and exploitation. Some of the children previously thought of as runaways have in actuality been thrownaway or abandoned. Every year many children are harmed after they become lost or wander away. Thousands of children are abducted for short periods of time and molested. It is estimated that there are more than 114,000 attempted abductions of children each year.

Missing and exploited children are often already known to community agencies as victims. Runaway and abducted children may experience physical and sexual assault while away from home. Runaways often leave home to escape abuse, and children may become involved in sexual exploitation as a direct or indirect result of earlier victimization. Many family abduction cases involve families with histories of domestic violence. Most parentalabducted children have suffered from being the focus of bitter conflict prior to being taken. Recovery of abducted children seldom means the end of the conflict or the traumatic effects of an abduction, yet these children only occasionally receive the mental health services that could help them cope. Recent studies indicate that children who come from households characterized by violence, abuse or neglect may also be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by persons outside their home.

The issues surrounding missing and exploited children are varied, complex, and tragic. The missing and exploited children problem is not a minor dilemma that can be resolved with a single approach or by any single agency. Law enforcement officers and other professionals who become involved in these cases face difficult challenges. Agencies must work in collaboration with others who share that responsibility.

The first ten years of the Missing and Exploited Children's Program have seen a great deal of progress in our understanding of the issues of these child victims. They also have identified areas of need and provided recommendations for future direction and activities. Building upon the work of the last decade, the goal of the Missing and Exploited Children's Program is to ensure that critical information gleaned from research and demonstration programs is successfully incorporated into existing and new projects funded by OJJDP. As the national clearinghouse and resource center, the successful applicant must play a pivotal role in advancing the national response to missing and exploited children.

Objectives

1. To continue the operation of a 24hour national toll-free telephone line by which individuals may report information regarding the location of any missing child, or other children 13 years of age or younger, whose whereabouts are unknown to such child's legal custodian, and request information pertaining to procedures necessary to reunite the child with the child's legal custodian.

2. To continue the operation of a national resource center and clearinghouse designed:

a. To provide information to State and local governments, public and private nonprofit agencies, and individuals regarding:

(1) Free or low cost legal, restaurant, lodging, and transportation services that are available for the benefit of missing children and their families;

(2) The existence and nature of programs being carried out by Federal Agencies to assist missing children and their families; and

(3) The lawful use of school records and birth certificates to identify and locate missing children.

b. To provide, and coordinate with OJJDP's Title IV Training Program, technical assistance and training to State and local governments, including law enforcement and other appropriate agencies in:

(1) Investigating, reporting, locating, recovering, and facilitating the reuniting of missing children with their families and/or lawful custodians;

(2) Family abduction cases;

(3) National and/or regional missing children poster distribution;

(4) Developing and distributing information and training publications relevant to missing, abducted, and exploited children's issues; and

(5) Providing case management assistance, sighting and lead information analysis assistance for missing children cases.

c. To disseminate nationally information about innovative and model missing children programs, services, and legislation at the State and local level.

d. To provide technical assistance to appropriate agencies and custodial parents in cases of national and international noncustodial family abduction and coordinate efforts with the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Criminal Justice, and INTERPOL.

e. To provide case analysis (based on leads and sightings) for ongoing missing child case investigative assistance that has been undertaken in over 6,500 missing child cases. Some of the tasks involved in this case assistance are as follows: technical assistance contacts with parents, law enforcement, state missing children clearinghouses, private attorneys, prosecutors, F.B.I., INTERPOL, State Department and support groups; and case follow-up activities by monitoring NLETS, verifying full NCIC entries, review of recent sightings and providing relevant sighting pattern analysis and leads to appropriate cognizant agencies in a timely manner.

f. To coordinate public and private programs that locate, recover or reunite missing children with their legal custodians.

g. To monitor and provide case analysis for ongoing missing child case investigative assistance that has been undertaken in more than 6,500 ongoing missing child cases plus more than 3,000 new case/lead assignments each quarter. Some of the tasks involved in this case investigative assistance are as follows: technical assistance contacts with parents, law enforcement, state clearinghouses, private attorneys, prosecutors, F.B.I., INTERPOL, U.S. State Department and support groups; and case follow-up activities by monitoring NLETS and verifying full NCIC entries, review of recent sightings and providing relevant sighting pattern analysis and leads to appropriate cognizant agencies in a timely manner.

h. To provide, when requested on cases of nonfamily abduction, on-site assistance by and coordination of the trained volunteers who are retired law enforcement personnel through Project ALERT and close coordination and liaison with the Federal Morgan Hardiman Task Force.

i. To provide, when appropriate, stateof-the-art image enhancement and aging procedures for follow-up on long-term missing children cases.

j. To provide and maintain a computer information network connection with State missing children agencies to facilitate the exchange of appropriate missing children case information, and technical assistance and training information developed by or through the National Clearinghouse.

k. To develop a documented process for determining the publications development targeted at meeting the Title IV mandates based on the needs of the field and the numbers and types of cases being identified.

l. To develop a formalized process for working with the state bar associations for providing parents and/or legal guardians with a referral process for obtaining pro bono or sliding scale legal