It was the abduction case that captivated the world. A year after Amanda Berry, Michelle Knight and Gina DeJesus were rescued from Ariel Castro's "House of Horrors", we ask experts what happens in the wake of such an ordeal.

Help me. I'm Amanda Berry. I've been kidnapped and I've been missing for 10 years." This was the frantic 911 call that one year ago this month set three women free from unimaginable terror. From the outside, 2207 Seymour Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio, looked like a regular suburban home. But inside, it was a prison - built by Ariel Castro to torture the three young women he kidnapped between 2002 and 2004: Michelle Knight, then 21, and teenagers Amanda Berry and Gina DeJesus.

On May 6, 2013, Berry ended the nightmare by catching the attention of passers-by - screaming and waving from inside while Castro was out - and calling police from a neighbour's house.

Shocking as the story is, it's not the first of its kind. In 2008, Elisabeth Fritzl was rescued from a 24-year imprisonment by her own father in his basement in Austria. Then, in 2009, Jaycee Lee Dugard was liberated after 18 years of captivity in California.

When these events first came to light, they echoed around the world with every detail of the imprisonment and abduction recounted in the media. Less publicised is what takes place after this.

According to therapist Dr Rebecca Bailey, who worked with Dugard, a chain of events kicks in when a kidnap victim is found. Police are first on the scene, but after this doctors, lawyers, psychiatrists and sometimes publicists all play a part in helping them adapt to their new lives.

"On day one, the first thing you want to do is take the victim away from media scrutiny and find out who they want to reconnect with," reveals Dr Bailey. She believes rehabilitation is most effective when it involves the victim's entire family or support structure. Contrary to what you might expect, this often means delaying re-entry into the family home.

"If the victim has been held in isolation and the family lives in the city, then they may not be ready for that environment," says Dr Bailey, who runs a ranch program for families dealing with the after-effects of abduction. "You want them to feel as comfortable and as nurtured as possible, which may mean staying in a hotel or other facility."

Ariel Castro's unassuming home in Cleveland, Ohio, served as a secret prison to his three victims (right) for a decade. The structure has now been demolished.
The first thing kidnap victims require is physical treatment — the Cleveland women were suffering bed sores, malnutrition and injuries including nerve and hearing damage, for example — but the psychological effects can be even longer lasting.

“They may have a fear of re-abduction, even if the perpetrator is dead,” explains Dr Bailey. “They may fear that the perpetrator can control them from death, particularly if they believed that the person was omnipotent.”

Psychiatrist Dr Frank Ochberg, a specialist in post-traumatic stress disorder who testified in the trial against Castro, believes that victims can suffer for years from “trauma memories”: “This is different from an autobiographical memory of something that happened. It comes when you don’t want it, and it has more intensity and immediacy.

“People will often black out, walk around in a daze, travel — sometimes for thousands of kilometres. If you dissociate at the time of the trauma, there’s a good chance you'll dissociate when you’re stimulated to relive the trauma by certain triggers [such as odours or music]. It’s a means of coping with overwhelming anxiety.”

In spite of the lasting effects, victims can and do move on with their lives. “After a year, you’d hope for the victims to have an understanding of freedom of choice,” comments Dr Bailey. “You may also see the beginning of an understanding or clarity about the events that occurred.”

Two years after her release, Dugard revealed her determination to lead a normal life, in defiance of her captors. “I am doing well now and no longer live in a nightmare,” she wrote to her one-time captor in her victim impact statement. “I have wonderful friends and family around me. Something you can never take from me again. You do not matter anymore.”

For most, escaping captivity is not the end of the journey, but the beginning.

Ukraine

Portrait of a protest

When demonstrations in Ukraine turned bloody, photographer Anastasia Taylor-Lind set up a studio amid the chaos to capture the human face of the violence.

Late last year, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of Kiev to protest against the Ukrainian President’s decision to abandon a trade agreement with the EU. Not only was the leader’s move seen as a betrayal, but it was one that controversially strengthened the country's ties with Russia — and moved it one step further from an alliance with the EU.

In the bloody months that followed, police and protesters clashed, activists were abducted and beaten, and the country witnessed violence that resulted in 77 people killed and 600 wounded in 48 hours. UK-based photographer Anastasia Taylor-Lind captured the weeks leading up to and after the bloodshed, through haunting portraits of the protesters and women mourning the dead.

How did you manage to set up a photo studio in Independence Square amid all the violence?

“I had been travelling around Europe and when I first landed in Kiev it was quite calm. I needed an alcove to hang my backdrop, so in the beginning I used a bus shelter. After that it was a disused alleyway about six metres from the barricades. It was a siege situation.”

How did the atmosphere change during the month you were there?

“When I first started taking pictures on February 1, the interaction was always very hopeful and positive. I went back to London to process my film and when I returned bodies were being laid out in the streets, medics were being targeted by snipers and the lobby of Hotel Ukraine had been turned into a morgue. The trauma was very evident.”

Who are these protesters?

“Everybody I spoke to was an ordinary person. I met a 50-year-old woman who worked in a restaurant — she had thrown herself over a boy who was...
Yosif, 52, protestor, February 7.

being beaten to protect him. She was taken to the police station, stripped, and only released the next day when some journalists came to find her. The majority of people I met were working people like her.

Tell us about the photograph of the little boy wearing the helmet.

"That was taken at the beginning of February when it was still very calm. He was a civilian who'd come down at the weekend with his parents. People would come down to have their pictures taken with the fighters."

Who are the women with flowers?

"After the violence, thousands of women started coming to the barricades and laying flowers, paying their respects to men who had been killed. They weren't relatives, just regular women who came because they felt they had to."

CAMBODIA

I started a charity at 21

It was 2007 when Tara Winkler pulled up outside a Cambodian orphanage in a bus. Her mission? To free children from an institution where they were suffering gross neglect and abuse. "Until that day, we weren't sure whether they were going to get on the bus and come with us," recalls Winkler. "The moment they did, I knew that this was what I wanted to do." In that instant, she became responsible for 14 children. She was just 21 at the time.

Winkler says she never intended to start an NGO, but fell in love with Cambodia while backpacking through South-East Asia after high school. Although she returned to Australia, she never forgot the poverty she had witnessed and, back in Sydney, started raising money for an orphanage she had visited. Then, in 2007, she heard allegations of corruption and abuse taking place there - and didn't feel she could turn her back on the children she had met. "I was young and naive and thought I could help, so I did."

Since then, Winkler has helped more than 300 children through the Cambodian Children's Trust (CCT), a charity she established to help give kids in one of the world's poorest countries access to education and healthcare. Rather than becoming yet another orphanage, CCT supports kids within their family structure or finds them foster homes.

For the past seven years, Winkler has based herself in Battambang, Cambodia's second-biggest city, though she says it's "more like a country town". Raised in affluent Vauduse, she now speaks fluent Khmer and says one of the highlights of her job is the dance parties they put on for the kids. "There will be over 300 people - mums, dads, grandmas, uncles and aunts. Everyone has a boogie. There's a lot of 'Gangnam Style'," she laughs.

Dances aside, the most rewarding part of her work is knowing that she is helping to empower the next generation of Cambodians. "If they can grow up to be educated, ethical future leaders then they'll be able to solve many of the problems they see in their own country."