

PROTECT THE CHILDREN

—Parental Guidelines
in Case Your Child
is Missing



1-800-U HELP ME

As parents, we feel a responsibility to teach our children about the issue of child abduction and molestation, but in a way that will not cause undue fear or psychological damage. There must be a balance between stressing the importance of these prevention tips and scaring your child. You as a parent best know how to approach each of your children. Be direct and realistic about these issues. Discuss them openly, and repeat tips often. You must adjust your discussion according to the age of your child, but a few key points remain the same:

- Tell and show your children that you love them, and that no matter what happens, you will always love them.
- Openly and continually communicate with your children. Let them know they can always talk to you, whether they are frightened or embarrassed, you will always be there for them.
- Do not blame the children if they are victims of sexual abuse, exploitation, or deception by a potential abductor. They must understand that they were the victim, and that they did not do anything wrong.

If Your Child Is Missing

1. **Immediately** contact your local law enforcement agency and initiate a report. Provide them with a photo and information you maintain on your child. Be complete and honest with them, including any problems at home that may be associated with your child's absence. Ask for a copy of the report, and make note of who is taking the initial report. Ask for the name of the officer investigating the case, and check back to determine the status of the case.
2. Be sure your child is entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and state level computer system
3. If you feel that the law enforcement agency handling your case is not being responsive, contact the chief, sheriff or director of the agency and seek relief. If you still feel that your case is not being addressed, contact the State's or District attorney's Office, higher level law enforcement authorities, or appropriate elected or appointed governmental officials who can look into the matter.
4. Be cautious if you decide to use private detectives or other for profit organizations to help you find your child. **Check references!** Ask for names of others they helped, check their credentials with law enforcement and state regulatory agencies, the Attorney General's Office (Consumer Fraud Division) as well as the Better Business Bureau.
5. Do seek the help of reputable support groups who can assist in a number of ways.
6. Keep someone by your telephone at all times, and keep a log of phone calls and other information regarding the case.
7. Get as much publicity as you can. Contact the media and request assistance in publicizing the case. Also, many private corporations may help in displaying photos of your child on their products.
8. Circulate posters with your child's photo and information about the case using the investigative law enforcement agency or support group as the contact.

1. Contact all your friends, relatives, and neighbors to determine if they have any information on the whereabouts of your child, or if they can be of assistance in a search or follow-up activities.
2. Talk to the friends of your children, but do not threaten them. Calmly explain how worried you are, and that your only concern is that your children are safe and that they come home. Often friends can provide important information for the investigation.
3. Consider offering a reward for information that would help locate your child.
4. Determine if your town or state has special programs for handling missing children cases. Seek their involvement and assistance.
5. Secure your child's dental records and have the investigating law enforcement agency enter them into NCIC. This will aid in determining if an unidentified dead body found anywhere in the country is your child.
6. Contact the Illinois State Police Clearinghouse for Missing and Exploited Children and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for assistance.

Illinois State Police
 Clearinghouse for
 Missing & Exploited Children
 2200 S Dirksen Parkway, #238
 Springfield, Illinois 62703
1-800-843-5763

National Center for
 Missing & Exploited Children
 Charles B. Wang Building
 699 Prince Street
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3175
1-800-843-5678

If Your Child Is Abducted by the Other Parent



1. **Immediately** report the incident to your local police department and note suggestions in the "If Your Child Is Missing" section of this brochure.
2. Also, get a copy of state parental kidnaping laws, and be sure the police/prosecutor are familiar with your state's provisions.
3. Seek felony charges against the abductor, if possible. This will allow for the issuance of a nationwide "Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution" (UFAP) warrant. It also enables the FBI to render assistance. Maintain records of all warrants issued.
4. Use the state and federal "Parent Locator Services" (PLS). The PLS was designed to track parents as part of child support enforcement activities. The system uses searches of various federal records. Information about the use of the PLS can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Volume 45, Section 303.69.
5. Contact friends and relatives of the abducting parent and request their help.
6. The abducting parent may try to obtain the child's records such as birth certificate and school records. Schools and governmental record centers should be contacted so that they will alert you if the records are requested.

1. Work with the police to trace the location of the abducting parent through record checks. The abducting parent may leave a trail that can be detected through these checks. Typical sources of information are:
 - State/local government record centers
 - Telephone companies
 - Department of Motor Vehicle records
 - Credit card companies, financial records, banks, loan associations, credit bureaus
 - Insurance companies
 - Professional associations/unions
 - Post office (for mail forwarding)
 - Hospitals or physicians treated abducting parent
 - Companies employing parent previously or currently
 2. If you suspect your child may be abducted by the other parent, prepare and maintain a file on the potential abducting parent containing:
 - Recent photo
 - Accurate description
 - Social security number
 - Driver's license number
 - Car make, model, color, license plate number
 - Employer
 - Type of work done in the past, union affiliations, professional associations/memberships
 - Schools attended
 - Names of physician, stockbroker, accountant, bank, and insurance companies
 - Credit cards
 - List of places where he/she might flee with abducted childIf abduction occurs, this information should be provided to police immediately.
 3. If you are involved in a custody dispute, seek legal advice regarding your rights and legal protection against the parental abduction.
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For further information contact your local law enforcement agency or the nearest Illinois State Police district headquarters.

To report information that could lead to the recovery of a child, or if you are a child in need of help, call



Illinois State Police
Clearinghouse for Missing & Exploited Children
2200 S Dirksen Parkway
Suite 238
Springfield, Illinois 62703
1-800-843-5763

