

Protecting Ohio's Families

Ohio Attorney General's Office



2017

MISSING CHILDREN CLEARINGHOUSE

ANNUAL REPORT



MIKE DEWINE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL





Linda Marie Pagano

Lost, injured, or missing

Missing from: Akron, Ohio
Missing since: 9/1/1974
Missing age: 17
Current age: 61
Gender: Female
Race/Ethnicity: White
Height: 4'10"
Weight: 100 lbs.
Hair color: Blond
Eye color: Blue

When Linda was last seen on 9/1/1974 in Akron, Ohio, she was wearing blue jeans and a dark-colored sweater.

If you have any information, contact the Akron Police Department at 330-375-2181.



Aaron Stepp

Lost, injured, or missing

Nickname or alias: Cody
Missing from: Columbus, Ohio
Missing since: 3/11/1997
Missing age: 3
Current age: 24
Gender: Male
Race/Ethnicity: White
Height: 3'2"
Weight: 39 lbs.
Hair color: Blond
Eye color: Blue

Aaron, shown here as a toddler, and in an age-progression photo as a 17-year-old, was last seen on March 11, 1997, on Hosack Street in Columbus, Ohio, playing in a neighbor's backyard.

If you have any information, contact the Columbus Division of Police at 614-645-4545.



Andre Aina

Abduction by family member

Missing from: Willoughby Hills, Ohio
Missing since: 6/4/2010
Missing age: 5
Current age: 13
Gender: Male
Race/Ethnicity: White
Height: 4'11"
Weight: 70 lbs.
Hair color: Brown
Eye color: Brown

Andre is believed to be with his noncustodial mother, Abir Helena Ania. They are believed to be in the country of Lebanon.

If you have any information, contact the FBI office in Cleveland at 440-942-9927.



Navaeh P. Hammock

Endangered runaway

Missing from: Columbus, Ohio
Missing since: 9/25/2016
Missing age: 14
Current age: 15
Gender: Female
Race/Ethnicity: Black
Height: 5'3"
Weight: 100 lbs.
Hair color: Black
Eye color: Brown

Navaeh was last seen on Sept., 25, 2016, in Columbus, Ohio. She was wearing a pink shirt and green jeans.

If you have any information, contact the Columbus Division of Police at 614-645-4545.



MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

May 9, 2018

The Honorable John Kasich
Governor, State of Ohio
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Cynthia Dungey, Director
Department of Job and Family Services
30 E. Broad St., 32nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

The Honorable Kirk Schuring
Speaker Pro Tempore,
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St.
Riffe Center, 14th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

The Honorable Larry Obhof
President, Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Statehouse, 2nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Tom Stickrath,
Superintendent
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
1560 State Route 56 SW
P.O. Box 365
London, Ohio 43140

Dear Colleagues,

At the Ohio Attorney General's Office, we are dedicated to our mission of protecting Ohio's families, particularly children. The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse has long been a key component of this undertaking. The clearinghouse collaborates with parents, schools, law enforcement agencies, and others to keep children safe.

The Missing Persons Unit within my office's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) oversees the clearinghouse, which compiles state data on missing children, assists law enforcement and families, and works with the Ohio departments of Education and Job and Family Services to train and provide resources for peace officers, teachers, parents, and children. The clearinghouse issues Ohio's Endangered Missing Child Alerts, and promotes awareness of issues related to abductions, human trafficking, and runaway children.

I am pleased to present this report, which details the activities of the clearinghouse in 2017.

The safe recovery of a missing child requires coordination and a quick response among agencies as well as critical help and input from the public. All of us have a role to play in making sure missing kids return home safely.

For more information, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons or call 800-325-5604.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General

Introduction and Overview

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse was established in 1993 by the Ohio General Assembly as a central repository for statistics and information about Ohio's missing children. It serves as an investigative resource to help law enforcement and families. The clearinghouse makes educational information available including training updates, news releases, and dates for abuse-prevention and safety fairs.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine created the Ohio Missing Persons Unit in 2011 to better coordinate and convey information about services related to missing children and adults. The unit, which operates the clearinghouse was placed with the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) to allow for a rapid response to missing persons cases and to provide immediate access to investigative tools. In addition to focusing on missing children, the Missing Persons Unit plays an integral role in cases involving missing adults, human trafficking, and unidentified human remains. The Missing Persons Unit has a toll-free hotline, **800-325-5604**, to field calls 24 hours a day, 365 days a year from law enforcement, parents, community members, and the media.

The Ohio Attorney General's website features a section on the Missing Persons Unit, **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons**. The webpages in that section call attention to cases and serve as a central location for information and resources. The website features photos of the missing and provides case details. It also allows visitors to submit tips and print posters for specific cases. It includes links to information about Ohio's unsolved homicides and unidentified remains. BCI also uses social media to raise awareness about those who are missing.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office prints pictures and information about missing persons cases on its business envelopes to increase public awareness. Two missing people are featured on each envelope along with the Missing Persons Unit's contact information. The cases are changed each time a new order of envelopes is printed, with missing children and adults alternated.

The Missing Persons Unit also assists by:

- Issuing Endangered Missing Child and Endangered Missing Adult Alerts.
- Collaborating with other agencies on the issuance of AMBER Alerts.
- Analyzing social media, public records, and law enforcement databases to help locate children.
- Offering a free program to collect DNA from families of the missing for possible use in making identifications.
- Providing training to law enforcement, other professionals, and the public.
- Giving investigative guidance, resource recommendations, and assistance.

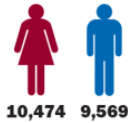
If a child goes missing, parents should immediately contact local law enforcement. The clearinghouse will make a supplemental report and ensure that the child's name is entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database. Parents also should file a report with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

2017 BY THE NUMBERS

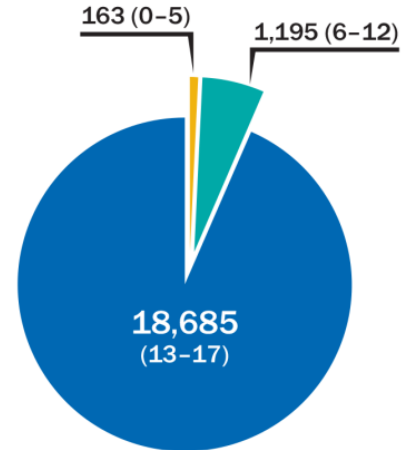


20,043

MISSING CHILDREN REPORTS



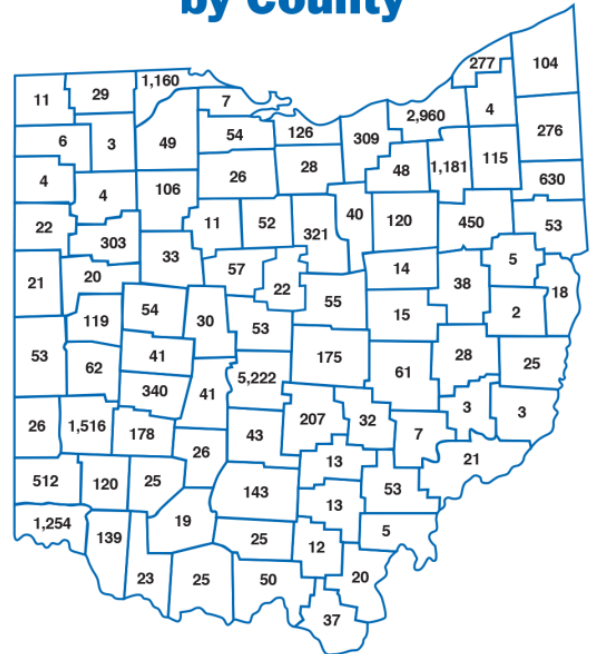
Missing Children Reports per Age



Missing Children Reports per Month



Missing Children Reports by County



21
TRAININGS
3,810 ATTENDEES

63 NEW
LINK CASES
(36 CASES CLOSED)

AMBER ALERT
11

19
ENDANGERED MISSING CHILD ALERTS

2017 Statistics

The clearinghouse receives monthly statistics on missing persons in Ohio whose cases have been entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database by law enforcement agencies.

Based on these statistics, the clearinghouse documented 25,512 persons reported missing in 2017. Of those reported missing, 20,043 were children (10,474 females and 9,569 males). Authorities reported that 97.9 percent – 19,623 children – were recovered safely.

Three children reported missing were recovered deceased in 2017. In all three cases, the cause of death was homicide.

NCIC implemented a Missing Person File in 1975 to track missing person reports nationwide. Records in the Missing Person File are retained until the individual is located or the record is canceled by the entering agency.

The 2017 Ohio cases were broken into the following NCIC categories:

- Individual under the age of 21 who is missing and does not meet any of the entry criteria set forth in other categories: **20,014 Ohio cases**
- Person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety may be in danger: **1,751 Ohio cases**
- Person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance may not have been voluntary (such as abductions and kidnappings): **54 Ohio cases**
- Individual of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting him/her or others to personal and immediate danger: **598 Ohio cases**
- Person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe: **One Ohio case**
- Missing individual over the age of 21 who does not meet the criteria for any other category and for whom there is a reasonable concern for his/her safety: **2,301 Ohio cases**

When entering a missing person into NCIC, law enforcement agencies have the option of noting the circumstances of the disappearance, if it is known. About half of all missing person reports filed with NCIC contain this information.

The 2017 Ohio cases were reported with the following circumstances:

Runaway: A child leaves home without permission and stays away overnight: **11,862 Ohio entries**

Abducted by noncustodial parent: A parent, other family member, or person acting on behalf of the parent or other family member takes, keeps, or conceals a child (or children), depriving another individual of his or her custody or visitation rights. Family abductions can occur before or after a court issues a custody determination. Ohio Revised Code Section 2919.23 spells out what constitutes family abduction, also known as “interference with custody,” and the accompanying penalties. Criminal statutes throughout the country vary as to the title of the offense and the conduct considered unlawful. Other terms for *family abduction* include *parental kidnapping*, *child abduction*, *child snatching*, and *custodial interference*: **42 Ohio entries**

Abducted by stranger: Two scenarios qualify as nonfamily abductions. In the first scenario, a nonfamily perpetrator takes a child by using physical force or threat of bodily harm and/or detains a

child in an isolated place by use of physical force, or threat of bodily harm, without lawful authority or parental/guardian permission. Under this scenario, the child is taken for at least one hour. In the second scenario, the child is taken, detained, or voluntarily accompanies a nonfamily perpetrator who conceals the child's whereabouts, demands ransom, or expresses the intention to keep the child permanently. Within this category, a *stereotypical kidnapping* is defined as involving someone the child does not know, or someone of slight acquaintance, who holds the child overnight, kills the child, demands ransom, or intends to keep the child permanently: **12 Ohio entries**

Adult : Missing person cases involving individuals older than 18 and younger than 21 must be reported to NCIC under 42 U.S. Code 5779 (c): **4 Ohio entries**

Attempted Child Abductions

The clearinghouse works with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) to identify patterns involving attempted child abductions, provide technical assistance and resources for law enforcement, and raise awareness among parents and children.

In Ohio, the clearinghouse documented 41 attempted child abductions involving 30 girls and 11 boys. The suspects were driving vehicles in 91 percent of the situations, and 72 percent occurred between the hours of 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thirty-seven percent of the incidents occurred while the children were walking to or from school.

Of incidents in which the outcome is known, 68 percent involved the children being able to walk or run away with no physical contact occurring. Of incidents in which the suspect's method of attempted abduction is known, 37 percent used physical force or a weapon; 30 percent offered the children a ride; 15 percent tried to entice the children with candy or an animal (such as a "lost puppy"); and 18 percent engaged the children in conversation by asking for directions or help. Ten suspects were arrested.

Tools for Finding Missing Children

AMBER Alert

Ohio's statewide AMBER Alert Plan was launched on Jan. 1, 2003. The AMBER Alert Program is a voluntary partnership involving law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, transportation agencies, and the wireless communications industry to activate an urgent bulletin in the most serious child-abduction cases. The goal of an AMBER Alert is to instantly galvanize the community to assist in the search for, and safe recovery of, the child.

The inception of the AMBER Alert is rooted in the national effort to publicize child abductions that followed the 1996 kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Dallas, Texas. Although named for Amber, the program's title also stands for "America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response."

In 2017, Ohio law enforcement issued 11 AMBER Alerts related to the disappearance of 14 children. All of the children were recovered safely.

Thankfully, most AMBER Alerts lead to the child's safe recovery. Here are two such instances involving Ohio children in 2017:

- At 1:45 a.m. on May 10, the Akron Police Department issued an AMBER Alert for a 1-year-old male. The noncustodial father to the child forcibly entered the home of the mother, assaulted the mother and the child's grandmother, and fled with the infant. The child was recovered safe, and the suspect was arrested.
- At 4:54 a.m. on Dec. 24, the Columbus Division of Police issued an AMBER Alert for a 2-year-old female. The mother of the child was at a gas station when she was assaulted and her vehicle stolen. The toddler was in the back seat. The child was later recovered safe.

The Ohio Attorney General's Missing Persons Unit staff assists in training law enforcement and the media in AMBER Alert procedures and best practices. In 2017, the unit offered clearinghouse workshops covering AMBER Alerts to 1,050 law enforcement personnel, media representatives, emergency management staff, children's services administrators, and victim advocates.

A staff member from the Missing Persons Unit also represents the Attorney General on the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee along with representatives from the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP), FBI, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Ohio Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Communications Committee, and Ohio Association of Broadcasters, as well as a victim advocate.

Here are the steps taken during an Ohio AMBER Alert:

- Law enforcement receives the initial call of a missing child and responds to the scene.
- Law enforcement confirms the missing child's case meets AMBER Alert criteria:
 - The abducted child is younger than 18.
 - The abduction poses a credible, immediate threat of serious bodily harm or death to a child.
 - The child is not a runaway and has not been abducted as a result of a child custody dispute (unless such a dispute poses a credible, immediate threat of serious bodily harm or death to the child).
 - There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, the abductor, and the circumstances to indicate that the alert will help locate the child.
- Law enforcement issues a radio broadcast to all neighboring law enforcement agencies and enters pertinent information into the NCIC database. The FBI, OSHP, NCMEC, and clearinghouse are notified of the alert.
- The OSHP and the investigating agency discuss case circumstances to verify the case meets AMBER Alert criteria. The clearinghouse also may be consulted.
- OSHP sends a statewide teletype to all Ohio law enforcement agencies alerting them to a child abduction.
- Law enforcement and broadcasters use the Emergency Alert System to air a description of the missing child and suspected abductor.
- The OSHP uses clearinghouse alert software on the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), maintained by BCI, to issue emails, faxes, and cellphone text messages containing alert information. The information goes to all partners, including law enforcement, private and public agencies, businesses, and citizens who have signed up to receive the alerts.

- The OSHP activates ODOT signboards and posts information on the AMBER Alert Plan website, OhioAMBERPlan.org.
- The OSHP disseminates the alert via Twitter. To receive these alerts through Twitter, visit www.Twitter.com. Search for “Ohio AMBER Alert” and click “follow.”
- The AMBER Alert phone number is activated. Members of the public can call **877-AMBER-OH (877-262-3764)** to report a tip or listen to the AMBER Alert description.
- NCMEC sends secondary alert notifications via social media and Yahoo, notifies truck drivers and Uber drivers, and sends Wireless Emergency Alert messages to cellphones.
- The BCI Child Abduction Response Team (CART) coordinator contacts the investigating agency to provide BCI resources and assistance.

Endangered Missing Child Alert

This alert is designed to seek assistance for a missing child when law enforcement cannot determine whether the child was abducted but whose disappearance otherwise meets all AMBER Alert criteria.

Once local law enforcement makes a request to the clearinghouse, an automated system alerts all Ohio law enforcement agencies of the missing child.

The Endangered Missing Child Alert provides a radio broadcast to law enforcement agencies in targeted areas, sends faxes and emails to the media, can activate the local CART if requested, and uses secondary notification systems to inform the public. The BCI CART coordinator will also contact the investigating agency to offer BCI assistance and resources.

The clearinghouse also sends Endangered Missing Child Alerts to participating trucking companies within a local or regional area designated by law enforcement. The companies post the information –

sent by fax and email – in their drivers’ lounges and dispatch offices and include the alerts in dispatches to their drivers.

In 2017, the clearinghouse issued 19 Endangered Missing Child Alerts. Seventeen children were recovered safe. In two cases, the children were victims of homicide.

Responsibilities of Law Enforcement

Under Ohio Revised Code Section 2901.30, which addresses missing children cases, law enforcement must:

- Take missing children reports and investigate them promptly.
- Make a concerted effort to locate the child.
- Submit information about missing children to NCIC immediately after a report.
- Notify the missing children’s parents, guardians, custodians, or caregivers of updates and of the submission of information to NCIC.
- Notify the missing child’s school to have the child’s school records flagged, if appropriate.

- Notify other law enforcement agencies of missing children reports.
- Assist other law enforcement agencies in the investigation of their missing children cases.
- Obtain dental records of children missing longer than 30 days.
- Submit information on found children to NCIC.

National Missing Children's Day

The nation marks National Missing Children's Day each May 25. Throughout Ohio, a variety of events take place on or about that day. Below is a description of some of the 2017 commemorations:

- Missing Persons Unit representatives made child-safety presentations focusing on the topic of runaways to more than 900 students in Reynoldsburg City Schools. After each presentation, the schools conducted balloon releases. Each balloon had the name of a missing child and the date they were reported missing.
- A statewide safety event took place at the Messiah Lutheran Church in Reynoldsburg. The keynote speaker was Gina DeJesus, survivor of a long-term abduction in Cleveland. There were exhibitors that provided information on child safety and human trafficking. BCI representatives were available to collect DNA samples from the families of the missing as a part of BCI's Project LINK (Linking Individuals Not Known).
- More than 600 Kirkersville Elementary School students attended a Missing Persons Unit presentation on child safety.
- Missing Persons Unit representatives provided child-safety presentations to more than 1,300 students at Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy, Pataskala Elementary, and Etna Elementary.
- The Missing Persons Unit held a playground commemoration and conducted child-safety presentations for 700 children at Columbus Preparatory Academy.

The Missing Persons Unit, in coordination with the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, forwarded the work of the winner of Ohio's poster contest to compete in the National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest at the U.S. Department of Justice. The Department of Justice hosts the annual competition to raise awareness about child abductions and promote safety. The Ohio winners were recognized at the Ohio Attorney General's Two Days In May conference.

The Ohio winners, selected by a panel of judges assembled by the Missing Persons Unit:

- First place, Ellen Curry, Campus International School, Cleveland
- Second place, Klaire Johnson, Ridgeway Elementary School, Hamilton, Ohio

Third place, Brynn Spencer, North Union Elementary School, Richwood, Ohio

Collaborations

The Ohio Missing Persons Unit collaborates with many agencies and organizations to locate missing and abducted children and prevent future incidents. Among them:

Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force: The Missing Persons Unit participates in the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, which also involves local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies; victim advocacy agencies; and prosecutors' offices. The task force identifies human trafficking victims, investigates criminal activity, assists with victim services, and prosecutes offenders. The Missing Persons Unit staff supports investigative efforts, shares intelligence, and provides resources.

Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition: The Missing Persons Unit is a member of the Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition, which works to end human trafficking through public awareness, service to trafficked persons, advocacy, and resource and training support for law enforcement.

I-SEARCH: The InterState Enforcement Agencies to Recover Children (I-SEARCH) Advisory Council aids in the identification and recovery of missing children. Midwestern member states are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Project LINK: BCI is the central repository for information regarding Ohio missing persons and unidentified remains. Project LINK (Linking Individuals Not Known) was created under Ohio Revised Code Section 109.573 in 1999 to help connect Ohio's missing persons, including unidentified remains, to those across the country. After a person is missing for 30 days, a relative may submit a DNA sample to be deposited into a database for comparison with unidentified remains. The samples are tested for mitochondrial DNA, nuclear DNA, and Y-STR (short tandem repeat on the Y-chromosome). Once the tests are completed, they upload the results to the national Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database so that it may be compared across the country. In 2017, 63 LINK cases were submitted to BCI and 36 were closed.

NamUs: The Missing Persons Unit participates in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). NamUs is the national online repository for records involving missing people and unidentified human remains. Launched in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Justice, the initiative is aimed at reducing the number of unidentified bodies held at coroners' and medical examiners' offices. Coroners and medical examiners enter an individual's record into the database, which is cross-checked with an unidentified remains database in hopes of confirming identification. Families of missing people also may submit DNA to aid in the identification of remains.

Child Abduction Response Team (CART): The Child Abduction Response Team (CART) is designed to respond when a missing child is considered to be in immediate danger. The Ohio Attorney General, along with the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police and the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, lead the Child Abduction Response Team model for Ohio. Dozens of teams are located throughout the state. The CART teams and their coordinators have assisted in the recovery of multiple missing children throughout the state.

Assistance to the Public

Online Resources

The Ohio Missing Persons Unit is represented at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons/ on the Ohio Attorney General's website. The unit's webpages provide valuable information to the public, including:

- Steps to take if a child is missing.
- Photographs and poster templates that are ready to print in order to raise awareness of missing children.
- Publications.
- Safety tips.
- Links to Ohio's AMBER Alert Plan, training information, other clearinghouses, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

The public plays a vital role in the recovery of missing children through another Web-based resource, the Ohio Citizen Alert Network. The network is a critical missing child response software program that notifies the public when children are abducted or are missing in a life-threatening circumstance. By subscribing to receive alerts on the Ohio Attorney General's website at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Ohio-Missing-Persons/Ohio-AMBER-Plan, citizens can learn of missing children alerts through text messages and emails.

Training Sessions

In 2017, the Ohio Attorney General's Missing Persons Unit gave training presentations on AMBER Alerts, other missing person alert programs, CART, first responder programs, child safety, reunification, resources for law enforcement, intervention, and human trafficking to 3,810 law enforcement officers, community members, teachers, children, child protective services employees, and other interested individuals.

Assistance to Law Enforcement and Other Agencies

Trainings

The clearinghouse conducted 21 trainings for law enforcement throughout Ohio in 2017. Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) students, officers who work with juveniles, new sheriffs, and trainers received instruction on missing children investigations, safety tips for children, AMBER Alert protocol, and ways to initiate other missing person alerts.

The clearinghouse is represented on the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee as well as the subcommittee that organizes the annual AMBER Alert Conference. More than 130 criminal justice professionals and members of the media attended the August 2017 conference at the Columbus Police Academy. Speakers from BCI and OSHP provided a basic overview of the alert programs and how to request or activate an alert. The FBI Behavioral Unit provided a presentation on children abducted from their homes and from hospitals. The keynote speaker for the conference was Colleen Nick. In 1995, Nick's 6-year-old daughter, Morgan, was abducted at a Little League Baseball game in Arkansas. Her daughter has yet to be found. Nick helped create the AMBER Alert program for Arkansas.

The clearinghouse provides three investigative manuals to law enforcement upon request:

- *Missing and Abducted Children: A Law-Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management*, which provides step-by-step investigation checklists for family and nonfamily abductions, lost children, and runaways.
- *The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Child Abduction Response Plan*, which details techniques essential in conducting abduction investigations.
- *Long-term Missing Children Guide for Law Enforcement*, which provides law enforcement strategies for finding long-term missing children.

The clearinghouse also offers a best practices guide for law enforcement for missing person cases. The guide, *Legal Mandates and Best Practices Protocol for Law Enforcement in Missing Persons Cases*, can be obtained through the clearinghouse or the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. Copies of other materials, brochures, and applicable Ohio Revised Code citations are distributed at trainings and by mail upon request. (A list of all available publications appears at the end of this report.)

The clearinghouse also works with the Ohio Department of Education to promote child safety through school presentations and assemblies. In six presentations in 2017, more than 1,900 children received information on how to stay safe, how to prevent abduction, what to do in the event of an abduction, and common consequences of — and alternatives to — running away. Each child also received safety information and a fingerprint card for personal family records. In support of local child-safety efforts, the clearinghouse distributed about 5,600 fingerprint cards in 2017.

Investigative Assistance

The clearinghouse offers investigative assistance to law enforcement agencies searching for missing children, including:

- Using Internet research tools, posting the child's photo on the clearinghouse website and advising peace officers of available resources.
- Conducting online searches to locate the addresses, telephone numbers, professional licenses, neighbors, and family members of people who may have taken, or who may be associated with, a missing child.
- Analyzing law enforcement records to see whether the child has been incarcerated, taken into the custody of child protective services, obtained a new driver's license or state ID card, or had other contact with law enforcement agencies.
- Accessing social networking websites on which missing children may have posted profiles, which sometimes reveal details about their whereabouts, the reasons for their disappearance, their friends, and their contacts.
- Providing suspect and associate work-ups to try to determine possible locations the child may go and to determine the risk of danger to the child.
- Referring the local agency to other resources that can provide assistance or expertise.
- Working with staff from these BCI units:
 - Crimes Against Children Unit, which assists local law enforcement in child abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, and Internet crimes against children.
 - The Criminal Intelligence Unit, which can provide background information on missing individuals and suspects.
 - The Special Investigations Unit, which can provide an agent to directly assist with a local investigation.
 - The Cyber Crimes Unit, which provides forensic analysis of many types of technology.

The Attorney General's Office also features missing children's photos on posters in conjunction with AMBER Alerts and Endangered Missing Child Alerts.

BCI's forensic artists work to create leads in cases involving missing children using:

- Age-progression photos: Using software and artistry to show what a person would look like with the passage of time.
- Age-regression photos: Using software and artistry to show what a person looked like in the past.
- Composite images: Working with a crime victim to create a sketch of the suspect.
- Photo modifications: Using digital editing to make changes to a photo.
- Post-mortem imaging: Turning cadaver photos into lifelike images that can be released to the public.
- Facial reconstruction: Using a skull to create a clay model or image of what the decedent may have looked like in life.

The clearinghouse works closely with human trafficking investigators and social service agencies to determine whether a child is a victim — or at risk of becoming a victim — of human trafficking. When children are identified as victims or at high risk, the clearinghouse forwards the information to human trafficking task forces, investigators, and social service agencies. Any tips that result are forwarded to the investigating law enforcement agency.

In addition, the clearinghouse provides law enforcement with cellphone tracking information, details on obtaining satellite photos of areas pertinent to searches for missing children, direction on legal issues, CART assistance, details on alert procedures, and information on warrant procedures related to social networking sites. A BCI Special Agent serves as Ohio's CART coordinator. The coordinator contacts agencies during any endangered missing person case and offers additional assistance and resources, participates in Ohio CART Steering Committee meetings, updates the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, helps create policy and procedures, and coordinates CART response to investigations. The clearinghouse can also recommend other state and national resources.

Ohio Department of Health

Under a policy the clearinghouse forged with the Ohio Department of Health, the department flags and holds the birth certificates of missing children involved in an AMBER Alert or Endangered Missing Child Alert and notifies law enforcement of requests for missing children's birth certificates.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) case managers provide the clearinghouse with information that can help locate a missing child and prevent future disappearances. The clearinghouse provides training to ODJFS employees on procedural issues involving the agencies and other information about missing children.

Other Assistance

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking forces the most vulnerable members of society — including children — into modern-day slavery. In Ohio, more than 1,000 minors are believed victims of sex trafficking. Nationally, the number of victims is estimated to be more than 100,000. The Missing Persons Unit trains local law enforcement to identify and investigate human trafficking cases and assists law enforcement in returning missing children at risk of becoming trafficking victims. In 2017, the unit provided five trainings to 400 first responders about missing children and domestic sex trafficking.

The Missing Persons Unit assists local law enforcement agencies with identifying missing children who are at high risk of victimization into domestic sex trafficking. The unit then refers the missing child case to BCI's Crimes Against Children Unit, which assists in efforts to locate children who are identified as being at high risk of victimization or children confirmed to be sex trafficking victims. The Missing Persons Unit also shares information about missing children with local law enforcement and social service agencies that work with human trafficking victims.

National Resources and Partners

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) helps prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation, find missing children, and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and the professionals who serve them. For details, visit www.MissingKids.com or call **800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)**.

The Missing Persons Unit collaborates with the **U.S. Department of State** regarding child abduction cases with an international connection. Within the State Department, the Office of Children's Issues assists parents whose children are victims of international abduction. The office provides information for parents and/or legal guardians that they can use to identify options – both criminal and civil – to pursue the return of their abducted children. In doing so, the office works closely and cooperatively with a wide range of U.S. and foreign entities, including law enforcement, nongovernmental organizations, and foreign governments.

The **National Runaway Safeline** is the federally designated national communication system for homeless and runaway youth. The organization provides crisis intervention, referrals to local resources, and educational and prevention services to children, families, and community members around the clock. The group is known for its Home Free Program, which in conjunction with Greyhound Lines and United Airlines provides runaways with free transportation home. For information, visit www.1800runaway.org.

A Child is Missing Inc. provides a first-responder program to law enforcement. The program's rapid response telephone system alerts residents in a targeted area about a missing child, elderly person, or individual with mental impairments or disabilities. The program serves several states, including Ohio. A Child Is Missing works in concert with AMBER Alert and other child safety programs and can only be activated by law enforcement. No special equipment or personnel are needed, and the program is free. For information, visit www.achildismissing.org.

Code Adam, one of the nation's largest child-safety programs, was created by Wal-Mart to assist businesses and others with public facilities in preventing a child from being abducted and removed from the premises. The Code Adam program was named for 6-year-old Adam Walsh, whose 1981 abduction and murder brought national attention to the horror of child abduction. The program lays out a series of steps to be taken in the event a child is reported missing in a store or similar location. All Ohio agencies, schools, libraries, law enforcement, and retailers are encouraged to promote Code Adam in their areas.

Team Adam, a program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, provides rapid, on-site assistance to law enforcement agencies and families when children go missing. Team Adam consultants are retired law enforcement professionals with years of investigative experience at the federal, state, and local levels. Consultants from Team Adam rapidly deploy to sites where these cases are unfolding. They provide on-the-ground technical assistance and connect local law enforcement to a national network of resources. The program's unique access to NCMEC's resources, coupled with years of law enforcement experience, often provides departments with the added tools needed to better address complex, media intensive cases.

Team HOPE (Help Offering Parents Empowerment) assists families who are missing children by offering counseling, resources, empowerment, and support from trained volunteers who have been in their position. For information, call 866-305-HOPE (866-305-4673) or visit www.TeamHope.org.

Related Publications*

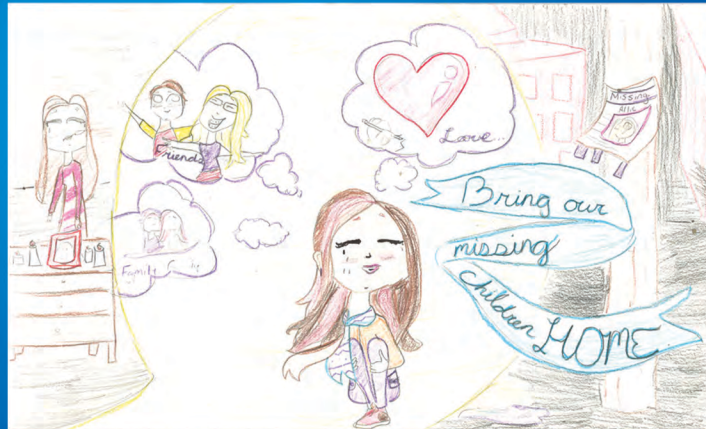
- Child ID Kit
- “Child Safety Game Sheet”
- “Eight Rules for Safety”
- *Family Abduction: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child Is Abducted*
- *For Healthcare Professionals: Guidelines on Prevention of and Response to Infant Abductions*
- “Just In Case” series of brochures for families, including:
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You Need a Babysitter”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You Need Help Finding Professional Help”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You are Considering Daycare”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You are Considering Family Separation”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case Your Child is Testifying in Court”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental and Professional Guidelines in Dealing With Grief Following the Loss of a Child
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case Your Child Might Someday be Missing”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines In Case Your Child Might Someday be a Runaway”
 - “Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines In Case Your Child Might Someday Be a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation”
- “Keep Your Child Safe” palm card
- “Know the Rules for Child Safety” brochures, including:
 - “Know the Rules: After-School Safety for Children Home Alone”
 - “Know the Rules: For Child Safety in Amusement or Theme Parks”
 - “Know the Rules: For Child Safety in Youth Sports”
 - “Know the Rules: General Parental Tips to Help Keep Your Child Safer”
 - “Know the Rules: Safety Tips for the Holidays”
 - “Know the Rules: School Safety Tips”
 - “Know the Rules: For Going To and From School More Safely”
- *Parental Kidnapping: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child is Abducted*
- *Recovery and Reunification of Missing Children: A Team Approach*
- *When Your Child is Missing: A Family Survival Guide*
- *Youth at Risk: Understanding Runaway and Exploited Youth*

Law Enforcement Resources*

- *Child Abuse and Neglect*
- *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*
- *Child Molesters Who Abduct*
- *Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis*
- *Children Traumatized in Sex Rings*
- *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response*
- *Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation*
- "Investigative Checklist for First Responders"
- *Investigator's Guide to Missing Child Cases*
- *Long-term Missing Child Guide for Law Enforcement: Strategies for Finding Long-term Missing Children*
- *Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program*
- *Management*

*These publications are available from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 703-224-2150.

Ohio's 2017 National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest



1st Place

Mya Wehrkamp

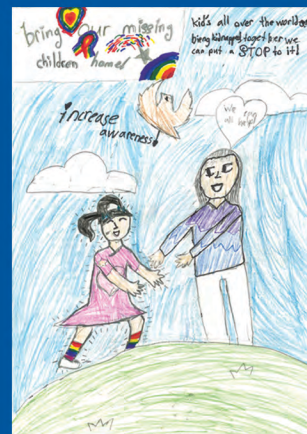
Coldwater Middle School
Coldwater, Ohio



2nd Place

Sophia Rush

St. Nicholas Academy
Cincinnati, Ohio



3rd Place

Ibraheem Ahmad

Dayton Islamic School
Beavercreek, Ohio



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Missing Children Clearinghouse

2017

Annual Report

Ohio Attorney General's Office
Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Missing Persons Unit
150 E. Gay St., 25th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Hotline: 800-325-5604



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OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

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