

Protecting Ohio's Families



Ohio Attorney General's Office Missing Children Clearinghouse



2012
Annual Report



MIKE DEWINE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

2012 National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest



1st Place

Chloe Lenox
Columbus Preparatory Academy
Columbus, Ohio



2nd Place

Jasmine Dushime
Pennyroyal Elementary School
Franklin, Ohio



3rd Place

Sienna Jacob
Brookridge Elementary School
Cleveland, Ohio



MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

May 25, 2013

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

The Honorable William G. Batchelder
Speaker, Ohio House of Representatives
Riffe Center, 14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Tom Stickrath
Superintendent
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
1560 State Route 56 SW
London, OH 43140

Michael B. Colbert
Director, Department of Job and
Family Services
30 E. Broad St., 32nd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Keith Faber
President, Ohio Senate
Statehouse, Second Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Colleagues,

Protecting Ohio families and children is the overarching mission in all of the work of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse — established within the Attorney General's Office 20 years ago — works diligently with parents, schools, law enforcement agencies, and other partners to keep children safe. I am pleased to present this report detailing the clearinghouse's work in 2012.

Housed within the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation's Missing Persons Unit, the clearinghouse 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 teachers, parents, children, and peace officers. The clearinghouse issues Ohio's Missing Child Alerts and Missing Adult Alerts, coordinates with law enforcement on AMBER Alerts, and raises awareness of the issues surrounding runaway children, human trafficking, and abductions.

Facilitating the safe recovery of a missing child requires quick work and coordination — both among agencies and with the critical help and input of the public. We all need to do our part in helping these kids get home safely.

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

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General

About the Missing Children Clearinghouse

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse was established in 1993 under Ohio Revised Code 109.65(B) and serves as a central repository of statistics and information about missing children in Ohio. It provides assistance to law enforcement and families in locating missing children and develops and disseminates educational information through news releases, training, child abuse prevention and safety fairs, and child safety lesson plans.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's office 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 Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse, was placed within the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) to facilitate the quickest possible response to missing persons cases and provide immediate access to important investigative tools. In addition to focusing on missing children, the Missing Persons Unit plays an integral role in cases and issues involving missing adults, human trafficking, and unidentified human remains.

The Missing Persons Unit provides a toll-free hotline, **800-325-5604**, to field calls from law enforcement, parents, community members, and the media. The hotline is answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Attorney General's Office also maintains a website at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons to give visibility to missing persons cases and provide a central location for families and the public to find resources and guidance. The site features details of missing children, missing adults, unidentified remains, and unsolved homicides throughout Ohio and allows visitors to submit tips and print posters for specific cases.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office also prints pictures of and information about missing persons on its business envelopes to increase public awareness. Two missing persons are featured on each envelope along with clearinghouse contact information. Different individuals are featured when each order of envelopes goes to print.

Staff members of the Missing Persons Unit also assist law enforcement and parents by:

- Issuing Missing Child and Missing Adult Alerts
- Collaborating with others in the issuance of AMBER Alerts
- Using social websites, public records, and law enforcement databases to help locate children
- Training law enforcement, other professionals, and the public
- Providing investigative guidance and assistance
- Recommending additional resources

Parents should contact local law enforcement immediately if a child goes missing. The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse also will, if contacted, take a supplemental report and verify that the investigating law enforcement agency has entered the child's name 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).

2012 Statistics

The clearinghouse receives monthly statistics on missing Ohio children whose cases law enforcement agencies have entered into the NCIC database. Some children, such as those who are recovered quickly or are the subject of frequent custody disputes, may not be included in NCIC statistics.

In 2012, the clearinghouse documented 19,219 reports of missing children in Ohio. Of those, authorities reported that 98.8 percent – a total of 18,990 children – were recovered safely.

Nine children were recovered deceased in 2012. Three females and one male were homicide victims, two males committed suicide, and three males died in accidents.

Missing children reports filed with NCIC are categorized into four areas. (Definitions appear below.)

The totals in each category were:

- Runaways – 11,721
- Lost, injured, or otherwise missing – 7,413
- Family abductions – 72
- International family abductions – 1
- Non-family abductions – 12

Ohio children reported missing to NCIC were in these age categories:

- 0 to 5 years old – 149
- 6 to 12 years old – 654
- 13 to 17 years old – 11,487
- 17 and older – 6,911
- Age unknown – 18

Attempted Child Abductions

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

The clearinghouse documented 62 attempted child abductions involving 36 girls and 26 boys. The suspects were driving vehicles in 71 percent of the situations, and 42 percent occurred between 2 to 7 p.m. Thirty-two percent of the incidents occurred while the children were walking to or from school.

Of incidents in which the outcome is known, 53 percent involved the children being able to walk or run away with no physical contact occurring. Of incidents in which the suspects' method of attempted abduction is known, 31 percent used physical force or a weapon; 37 percent offered the children a ride; 11 percent tried to entice the children with candy or an animal (such a "lost puppy"), 11 percent tried to entice the children by offering money or something of value; and 10 percent engaged the children in conversation by asking for directions or help.

Definitions

Runaway: A child leaves home without permission and stays away overnight.

Lost, injured, or otherwise missing: A child's whereabouts are unknown to the child's caretaker for at least an hour. This may happen because the child was trying to get home or make contact with the caretaker but was unable to do so because he or she was lost, stranded, or injured; the child was too young to know how to return home or make contact with the caretaker; or the child was unaware that the caretaker was looking for him or her.

Family abduction: 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. ORC 2919.23 spells out what constitutes family abduction, also known as interference with custody, and the accompanying penalties. Criminal statutes across the country vary both 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.

International family abductions: This occurs when — in violation of a custody order, decree, or other legitimate custodial rights — a member of the child's family or someone acting on behalf of a family member takes or fails to return a child, and the child is concealed or transported out of the United States with the intent to prevent contact or deprive the caretaker of custodial rights indefinitely or permanently.

Non-family abduction: Two scenarios qualify as non-family abductions. In one, a non-family perpetrator takes a child by using physical force or threat of bodily harm or detains a child for at least one hour in an isolated place by use of physical force or threat of bodily harm without lawful authority or parental/guardian permission. In the other scenario, the child is taken, detained, or voluntarily accompanies a non-family 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, transports the child a distance of 50 miles or more, kills the child, demands ransom, or intends to keep the child permanently.

Missing Ohio Children by County in 2012

County	Children Reported Missing	County	Children Reported Missing	County	Children Reported Missing
Adams	11	Guernsey	24	Muskingum	39
Allen	188	Hamilton	1,617	Noble	0
Ashland	53	Hancock	85	Ottawa	11
Ashtabula	95	Hardin	56	Paulding	6
Athens	39	Harrison	2	Perry	32
Auglaize	12	Henry	5	Pickaway	62
Belmont	35	Highland	25	Pike	7
Brown	0	Hocking	15	Portage	138
Butler	345	Holmes	8	Preble	18
Carroll	11	Huron	33	Putnam	7
Champaign	16	Jackson	12	Richland	141
Clark	325	Jefferson	29	Ross	93
Clermont	1,247	Knox	66	Sandusky	21
Clinton	5	Lake	241	Scioto	45
Columbiana	36	Lawrence	27	Seneca	84
Coshocton	10	Licking	180	Shelby	81
Crawford	69	Logan	27	Stark	489
Cuyahoga	2,815	Lorain	650	Summit	329
Darke	33	Lucas	1,065	Trumbull	317
Defiance	30	Madison	36	Tuscarawas	60
Delaware	50	Mahoning	1,009	Union	20
Erie	160	Marion	101	Van Wert	15
Fairfield	117	Medina	63	Vinton	6
Fayette	15	Meigs	10	Warren	122
Franklin	3,937	Mercer	23	Washington	40
Fulton	18	Miami	75	Wayne	87
Gallia	18	Monroe	2	Williams	14
Geauga	15	Montgomery	1,465	Wood	44
Greene	108	Morgan	7	Wyandot	4
		Morrow	26	Unknown	90

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 entire community to assist in the search for and safe recovery of the child.

Its beginnings are tied to a national effort to publicize child abductions that followed the 1996 kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Dallas. Although named for Amber, the program's title also is an acronym for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response.

In addition to the statewide plan, 24 local or regional areas of Ohio have AMBER Alert plans that complement the statewide plan and spell out procedures for alerts in those specific geographic areas.

In 2012, Ohio law enforcement issued 10 AMBER Alerts related to the disappearance of 15 children. Fourteen of the children were recovered safely. Unfortunately, one child was recovered deceased.

Thankfully, most AMBER Alerts lead to the child's safe recovery. Here are two such instances involving Ohio children in 2012:

- Cleveland Police Department issued an AMBER Alert for a 4-year-old boy about 1:30 a.m. March 27, 2012. The child was last seen playing outside his residence about four and a half hours earlier. A citizen who saw the AMBER Alert contacted police to report seeing the child. Investigators found the boy in East Cleveland with a homeless suspect whom the victim's mother had allowed to stay in her home for a few days. The suspect was found to have a history of child kidnapping. The child and suspect were located together in East Cleveland. The child was safely returned to his family, and the suspect was arrested.
- Maple Heights Police Department issued an AMBER Alert for an 8-month-old boy about 9:11 p.m. July 22, 2012. The boy was last seen in Maple Heights about 8:21 p.m. that evening. The boy had been abducted by his father, who previously made verbal threats against his family and attempted to set his wife's car on fire. The AMBER Alert was canceled after the suspect left the child at a residence and fled upon hearing the AMBER Alert. The man was later arrested and charged with domestic violence.

The Attorney General's Missing Persons Unit staff assists in training law enforcement and the media in AMBER Alert procedures and best practices. In 2012, the unit offered clearinghouse workshops covering AMBER Alerts to 812 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 Steering Committee along with representatives from the Buckeye Sheriffs' Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Federal Bureau of Investigation (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 National Crime Information Center database. The FBI, Ohio State Highway Patrol, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), and Missing Children Clearinghouse are notified of the alert.
- The Ohio State Highway Patrol (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 software on the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), maintained by the Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, to issue e-mails, faxes and cell phone text messages containing alert information. These go to all partners, including law enforcement, private and public agencies, businesses, and citizens who have signed up to receive the alerts.
- The OSHP activates Ohio Department of Transportation signboards and posts information on the AMBER Alert Plan website, www.OhioAMBERplan.org.
- The OSHP issues the alert using Twitter. To receive these alerts through Twitter, go to 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.
- The NCMEC sends secondary alert notifications via such sites as AOL, Facebook, MySpace, Google, and Yahoo; notifies truck drivers; and sends Wireless Emergency Alert messages to devices capable of receiving them.

Endangered Missing Child Alert

This alert is designed to seek assistance for a missing child whose disappearance meets all AMBER Alert criteria with the exception that law enforcement cannot determine whether the child was abducted. 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 e-mails to the media, can activate the local Child Abduction Response Team (CART) if requested, and uses secondary notification systems to inform the public.

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 e-mail – in their drivers' lounges and dispatch offices and include the alerts in dispatches to their drivers.

In 2012, the clearinghouse issued 11 Endangered Missing Child Alerts. All of these children were recovered safely.

Responsibilities of Law Enforcement

Under ORC 2901.30, which addresses missing children cases, law enforcement is required to:

- Take missing children reports and investigate them promptly
- Make a concerted effort to locate the child
- Submit information about missing children to the National Crime Information Center immediately after a report is complete
- Notify the missing children's parents, guardians, custodians, or caregivers of updates and of the submission of information to the 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 the NCIC

National Missing Children's Day

The nation marks National Missing Children's Day each May 25. A variety of events take place on or about that day throughout Ohio. Here is a recap of some of the 2012 commemorations:

- Berean Baptist Church in Mansfield posted missing children's names on a large board and asked people to take one or two names and pray for the children and their families.
- More than 500 Kirkersville Elementary School students attended a Missing Persons Unit presentation on child safety. Afterward, each student tied to the school's fence an orange ribbon bearing a child's name and date they went missing.
- About 825 students at Pennyroyal, Gerke, and Schenck elementary schools in Franklin, Ohio, heard a safety presentation by Missing Persons Unit staffers and worked on projects illustrating the number of missing children in the state.
- The Missing Persons Unit held a balloon launch at Columbus Preparatory Academy involving 700 children.
- The Missing Persons Unit, in coordination with the Ohio Department of Education, forwarded the work of Ohio's first-, second-, and third-place National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest winners to the national contest. The Department of Justice hosts the annual competition to raise awareness of child abductions and promote safety.

A panel of judges assembled by the Missing Persons Unit selected these Ohio winners in 2012:

- First place, Chloe Lenox, Columbus Preparatory Academy, Columbus
- Second place, Jasmine Dushime, Pennyroyal Elementary School, Franklin
- Third place, Sienna Jacob, Brookridge Elementary School, Brooklyn

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; 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 assists investigators, shares intelligence, provides resources, and identifies funding sources. The Missing Persons Unit director co-chairs the task force's Law Enforcement Subcommittee, assists in the organization of task force meetings, and engages other agencies to participate in the task force.

Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition — The Missing Persons Unit director 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. The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse manager served as president of I-SEARCH in 2012.

NamUs — The Missing Persons Unit participates in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) workgroup. NamUs is the first 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 across the United States. Through NamUs and other measures, the number of unidentified human remains has fallen from about 40,000 in 2008 to less than 8,000 currently. 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.

Ohio Child Abduction Response Team (CART): Ohio CART is a network of trained public safety and other individuals from various agencies, jurisdictions, and disciplines prepared to respond to cases of missing, endangered, or abducted children and adults. Ohio CART was developed in 2006 by the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, Ohio State Highway Patrol, and Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee in collaboration with the Missing Children Clearinghouse. Twenty-three local CART teams cover six Ohio regions and can be activated when a child goes missing or is abducted. More information is available at www.lef-oh.org/carthm.html.

Assistance to the Public

Online resources

The Missing Children Clearinghouse website, www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons, provides valuable information to the public, including:

- Steps to take if a child is missing
- Photographs/poster templates to raise awareness of missing children
- Publications
- Safety tips
- Fingerprint identification cards and game sheets
- Links to Ohio's AMBER Alert Plan, training information, other state clearinghouses, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

The public plays a vital role in the recovery of missing children through another Internet-based resource, the Ohio Citizens Alert Network (CAN). By subscribing to CAN on Ohio's AMBER Alert website at www.ohioamberplan.org, citizens can learn of missing children through text messages and e-mails.

Training Sessions

The Attorney General's Missing Persons Unit gave training presentations on AMBER Alert, CART, first responder programs, child safety, reunification, resources for law enforcement, intervention, and human trafficking to 3,148 individuals in 2012. These included law enforcement officers, community members, teachers, children, child protective services employees, and other interested individuals.

Telephone inquiries

Throughout the year, the unit responded to more than 2,700 calls from law enforcement, families of missing children, state and federal agencies, and others on issues related to missing children.

Assistance to Law Enforcement and Other Agencies

Trainings

The clearinghouse conducted 21 trainings for law enforcement across Ohio in 2012. Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy students, juvenile officers, new sheriffs, and trainers received instruction on missing children investigations, safety tips for children, AMBER Alert protocol, and initiating other missing persons alerts.

The clearinghouse is represented on the Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee as well as the subcommittee that organizes the annual AMBER Alert Conference. More than 140 criminal justice professionals and members of the media attended the August 2012 conference in Columbus. The speaker was New York State Trooper Sayeh Rivazfar, who along with her sister was abducted by her mother's ex-boyfriend when she was a child. He drove them to a wooded area, raped Sayeh, slashed the girls' throats, and left them to die in the woods. Sayeh's sister did not survive. Also speaking at the conference was Capt. Rob Jackson of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, chairman of the AMBER Alert Steering Committee, who led interactive scenario training on missing children cases.

The clearinghouse provides two investigative manuals to law enforcement:

- "Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigations and Program Management," which provides step-by-step investigation checklists for family and non-family abductions, lost children, and runaways
- "The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Child Abduction Response Plan," which details techniques essential in conducting abduction investigations

The clearinghouse also offers a best practices guide for law enforcement for missing persons cases. The guide, titled "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 10 presentations in 2012, more than 2,814 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. In support of local child safety efforts, the clearinghouse distributed about 8,700 fingerprint cards in 2012.

Investigative assistance

The clearinghouse assists law enforcement in missing children investigations in a number of ways. These include:

- Utilizing 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 be associated with a missing child
- Analyzing law enforcement records to see if 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 various social networking websites on which missing children may have posted profiles, which sometimes reveal details about children’s whereabouts, the reasons for their disappearance, their friends, and contacts
- 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 on many types of technology

In 2012, the Missing Persons Unit posted 1,576 cases of missing children and adults on the Ohio Attorney General’s website. The Attorney General’s Office also featured hundreds of missing children’s photos on posters in conjunction with AMBER Alerts and Endangered Missing Child Alerts.

The clearinghouse also works closely with human trafficking investigators and social service agencies and can help determine if a child is a victim of (or at risk for) 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 cell phone 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. The clearinghouse also can recommend other state and national resources.

Here are two examples of how the Attorney General’s assistance to law enforcement aided in the recovery of missing children:

- A police chief requested assistance in locating a 17-year-old girl who had run away from home. The local agency determined that, through Facebook, she had met an adult male who lived in a nearby state. The girl was not located in a search of the man’s house. The Attorney General’s Office provided clearinghouse resources, a BCI special agent to aid in the investigation, and assistance from BCI’s Crimes Against Children and Criminal Intelligence units. The clearinghouse issued an Endangered Missing Child Alert and worked with the clearinghouse in the neighboring state. A friend of the man became concerned after seeing a young girl with him at a party. She searched the Internet, learned that the girl had been reported missing and was the subject of an alert, and contacted law enforcement. The girl was recovered as a result. The chief expressed appreciation for the investigative assistance and help in coordinating resources in multiple states.
- A detective called the clearinghouse seeking assistance with a case involving a 14-year-old girl who had run away from home. The Attorney General’s Missing Persons Unit discovered that she was posting to a social website using a public library computer. The unit sent a poster about the missing girl to libraries in her community, and a librarian recognized the girl. Several days later, the girl visited the library to use a computer, and the librarian alerted authorities. The girl was recovered safely.

Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway

The Ohio Attorney General's Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG) is a secure, Internet-based crime-fighting and communication tool that provides Ohio law enforcement agencies with a single location for information on missing children. All missing child data that law enforcement enters into LEADS is automatically downloaded into the missing persons software of OHLEG, where law enforcement can use it to share and quickly disseminate important details to the public. OHLEG allows law enforcement to create missing children posters, generate advisories, and search for registered sex offenders in the area where a child may be missing.

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 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.

Lost Child Alert Technology Resource (LOCATER)

The clearinghouse staff utilizes the Internet-based LOCATER system to create and disseminate posters of missing children to other state clearinghouses, law enforcement agencies, and private businesses. During presentations, the Missing Persons Unit staff advocates the use of LOCATER to law enforcement agencies. LOCATER posters can be viewed on the clearinghouse website as printable images. Law enforcement and family members can print copies of these posters to be displayed in appropriate areas.

Other Assistance

Human trafficking

Human trafficking forces the most vulnerable members of society — including children — into modern-day slavery. More than 1,000 minors are believed to be forced to sell sex in Ohio alone. Nationally, the number is estimated at more than 100,000.

The Ohio Attorney General combats human trafficking through the work of several parts of the office, including the Human Trafficking Commission, made up of elected and appointed officials and representatives of law enforcement, social service agencies, religious groups, and schools.

In 2012, the commission released a Domestic Sex Trafficking in Ohio report, which summarized the demographic information and experiences of 328 human trafficking victims in Ohio, including 115 who entered the sex trade before the age of 18. Runaways in particular face a risk of being lured into human trafficking. Sixty-three percent of those surveyed were first runaways. In Ohio, an estimated 11,000 youth run away each year.

Those surveyed also were more likely to have suffered child abuse and neglect, faced difficulty in school, and been raped. Additionally, they were more likely to have had interactions with police, spent time in juvenile detention, and have a much older boyfriend. Despite these childhood problems, only 19 percent were ever involved with child protective services in Ohio.

The commission played a significant role in the passage of Ohio's Safe Harbor Law, enacted in 2012. The law, sponsored by Human Trafficking Commission member Rep. Teresa Fedor, toughens penalties on convicted traffickers and johns, provides help for victims, and requires law enforcement to track data and seek training.

In coordination with the Human Trafficking Commission's Law Enforcement Subcommittee, the Missing Persons Unit worked with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) to create courses on human trafficking for peace officers, other first responders, and social service employees. OPOTA offered three human trafficking courses, training 482 people in person and thousands through online instruction. Awareness of Human Trafficking was completed by 13,900 individuals online, Ohio Human Trafficking by 1,544 people, and Responding to Human Trafficking by 15,221. In addition the Missing Persons Unit provided human trafficking training to 286 officers, other first responders, and victim advocates in 2012.

The Missing Persons Unit also is a member of the Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition, which raises public awareness about human trafficking, advocates for victims, and provides resources and training for law enforcement. The Missing Persons Unit manager serves on the coalition's steering committee and chairs its Law Enforcement Subcommittee.

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 **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 youth, 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 mentally impaired or disabled individual. 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 the horror of child abduction to national attention. 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 HOPE: Help Offering Parents Empowerment assists families with missing children by offering counseling, resources, empowerment, and support from trained volunteers who have or have had missing children. For information, call **866-305-HOPE (866-305-4673)** or visit www.teamhope.org.

Related Publications*

Child Safety Game Sheet
Child Safety on the Information Highway
Eight Rules for Safety
For Camp Counselors: Guidelines on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
Guidelines for Programs to Reduce Child Victimization
Child Protection
Personal Safety for Children
Teen Safety on the Information Highway
Family Abduction: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child is Abducted
When Your Child is Missing: A Family Survival Guide
Online Victimization (A Report on the Nation's Youth)
National Runaway Safeline
AMBER Alert for the Media
For Healthcare Professionals: Guidelines on Prevention Infant Abductions
Non-Profit Service Provider's Handbook
Parental Kidnapping: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child is Abducted
Recovery and Reunification of Missing Children
Youth at Risk: Understanding Runaway and Exploited Youth

Just In Case Series for Families

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 in 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
In Case ... Parental Guidelines In Case Your Child Might Someday Be a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation

Know the Rules for Child Safety

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)

Law Enforcement Resources

AMBER Alert Investigator Checklist

Law Enforcement: Resource Information

Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management

Child Molesters Who Abduct

Child Molesters (A Behavioral Analysis)

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Publication Order Form

Child Sex Rings: Behavioral Analysis

Female Juvenile Prostitution Problem and Response

Criminal Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Laws in Eight Mid-Western States

Children Traumatized in Sex Rings

Child Abuse and Neglect

Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation

Investigator's Guide to Missing Child Cases

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



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Missing Children Clearinghouse

2012
Annual Report

How to contact us

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Missing Persons Unit
150 E. Gay St., 25th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Hotline: 800-325-5604



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