained?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK2.23** How *isolated* was the location where this victim was detained?

*Isolated* means the child was not able to leave on his or her own and had no opportunity to appeal for help.

1. Very isolated
2. Probably isolated
3. Not isolated
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**BOX C (Specs Box 2.9)**

**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS NOT USED (SK2.21 =2, No or SK2.22 = 2, No) → GO TO SK2.25**

**IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS USED OR IS UNKNOWN (SK2.21 = 1, Yes OR -8, DK; or SK2.22 = 1, Yes OR -8,**

**SK2.24 [IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 3 OR IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8 AND SK2.19 = 2] Earlier you said this child was killed.]** Did [the/any] perpetrator use force or threaten this victim in any of the following ways during the crime? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.24A</b>	Threaten this child with or use a weapon?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24B</b>	Harm or threaten to harm this child's family or pets?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24C</b>	Force this child to walk somewhere?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.24D</b> <b>SK2.24D_OS</b>	Other use of force? Please describe the other use of force or threat by the perpetrator during the crime [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK2.25 [IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 3 OR IF SK1.4d = 1 AND SK1.9 = 1, 2 or -8 AND SK2.19 = 2] Earlier you said this child was killed.] At any time in this episode, during the abduction or detention, did [the/any] perpetrator ... (Please respond to all items.)**

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK2.25A</b>	Physically assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.25B</b>	Neglect this victim's basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical treatment, etc.)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.25C</b>	Sexually assault this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.25D</b>	Drug this child victim?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.25E</b>	Rob this child victim or damage or destroy their belongings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK2.25F SK2.25F_OS</b>	Harm this child some other way? Please describe the other way the perpetrator harmed this child [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF CASE INVOLVED A SINGLE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 3) → GO TO SK3.1  
IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD VICTIM (SK1.9 = 1 or 2), loop back to SK2.1—  
SK2.25 and repeat for each child victim. After last child victim, → GO TO SK3.1**

---

### 3. PERPETRATOR CHARACTERISTICS

The next questions ask about the perpetrator. [Please answer about the perpetrator most responsible for the incident.]

**SK3.1** Is the identity of this perpetrator known?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK3.3**
2. No

**SK3.2** Do you have any information at all, like sex, race or approximate age?

1. Yes
2. No → GO TO **SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.3** How old was the [most responsible] perpetrator at the time of the incident.

Please enter age in years\_SOFT EDIT (value <= 14 or value >= 80).

**SK3.3\_DK** Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.4** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator male or female?

1. Male
2. Female
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.5** Is the [most responsible] perpetrator Hispanic or Latino?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.6** What is the [most responsible] perpetrator’s race? (Please check all that apply.)

		Checked	Unchecked
<b>SK3.6A</b>	White	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6B</b>	Black or African American	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6C</b>	American Indian or Alaska Native	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6D</b>	Asian	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6E</b>	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6F</b>	Other		
<b>SK3.6F_OS</b>	Please describe:	(1)	(0)
<b>SK3.6G</b>	Don’t know/Cannot determine	(1)	(0)

---

**IF PERPETRATOR’S IDENTITY IS KNOWN (SK3.1 = 1) → GO TO SK3.8.**

---

**SK3.7** Do you have any information about the perpetrator’s life circumstances, like marital status, employment or involvement with the criminal justice system?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.8** What was the [most responsible] perpetrator’s marital status at the time of the crime?

1. Single
2. Married
3. Separated, divorced or widowed
4. Living with a partner
- 8. Don’t know/Cannot determine

**SK3.9** Was the [most responsible] perpetrator employed either full- or part-time at the time of the crime?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.10** At the time of this crime, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have any active or ongoing involvement with the legal system or any treatment programs?

1. Yes  
SK3.10\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.11** At the time of the episode, did the [most responsible] perpetrator have a diagnosed mental illness?

1. Yes  
SK3.11\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.12** Is there any indication that the [most responsible] perpetrator has any problems with drugs or alcohol?

1. Yes  
a. SK3.12\_OS Please describe type of problem: \_\_\_\_\_
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.13** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

**SK3.14** Were any of these arrests for crimes of violence?

1. Yes

SK3.14\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

2. No

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.15** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Registry before this abduction?

1. Yes

2. No

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.16** Was this perpetrator listed in the National Sex Offender Public Website before this abduction?

1. Yes

2. No

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK3.17** Did this perpetrator have any prior arrests for crimes against juveniles?

1. Yes

2. No → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**

-8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK4.1 [CRIME CHARACTERISTICS]**



**SK3.18** Did any of these prior arrests involve any of the following? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK3.18A</b>	Homicide of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18B</b>	A sex crime against a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18C</b>	Child abduction?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18D</b>	Battery or assault of a child?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK3.18E</b> <b>SK3.18E_OS</b>	Something else? Please describe what else was involved in these prior arrests. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK3.19** What is this perpetrator's current situation?

1. Still at large
2. In custody
3. Free
4. Something else
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**4. CRIME CHARACTERISTICS**

**SK4.1** Where [was the victim/were the victims] last seen before the abduction occurred?

1. Victim’s residence or place child was staying at night, includes yard
2. Outdoor area with public access (sidewalk, park, street, beach, etc.)
3. Indoor area with public access (shopping mall, store, theater, etc.)
4. Perpetrator’s residence or yard
5. Common area of apartment complex
6. School or daycare, indoors or outdoors
7. Vehicle
8. Other place

SK4.1\_OS Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

-8. Don’t know/Not sure

**SK4.2** Were there other children in the vicinity of the abduction where it occurred, that is, within hearing or viewing distance?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don’t know/Cannot determine

**SK4.3** How would you characterize the perpetrator’s approach? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don’t know/Cannot determine
<b>SK4.3A</b>	Deceptive or non- threatening pretext?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.3B</b>	Surprise (lying in wait, using stealth) or blitz (sudden, overwhelming force)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.3C</b> <b>SK4.3C_OS</b>	Other type of approach? Please characterize the perpetrator’s initial approach. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK4.4** Did [the/ any] victim go with the perpetrator voluntarily (even if duped)?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK4.5**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.4A** Is there any reason to believe the victim wanted to leave the company of the perpetrator but was unable or prevented from doing so?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK4.5** Is there any indication that this crime was connected with ...? (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK4.5A</b>	Youth gang activity?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5B</b>	Drug trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5C</b>	Sex trafficking?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5D</b>	Serial killings?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK4.5E</b> <b>SK4.5E_OS</b>	Other criminal networks or conspiracies? Please describe the other criminal networks or conspiracies indicated. [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK4.6** Is there any indication that the internet played a role in prior contact between a perpetrator and victim or in leading up to the abduction encounter?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.1 [INVESTIGATION]**

**SK4.7** Please describe the role the internet played.

[TEXT BOX]

## 5. INVESTIGATION

**SK5.1** Was this case submitted to ... (Please respond to all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.1A</b>	FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension system (VICAP)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1B</b>	National Crime Information Center (NCIC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.1C</b>	National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)?	(1)	(2)	(-8)

**SK5.2** Did a NCMEC Project Alert team participate in the investigation?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.3** Was a DNA profile entered into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System)?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.5**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.5**

**SK5.4** Was a match found?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.5** Was a telephone hotline established?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.6** Was a leads management system established?

1. Yes
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine

**SK5.7** Was an Amber Alert issued?

1. Yes → **GO TO SK5.9**
2. No
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.8** Why wasn't an Amber Alert issued? (Please answer all items.)

		Yes	No	Don't know/Cannot determine
<b>SK5.8A</b>	Child was quickly recovered	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8B</b>	No reasonable belief an abduction had occurred	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8C</b>	Child was not in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8D</b>	Insufficient information about child, vehicle, etc., to issue Amber Alert	(1)	(2)	(-8)
<b>SK5.8E</b> <b>SK5.8E_OS</b>	Other reason Please describe the other reason an Amber Alert was not issued [TEXT BOX]	(1)	(2)	(-8)

---

**IF NO AMBER ALERT WAS ISSUED (SK5.7 = 2) → GO TO SK5.11.**

---

**SK5.9** Did the Amber Alert result in any information that helped to locate or recover the child or identify the perpetrator?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.11**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.11**

**SK5.10** Please describe how the Amber Alert helped to locate and recover the child?

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.11** Did digital or technological resources, including social media, provide evidence, leads, or other information that was of particular importance in the solution of this case or the recovery of the victim?

1. Yes
2. No → **GO TO SK5.13**
- 8. Don't know/Cannot determine → **GO TO SK5.13**

**SK5.12** Please describe how digital or technological resources, including social media provided evidence, leads or other information.

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.13** Is there anything else that would be important to know about this case? (If applicable: What was most important in solving this case or recovering the child?)

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.14** If you want to clarify your answers to any of the close-ended responses above, please do so here:

[TEXT BOX]

**SK5.15**

IF SK1.19 IS NULL: If you feel a narrative description of the kidnapping episode would help us better understand this case, please provide a description here:

[If SK1.19 HAS TEXT: Your response to an earlier item regarding details of this incident is presented below. Do you have anything to add to help us better understand this case?

[SK1.19 RESPONSE REPEATS HERE]

[TEXT BOX]

---

**IF RESPONDENT HAS NO ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY3.**  
**IF RESPONDENT HAS ADDITIONAL CASES → GO TO ENDSURVEY4.**

---

## ENDSURVEY

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

**ENDSURVEY2** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case does not qualify. Please use this link 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 child kidnapping.

**ENDSURVEY4** Thank you for completing this survey. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.

**ENDSURVEY5** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. There are no further questions at this time. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Thank you for your time.

**ENDSURVEY6** We are only including certain incidents in this study and this case may not qualify. We appreciate your help and your contribution to understanding the problem of child kidnapping. Please use this link to access questions about your next case that may qualify for this study.



# **Appendix E.1**

## **Phase 1 Invitation Letter**



University of New Hampshire



01234567890  
[INSERT F\_NAME, MID\_INIT, L\_NAME]  
[INSERT DEPT NAME]  
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]  
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

[INSERT DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L\_NAME],

We are asking your agency to participate in the *National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping*, a study designed to estimate the number of children kidnapped by strangers in the U.S. You have been identified as the most knowledgeable person to respond to this request. If not, please forward to the person most able to respond.

This study is part of the *Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-4)*. The current study will update the national estimates of child victims of stranger 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.

The study is being conducted in two phases. In this first phase, we are asking your agency to complete a brief mail screener to let us know 1) if you have jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of missing children and 2) if you have had any relevant cases between **January 1 and December 31, 2019**. In Phase 2, the research team will contact investigators of the child abduction cases identified in Phase 1. They will be asked to complete a self-administered web survey providing details about the specific case.

Enclosed is the Phase 1 survey packet for your agency. The packet includes the mail survey screener, frequently asked questions about the study, and a pre-paid return envelope. Please review the materials enclosed, complete the survey and return it using the enclosed prepaid envelope by <<SURVEY DUE DATE>>.

In order for the results of this study to truly represent the experience of all law enforcement agencies across the country, ***it is important that every questionnaire be completed and returned, even if your agency did not have any relevant cases. You can simply note this. If your agency has a lot of eligible cases, you can call the survey director and she will help you complete it.***

Your agency's participation is voluntary and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. Responses are confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only, as required by federal law. The name of your agency will also remain confidential. It will not be used in any of the results from the study. The survey identification number is for mailing purposes only, so we can check your agency off our mailing list when your survey is returned.

This study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. The results of this study will be published in a report by OJJDP and NIJ.

We will be happy to answer your questions about this project. Please call us at our toll free number, 1-855-942-0406, or send an email to Gail Thomas at Westat at GailThomas@westat.com. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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

**Appendix E.2**  
**Phase 1 Letter of Support from NIJ**



**U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Justice Programs

*National Institute of Justice*

*Washington, DC 20531*

01234567890  
[INSERT F\_NAME, MID\_INIT, L\_NAME]  
[INSERT DEPT NAME]  
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]  
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

[DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L\_NAME],

Westat and the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children Research Center are conducting the *Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children* (NISMA-4). The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. Your agency has been invited to participate in this study and we would appreciate your assistance.

In response to the 1984 Missing Children's Assistance Act, three previous national incidence studies have been conducted to determine for a given year the actual number of children reported missing, 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.

The current study will generate updated national estimates of child victims of stranger abductions and determine whether there have been any changes in the overall number of victims or in specific categories of victims. The data collected in this survey will only be used for research and statistical purposes, as described in Title 34, USC §10231 (see back). The data will be reported to Congress and will be used to inform the development of future policies and programs for missing children. Findings from the survey will be available on the NIJ and OJJDP websites.

We understand that you receive a number of data requests throughout the year; however, we would greatly appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the enclosed survey. Your responses will allow us to examine the size and nature of key aspects of the nation's missing children problem.

If you have any comments or questions about this request, please feel free to contact me at Benjamin.Adams@ojp.usdoj.gov.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Adams  
Social Science Analyst  
National Institute of Justice, Department of Justice

## 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 OMB 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 15 minutes (0.25 hour) 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@ojp.usdoj.gov. If you need assistance regarding your submission, please contact Gail Thomas at GailThomas@westat.com or call the project's toll free number: 1-855-942-0406.

**Appendix E.3**  
**Phase 1 Letter of Support from NCMEC2**



October 2020

This letter is to encourage your agency's participation in the National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping, the national study designed to update research estimates about the number of U.S. children kidnapped by strangers.

This is a very important project, and the results can help better inform our work to find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization.

The study can help to better understand the dynamics of kidnappings and the characteristics of the perpetrators and victims. It has been of great value in the past, and updating this research is important for child-protection efforts in the future.

We appreciate your participation.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Bischoff III".

John E. Bischoff III, D.Eng.  
Vice President, Missing Children Division  
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

---

333 John Carlyle Street | Alexandria, VA 22314  
1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678) | MissingKids.org

@MissingKids

# **Appendix E.4**

## **Phase 1 Reminder Postcard**





NISMART  
 1600 Research Blvd  
 RC B16  
 Rockville, MD 20850-9940

First Class Mail  
 U. S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Suburban MD  
 Permit No. 6379

1234567  
 <<Fname>> <<Lname>>  
 <<address1>>  
 <<address2>>  
 <<city>>, <<state>> <<zip>>-<<zip4>>


**Reminder to Complete the *National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping***

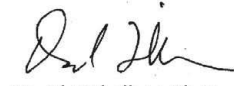
We recently sent you a survey about cases in your agency involving child abductions by strangers. The current study will update the estimates of how many children are abducted by strangers each year. The data will be reported to Congress and will be used to inform the development of future policies and programs for missing children.

**If you have already completed the survey and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks.** If not, please complete the survey and send it to us as soon as possible. The survey is due on <<MAIL SCREENER SURVEY DUE DATE>>. We need to receive your survey, even if you do not have any stranger abduction cases, so that the study results will accurately represent the experiences of law enforcement agencies across the nation.

If you have questions about completing the survey, you did not receive the survey, or it has been misplaced, please call our toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406, and we will mail another survey to you right away.

We greatly appreciate your help!

  
 Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
 Westat  
 Co-Principal Investigator

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

**Appendix E.5**  
**Phase 1 Reminder Letter 1**



University of New Hampshire



01234567890  
[INSERT F\_NAME, MID\_INIT, L\_NAME]  
[INSERT DEPT NAME]  
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]  
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

[INSERT DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L\_NAME],

In October, we sent you a survey and a letter asking you to participate in the *National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping*. The survey seeks information about your agency's experiences with stranger abductions. The survey was due [SURVEY DUE DATE] but, as of today, we have not received your completed survey. If you are still filling it out or have recently returned it, please disregard this notice. In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. Alternately, you may complete the survey online by going to our secure website and entering your unique access key:

**Survey address:** <https://missingchildrenstudy.org/survey>

**Access key:** XXXXXX

Our research team was asked to conduct this study to obtain an accurate estimate of the number of children who are kidnapped by strangers. We know that crime investigators are the most knowledgeable sources of information about such cases.

I am writing to you again because each questionnaire is significant to the usefulness of this study. Your agency was drawn through a *scientific sampling process in which every law enforcement agency in the United States had an equal chance of being sampled*. In order for the study results to truly represent the experiences of all agencies, it is essential that each agency in the sample return the questionnaire, even if your agency does not have any relevant cases. There is a place for you to note this on the questionnaire.

We know you are extremely busy, but your response to this survey is an investment of time that will help law enforcement in the future. The report we write from this study will give policy makers and legislators vital information about cases involving stranger abductions. If you have any questions about this project, please send an email to [NISMART@westat.com](mailto:NISMART@westat.com) or you can call our project's toll-free number 1-855-942-0406, and someone will return your call promptly. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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

**Appendix E.6**  
**Phase 1 Reminder Letter 2**



University of New Hampshire



01234567890  
[INSERT F\_NAME, MID\_INIT, L\_NAME]  
[INSERT DEPT NAME]  
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]  
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

[INSERT DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L\_NAME],

This is the third request for your agency's participation in the *National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping*. The survey seeks information about your agency's experiences with child kidnappings. The survey was due November 30th but, as of today, we have not received your completed survey. (If you have recently returned your survey, please disregard this notice.) In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. For your convenience, you may return your completed survey using either the enclosed business reply envelope or in the preaddressed FedEx envelope.

Alternately, you may also complete the survey online by going to our secure website and entering your unique access key:

**Survey address:** <https://missingchildrenstudy.org/survey>  
**Access key:** XXXXXX

If you have not yet responded, we hope that you will be able to do so soon. The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. We would be very grateful if you would consider helping us with this important research. We appreciate the many demands for your time but please be assured that the study results will help law enforcement in the future. If you have any questions about this project, please send an email to [NISMART@westat.com](mailto:NISMART@westat.com) or you can call our project's toll-free number 1-855-942-0406, and someone will return your call promptly.

Thank you so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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

**Appendix E.7**

**Phase 1 Reminder Letter of Support from NIJ**



**U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Justice Programs

*National Institute of Justice*

*Washington, DC 20531*

01234567890  
[INSERT F\_NAME, MID\_INIT, L\_NAME]  
[INSERT DEPT NAME]  
[INSERT ADDRESS 1]  
[INSERT CITY], [INSERT STATE] [INSERT ZIP]

[DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [INSERT TITLE, L\_NAME],

Westat and the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children Research Center are conducting the *Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children* (NISMA-4). The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. Your agency has been invited to participate in this study and we would appreciate your assistance.

In response to the 1984 Missing Children's Assistance Act, three previous national incidence studies have been conducted to determine for a given year the actual number of children reported missing, 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.

The current study will generate updated national estimates of child victims of stranger abductions and determine whether there have been any changes in the overall number of victims or in specific categories of victims. The data collected in this survey will only be used for research and statistical purposes, as described in Title 34, USC §10231 (see back). The data will be reported to Congress and will be used to inform the development of future policies and programs for missing children. Findings from the survey will be available on the NIJ and OJJDP websites.

We understand that you receive a number of data requests throughout the year; however, we would greatly appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the enclosed survey. Your responses will allow us to examine the size and nature of key aspects of the nation's missing children problem.

If you have any comments or questions about this request, please feel free to contact me at Benjamin.Adams@ojp.usdoj.gov.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Adams  
Social Science Analyst  
National Institute of Justice, Department of Justice

## 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 OMB 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 15 minutes (0.25 hour) 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@ojp.usdoj.gov. If you need assistance regarding your submission, please contact the Gail Thomas at GailThomas@westat.com or call the project's toll free number: 1-855-942-0406.



# **Appendix F.1**

## **Phase 2 FAQs**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PHASE 2: LES-SK SURVEY

### **What is NISMART-4?**

NISMART-4 is a research study created by the federal Missing Children's Assistance Act. Its goal is to estimate the number of missing children, including children who have been abducted. NISMART-4 is the fourth in a series of studies conducted between 1988 and 2011. It will update numbers from the three previous studies to determine whether there have been increases or decreases in the number of missing or abducted children. The findings will be reported to Congress and will guide the development of policies and programs for missing children. The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. Westat and the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) at the University of New Hampshire are conducting the study.

### **What is the National Law Enforcement Survey on Abducted Children?**

NISMART includes a number of different studies. The *National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping* will estimate the number of children who were kidnapped by strangers between **January 1 and December 31, 2019**. Data are being collected in two phases from all law enforcement agencies with authority to investigate stereotypical kidnappings. In Phase 1, law enforcement agencies completed a mail survey screener to identify relevant cases. Now in Phase 2, we are asking investigators of child kidnapping cases to complete a self-administered web survey to provide details about specific cases investigated.

### **How did you choose this agency?**

The initial mail survey screener was sent to all law enforcement agencies in a nationally representative sample of more than 400 U.S. counties, a total of **4,680** agencies. Because your agency investigated a child abduction case, you are being asked to provide some case details.

**Why is my participation important?** Participation is voluntary, and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. However, the sample of agencies has been carefully designed to be nationally representative, so your agency will make an important contribution to the accuracy and reliability of the final study estimates about child abductions. Participating in this research will not entail any particular risks or benefits to you but it will greatly contribute to our knowledge about abducted children.

### **What will the web survey involve?**

We are asking the investigator most knowledgeable about a relevant case to respond to the secure web survey to provide details about the characteristics of offenders, victims, and cases investigated. The web survey will take about 35 minutes.

### **What about security and confidentiality protections?**

In accordance with 28 CFR Part 22, the research team will provide administrative and physical security of identifiable data and preserve the anonymity of private persons participating in this project. 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.

### **I'm having problems accessing the web survey. What should I do?**

Occasionally, strict firewalls may prevent you from accessing the survey from your workplace. One work-around is to access the survey through your smart phone: the website is designed to be mobile-aware and will look and function okay on the phone. A second solution is to access the survey from a home computer or tablet device. (For reasons of security, we do not recommend using public Wi-Fi to complete the survey.) Another alternative is to take the survey over the phone with one of our trained interviewers. If you would like to set an appointment to take the survey by telephone, or if you believe your access problem is unrelated to a firewall, please call the study's toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406.

### **What if I have questions?**

If you have questions about the research, please contact Gail Thomas at Westat, at [gailthomas@westat.com](mailto:gailthomas@westat.com) or call the study's toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Westat Human Subjects Protection Office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the study (NISMART-4) and a phone number, beginning with the area code. Someone will return your call as soon as possible.

# **Appendix F.1**

## **Phase 2 Invitation Letter**



University of New Hampshire



01234567890

[F\_NAME L\_NAME]  
[DEPT NAME]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE ZIP]

[DATE OF MAILING]

Dear [F\_NAME, L\_NAME]:

Your agency is participating in the **National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping**, a study designed to estimate the number of children abducted by strangers in the U.S.

This study is part of a larger study, sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), which seeks to design and test methodologies to produce accurate estimates on the number and characteristics of missing children reported to law enforcement. The study will update the national estimates of child victims of stereotypical kidnapping 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 is relying on the law enforcement agencies as the source of data.

**The following case has been identified by your agency as an episode of stranger abduction:**  
[CASE ID]

We are asking you (or the most knowledgeable investigator) to answer questions about this case on a web survey. In order for the results of this study to truly represent the experience of all law enforcement agencies across the country, it is important that every questionnaire be completed. The web survey is hosted on our secure website and will take about 35 minutes. It may be completed in one sitting or in parts. You may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential access key (below) to begin the survey. **We ask you to please complete the web survey by Month, XX, 20XX.**

**Survey address:** <https://missingchildrenstudy.org>

**Access key:** «UID»

Your agency's participation is voluntary and will not affect the status of your agency in any way. Responses will be confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only, as required by federal law. Your name and the name of your agency will remain confidential and will not be used in any of the results from the study. We greatly appreciate your assistance in this important project. If you have questions about the operation or content of the web survey, have difficulty accessing the survey, or need further assistance, please call our toll free number, 1-855-942-0406, or email Gail Thomas at [GailThomas@westat.com](mailto:GailThomas@westat.com).

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.  
Westat  
Co-Principal Investigator

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 OMB 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 35 minutes 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@ojp.usdoj.gov. If you need assistance regarding your submission, please contact Gail Thomas at GailThomas@westat.com or call the project's toll free number: 1-855-942-0406.

**Appendix F.2**  
**Phase 2 Reminder Email 1**

**From:** Missing Children Study

**Sent:** [DATE]

**To:** [INVESTIGATOR]

**Subject:** Reminder to complete the National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping

Dear [INVESTIGATOR NAME]:

On [DATE], we sent you a letter asking you to participate in the ***National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping (LES-SK)***. Your agency is one of a number of agencies being asked to participate in a national study to estimate the number of children kidnapped by strangers. This survey is part of the *National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway & Throwaway Children (NISMART-4)*, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention.

In the letter we sent on [DATE], we identified the case ID of the victim(s) in a kidnapping case identified by your agency. The survey was due on [DATE] but we have not received your completed survey. (If you are still filling it out or have recently submitted it, please disregard this notice.)

If you need information to identify this case, or you are not the right person to complete the survey, please contact Gail Thomas at [GailThomas@westat.com](mailto:GailThomas@westat.com) or call our study toll-free number at 1-855-942-0406.

The web survey is available on our secure website. You may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential access key (below) to begin the survey. The survey should only take about 35 minutes and can be completed in parts. **We ask you to please complete the web survey by [DATE].**

**Survey address:** <https://MissingChildrenStudy.org>

**Access key:** XXXXXX

We know you are extremely busy, but your participation in this study will help law enforcement in the future.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.

Westat

Co-Principal Investigator

David Finkelhor, Ph.D.

University of New Hampshire

Co-Principal Investigator

**Appendix F.3**  
**Phase 2 Reminder Email 2**



**From:** Missing Children Study

**Sent:** [DATE]

**To:** [INVESTIGATOR]

**Subject:** Reminder to complete the National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping

Dear [INVESTIGATOR]:

Westat and the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children Research Center are conducting the **Fourth National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMAART-4)**. The study is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at the U.S. Department of Justice. The study seeks to update national estimates of child victims of stereotypical kidnapping and determine whether there have been any changes in the overall number of victims or in specific categories of victims.

On DATE, the research team sent you a letter asking you to participate in the web survey component of the study by providing details about a specific case of child abduction. You were selected as the investigator most knowledgeable about the case. The research team has not yet heard from you and I wanted to reach out to urge you to respond.

In the original letter sent, the research team identified the case ID of the victim(s) in the kidnapping case investigated by your agency. If you no longer have the letter and need information to identify this case, please contact Gail Thomas at [GailThomas@westat.com](mailto:GailThomas@westat.com) and she can help you. If you have questions about the operation or content of the web survey, have difficulty accessing the survey, or need further assistance, please call the project's toll free number at 1-855-942-0406.

The web survey is available on the project's secure website. You may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential user login and password (below) to begin the survey. The survey should only take about 30 minutes. **I ask you to please complete the web survey by DATE.**

**Survey address:** <https://MissingChildrenStudy.org>

**Access key:** XXXXXXXX

I can appreciate the many demands on your time, but please know that your participation in this study will help law enforcement in the future.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Adams  
Social Science Analyst  
National Institute of Justice

**Appendix F.4**  
**Phase 2 Reminder Email 3**

**From:** Missing Children Study

**Sent:** [DATE]

**To:** [INVESTIGATOR]

**Subject:** Final reminder to complete the Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping

Dear [INVESTIGATOR]:

On DATE, we sent you a letter asking you to participate in the ***National Law Enforcement Survey on Stereotypical Kidnapping***. You were selected to participate because of your investigation of a child abduction that fits our study. This research is designed to help estimate the number of children involved in stranger abductions each year in the U.S. and is mandated by Congress.

In the letter we sent, we identified the case ID of the victim(s) in the kidnapping case investigated by your agency. The survey was due on DATE. We will be very grateful if you could help us with this important research and complete the survey today

The web survey is still available on our secure website. To begin the survey, you may go to the website at any time and enter your personal and confidential access key (below). The survey should only take about 30 minutes. **If possible, we ask you to please complete the web survey now.**

**Survey address:** <https://MissingChildrenStudy.org>

**Access key:** XXXXX

If you need information to identify this case, or you are not the right person to complete the survey, please let us know by contacting Gail Thomas at [GailThomas@westat.com](mailto:GailThomas@westat.com). If you have questions about the operation or content of the web survey, have difficulty accessing the survey, or need further assistance, please call our toll free number at 1-855-942-0406.

We know you are extremely busy, but your participation in this study will help law enforcement and abducted children in the future.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sedlak, Ph.D.

Westat

Co-Principal Investigator

David Finkelhor, Ph.D

University of New Hampshire

Co-Principal Investigator

# **Appendix G**

## **LES-SK Tables**

## Total Estimates

### Victims

<b>NISMART</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
3	102.53	32.03	(40-165)
4	182.37	65.02	(55-310)

### Perpetrators

<b>NISMART</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
3	101.22	24.83	(53-150)
4	179.15	64.77	(52-306)

### Cases

<b>NISMART</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
3	84.21	21.49	(42-126)
4	179.15	64.77	(52-309)

Table 1: Estimates of Children Stereotypically Kidnapped

Characteristics of Episode	2019		2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	95% CI							
Outcome					0.116				
Homicide	1 <sup>†</sup>	(0-2) <sup>†</sup>	8	(4-15)		6	1	0.36	0.46
Recovered	96	(82-99)	92	(85-96)		40	23	0.03	0.03
Still missing	3 <sup>†</sup>	(0-21) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	2	0	0.74
Abduction involved									
Use of force or threats	59	(20-89)	74	(55-86)	0.4131	29	17	0.11	0.32
Sexual assault or exploitation	74	(21-97)	63	(43-80)	0.6176	24	14	0.15	0.26
Ransom/extortion	2 <sup>†</sup>	(0-7) <sup>†</sup>	12	(6-22)	0.004	6	2	0.34	0.7
Intent to keep as own child	17 <sup>††</sup>	(3-56)	8	(4-14)	0.3165	6	6	0.29	0.9
Victim was									
Detained overnight	92	(78-97)	80	(60-91)	0.1377	34	21	0.1	0.05
Moved 50 or more miles	74	(45-91)	22	(11-38)	0.0006	14	15	0.31	0.15

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 2: Characteristics of Children Stereotypically Kidnapped

Characteristics of Child	2019				P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	2019 95% CI	2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI					
Age (years)					0.003				
0-2	1 <sup>†</sup>	(0-2) <sup>†</sup>	13	(8-19)		9	1	0.22	0.45
3-5	22 <sup>††</sup>	(7-54)	11	(4-27)		6	7	0.45	0.5
6-11	1 <sup>†</sup>	(0-2) <sup>†</sup>	18	(9-34)		12	1	0.34	0.45
12-17	76	(46-92)	58	(32-80)		19	18	0.21	0.15
Gender					0.793				
Male	24 <sup>††</sup>	(2-79)	19	(9-37)		10	5	0.35	0.73
Female	76	(21-98)	81	(63-91)		36	22	0.08	0.22
Gender/age					0.299				
Girl, age 12-17	55	(13-91)	51	(25-76)		16	15	0.26	0.42
Boy, age 12-17	21 <sup>†</sup>	(1-85) <sup>†</sup>	7 <sup>†</sup>	(3-18) <sup>†</sup>		3	3	0.56	0.82
Girl, age 11 or younger	22 <sup>††</sup>	(6-54)	30	(16-49)		20	7	0.28	0.52
Boy, age 11 or younger	2 <sup>†</sup>	(1-6) <sup>†</sup>	12	(5-28)		7	2	0.44	0.6
Race					0.260				
White	54	(29-77)	61	(23-89)		30	12	0.27	0.23
Black	17 <sup>††</sup>	(3-55)	32 <sup>††</sup>	(5-80)		10	7	0.56	0.63
Asian	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-3) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	1	0	0.44
Biracial	1 <sup>†</sup>	(0-2) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	1	0	0.44
Race unknown or other	27 <sup>††</sup>	(8-59)	7	(5-11)		5	7	0.21	0.54
Ethnicity					0.739				
Hispanic or Latina/Latino	32 <sup>††</sup>	(2-90)	24	(15-37)		15	6	0.22	0.86
Lived with					0.910				
Both biological or adoptive	8 <sup>†</sup>	(2-26) <sup>†</sup>	16	(7-31)		10	3	0.37	0.72
Single parent	36 <sup>††</sup>	(2-95)	32	(18-50)		22	5	0.25	0.77
Parent and stepparent/partner	31 <sup>†</sup>	(3-85) <sup>†</sup>	24	(7-58)		6	2	0.49	0.74
Another relative or someone else	25 <sup>††</sup>	(6-64)	28 <sup>††</sup>	(3-84)		8	6	0.64	0.59
Type of housing					0.018				
Single family	44	(14-79)	45	(21-71)		20	19	0.29	0.43
Multifamily	12 <sup>†</sup>	(1-77) <sup>†</sup>	24	(13-38)		16	2	0.26	0.93
Other	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	27	(2-85)		6	0	0.67	0
Unknown	44	(19-72)	5 <sup>†</sup>	(2-11) <sup>†</sup>		4	7	0.43	0.31
Relationship of perpetrator to victim					0.043				
Stranger	88	(68-97)	62	(40-80)		23	19	0.17	0.08
Slight acquaintance	12 <sup>†</sup>	(3-32) <sup>†</sup>	38	(20-60)		23	4	0.27	0.6

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 3: Characteristics of Stereotypical Kidnappers Known to Law Enforcement

Characteristics of Kidnapper	2019		2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	95% CI							
Gender					0.499				
Male	86	(32-99)	76	(64-85)		37	21	0.07	0.14
Female	14 <sup>†</sup>	(1-68) <sup>†</sup>	24	(15-36)		13	3	0.21	0.83
Age					0.001				
15-17	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	16	(2-66)		5	0	0.64	0
18-25	28	(10-58)	32	(18-49)		18	9	0.24	0.43
26-35	6 <sup>††</sup>	(2-18)	31	(13-58)		13	5	0.34	0.63
36-45	40	(13-75)	17	(10-26)		11	6	0.22	0.41
46 or older	26 <sup>†</sup>	(7-61) <sup>†</sup>	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-14) <sup>†</sup>		2	3	0.7	0.59
Marital status					0.379				
Single	73	(31-94)	70	(53-83)		31	9	0.11	0.25
Married or living with partner	9 <sup>†</sup>	(2-27) <sup>†</sup>	15	(8-28)		8	2	0.34	0.69
Divorced or separated	19 <sup>†</sup>	(4-59) <sup>†</sup>	8 <sup>†</sup>	(2-23) <sup>†</sup>		3	2	0.56	0.8
Unknown	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	7	(4-12)		5	0	0.3	0
Race									
White	54	(28-78)	44	(24-66)	0.538	21	11	0.24	0.24
Black	21 <sup>††</sup>	(5-54)	46	(25-68)	0.1265	23	8	0.23	0.56
Asian	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-2) <sup>†</sup>	0.002	1	0	0.29	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	20 <sup>†</sup>	(5-56) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	0.2794	0	1	0	0.69
Unknown	7	(3-17)	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-2) <sup>†</sup>	0.0002	1	6	0.29	0.48
Ethnicity					0.002				
Hispanic or Latina/Latino	38 <sup>††</sup>	(2-95)	18	(12-25)		12	5	0.18	0.76
Employed full- or part-time					0.002				
Yes	8 <sup>†</sup>	(2-25) <sup>†</sup>	18	(10-31)		10	4	0.28	0.7
Unknown	76	(46-92)	20	(13-30)		12	18	0.2	0.15
No/other	16 <sup>††</sup>	(3-57)	61	(48-74)		26	5	0.1	0.67
Problems with drugs or alcohol					0.0537				
Problems with drugs or alcohol	30 <sup>†</sup>	(16-48) <sup>†</sup>	52	(30-73)		22	4	0.21	0.24
Diagnosed mental illness					0.001				
No	5 <sup>†</sup>	(1-20) <sup>†</sup>	65	(47-80)		29	3	0.12	0.74
Yes	1 <sup>†</sup>	(0-2) <sup>†</sup>	8	(3-18)		5	1	0.44	0.45
Unknown	94	(80-99)	26	(15-42)		15	23	0.25	0.04

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent



Table 3: Characteristics of Stereotypical Kidnappers Known to Law Enforcement (continued)

Characteristics of Kidnapper	2019	2019 95% CI	2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.								
Active involvement with criminal justice system					0.002				
No	10 <sup>††</sup>	(3-29)	54	(29-76)		23	6	0.22	0.61
Yes	36	(16-63)	31	(13-58)		14	7	0.35	0.34
Unknown	54	(28-78)	15	(9-25)		11	14	0.25	0.24
Prior arrests for crimes against children					0.006				
No	40 <sup>††</sup>	(6-88)	80	(69-88)		35	6	0.06	0.61
Yes	50 <sup>†</sup>	(12-88) <sup>†</sup>	4 <sup>†</sup>	(0-36) <sup>†</sup>		2	2	0.75	0.47
Unknown	10 <sup>†</sup>	(2-39) <sup>†</sup>	16	(11-23)		11	3	0.19	0.7

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 4: Characteristics of Stereotypical Kidnappings

Kidnapping Characteristics	2019				P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	2019 95% CI	2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI					
Child's location when taking or detainment began					0.026				
Indoor or outdoor area with public access	25	(9-53)	36	(19-56)		24	11	0.26	0.44
Child's home or place child was staying at night	28 <sup>††</sup>	(6-69)	32	(12-63)		14	9	0.42	0.57
Perpetrator's home (including detainment when not taken)	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-18) <sup>†</sup>	32 <sup>††</sup>	(4-83)		8	1	0.59	0.96
Other	3 <sup>†</sup>	(1-7) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	3	0	0.44
Unknown	40 <sup>†</sup>	(16-71) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	4	0	0.36
Multiple child victims in case	15 <sup>†</sup>	(2-63) <sup>†</sup>	19 <sup>††</sup>	(4-56)	0.7656	7	3	0.5	0.77
Multiple perpetrators in case	4 <sup>†</sup>	(2-10) <sup>†</sup>	17	(9-28)	0.0067	10	4	0.27	0.47
Perpetrator's initial approach									
Deceptive or nonthreatening pretext	68	(28-92)	69	(39-88)	0.951	31	16	0.18	0.24
Surprise/blitz	15 <sup>††</sup>	(3-50)	28	(10-59)	0.3768	13	8	0.43	0.69
Unknown	24 <sup>††</sup>	(3-78)	3 <sup>†</sup>	(1-6) <sup>†</sup>	0.0032	2	5	0.45	0.71
Child voluntarily went with perpetrator	93	(84-97)	61	(34-83)	0.0018	26	18	0.2	0.03
During the incident, the child was taken or removed									
In a vehicle	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	63	(26-89)	0.0012	32	0	0.25	0
Into a building	43 <sup>††</sup>	(10-85)	32	(16-53)	0.5908	22	11	0.3	0.52
To the perpetrator's home	53	(12-90)	24	(8-55)	0.2053	11	7	0.44	0.45
To an outside area	44 <sup>††</sup>	(5-93)	26	(8-57)	0.4896	7	5	0.45	0.68

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 4: Characteristics of Stereotypical Kidnappings (continued)

Kidnapping Characteristics	2019		2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	95% CI							
Distance child was moved during stereotypical kidnapping									
Less than 1 mile	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-18) <sup>†</sup>	5 <sup>†</sup>	(3-9) <sup>†</sup>	0	4	3	0.24	0.68
1-9 miles	21 <sup>††</sup>	(5-56)	19	(9-36)	0	11	6	0.36	0.57
10-49 miles	3 <sup>†</sup>	(1-11) <sup>†</sup>	20 <sup>††</sup>	(4-58)	0	6	2	0.57	0.63
50 miles or more	73	(44-90)	22	(11-38)	0	14	14	0.31	0.16
Unknown	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	34 <sup>††</sup>	(7-79)	0	11	0	0.51	0
Length of time child was detained									
Less than 1 hour	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-3) <sup>†</sup>	7 <sup>†</sup>	(2-18) <sup>†</sup>	0.0321	3	1	0.61	0.46
1 hour to less than 24 hours	19 <sup>††</sup>	(6-48)	36	(19-59)	0.0321	20	13	0.28	0.55
1-3 days	42	(20-67)	31 <sup>††</sup>	(4-81)	0.0321	10	8	0.57	0.3
4-7 days	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-3) <sup>†</sup>	15 <sup>†</sup>	(1-67) <sup>†</sup>	0.0321	4	1	0.7	0.46
More than 1 week	36 <sup>†</sup>	(10-74) <sup>†</sup>	10	(5-20)	0.0321	8	3	0.34	0.46
Not detained	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-3) <sup>†</sup>	0.0321	1	0	0.48	0
Child was detained overnight	92	(78-97)	80	(60-91)	0.1377	34	21	0.1	0.05
Child was detained 1 day or longer	79	(50-94)	56	(31-77)	0.1413	22	12	0.21	0.14
Caretaker reported child missing	95	(80-99)	69	(40-88)	0.0162	34	20	0.17	0.04
Perpetrator used force/threats in taking child from original location					0.574				
No	63	(29-88)	76	(44-92)		35	14	0.15	0.25
Yes	34	(10-71)	22 <sup>††</sup>	(6-56)		9	11	0.51	0.46
Unknown	2 <sup>†</sup>	(0-39) <sup>†</sup>	3 <sup>†</sup>	(1-8) <sup>†</sup>		2	2	0.63	0.91
Perpetrator used force/threats to detain child	36 <sup>††</sup>	(8-77)	66	(43-83)	0.0634	23	11	0.16	0.58

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 4: Characteristics of Stereotypical Kidnappings (continued)

Kidnapping Characteristics	2019		2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
	Est. Pct.	95% CI							
Maltreatment by perpetrator									
Sexual assault	74	(21-97)	63	(43-80)	0.6176	24	14	0.15	0.26
Physical assault	19 <sup>††</sup>	(5-49)	35	(14-63)	0.2972	13	5	0.36	0.57
Neglect of basic needs	11 <sup>†</sup>	(3-31) <sup>†</sup>	24	(7-57)	0.2721	10	3	0.49	0.63
The perpetrator									
Threatened the child with or used a weapon	36	(19-58)	20 <sup>††</sup>	(4-58)	0.3132	6	5	0.56	0.26
Harmed or threatened to harm the child's family or pets	13 <sup>†</sup>	(5-26) <sup>†</sup>	23 <sup>††</sup>	(6-57)	0.3252	6	2	0.5	0.34
Forced the child to walk somewhere	20 <sup>†</sup>	(12-31) <sup>†</sup>	21	(10-40)	0.8561	10	3	0.36	0.22
Drugged the child	8 <sup>†</sup>	(3-20) <sup>†</sup>	15	(8-27)	0.2464	8	3	0.33	0.57
Robbed the child or damaged or destroyed belongings	10 <sup>†</sup>	(3-30) <sup>†</sup>	15	(7-31)	0.579	7	3	0.39	0.63
Crime was connected with									
Sex trafficking	14 <sup>†</sup>	(3-48) <sup>†</sup>	16	(10-25)	0.8569	11	4	0.24	0.74
Drug trafficking	2 <sup>†</sup>	(1-5) <sup>†</sup>	23 <sup>†</sup>	(0-96) <sup>†</sup>	0.0011	4	1	0.84	0.54
Youth gang activity	30 <sup>†</sup>	(2-92) <sup>†</sup>	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-16) <sup>†</sup>	0.0637	1	2	0.91	0.83
Internet played role in commission of crime	22	(8-50)	9	(5-17)	0.1232	7	10	0.34	0.48

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 5: Law Enforcement Response to Stereotypical Kidnappings

Law Enforcement Agency Response	2019 Est. Pct.	2019 95% CI	2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
Status of case at time of interview					0.320				
Under active investigation	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-17) <sup>†</sup>	4 <sup>†</sup>	(1-20) <sup>†</sup>		2	3	0.63	0.65
Arrest warrant issued	20 <sup>†</sup>	(1-89) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	2	0	0.88
Cleared by arrest	48	(24-74)	95	(84-98)		43	14	0.03	0.27
Status unknown	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	2 <sup>†</sup>	(1-2) <sup>†</sup>		1	0	0.15	0
Cleared for some other reason	8 <sup>†</sup>	(1-35) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	3	0	0.8
Suspended	17 <sup>†</sup>	(0-94) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	3	0	0.94
Other	3 <sup>†</sup>	(1-10) <sup>†</sup>	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>		0	2	0	0.72
Other law enforcement agencies were involved in case	94	(86-98)	53	(22-82)	0.0001	26	21	0.3	0.03
Number of agencies involved in case					0.137				
One	11	(4-26)	47	(18-78)		20	5	0.33	0.49
Two or three	50 <sup>††</sup>	(9-92)	26	(12-47)		15	8	0.34	0.53
Four or more	39 <sup>††</sup>	(6-86)	27	(9-57)		11	6	0.43	0.66
Investigation was supported by a federal agency	54	(24-81)	29	(11-56)	0.1613	14	10	0.37	0.28
Telephone hotline was established	53 <sup>††</sup>	(6-95)	21 <sup>††</sup>	(5-59)	0.2165	8	7	0.58	0.6
Leads management system was established	33 <sup>†</sup>	(3-90) <sup>†</sup>	23 <sup>††</sup>	(6-58)	0.494	7	4	0.52	0.84
AMBER Alert was issued	28	(9-62)	22	(11-41)	0.4361	12	6	0.34	0.49
Case was submitted to									
FBI ViCAP system	64	(13-95)	7 <sup>†</sup>	(2-16) <sup>†</sup>	0.0013	4	6	0.52	0.44
NCIC	70	(31-92)	71	(38-91)	0.4788	32	10	0.19	0.25
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children	79	(23-98)	44	(19-74)	0.0844	22	8	0.33	0.32

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent

Table 5: Law Enforcement Response to Stereotypical Kidnappings (continued)

Law Enforcement Agency Response	2019 Est. Pct.	2019 95% CI	2011 Est. Pct.	2011 95% CI	P-value	2011 cases	2019 cases	2011 CV	2019 CV
NCMEC Project Alert Team participated in investigation	66 <sup>††</sup>	(9-98)	20 <sup>††</sup>	(5-58)	0.0924	7	5	0.57	0.51
<b>CODIS</b>									
DNA profile entered	21 <sup>††</sup>	(3-66)	20	(9-39)	0.3656	11	6	0.37	0.94
Match found	0 <sup>†</sup>	(0-0) <sup>†</sup>	1 <sup>†</sup>	(1-2) <sup>†</sup>	0.7141	1	0	0.42	0
Electronic devices provided evidence, leads, or other information that were key to recovering child or identifying perpetrator	27 <sup>††</sup>	(8-61)	67	(46-83)	0.0165	25	9	0.14	0.56

<sup>†</sup> Estimate is based on fewer than five cases and is not reliable

<sup>††</sup> The coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent