

Model Policy and Best-Practice Guide for Call-Takers When Handling Calls Pertaining to Missing and Sexually Exploited Children

**A model accepted by
the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children®**

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Best-Practice Guidelines for Handling Calls Regarding Missing and Sexually Exploited Children

Overview

Reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children may be among the most difficult, challenging, and emotionally charged cases your agency will ever experience. The attitude and approach taken when responding to reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children may determine whether the child is recovered promptly and safely or remains missing in an exploitive environment. Each stage of the case, therefore, from initial call through successful recovery, forms a critical component of a thorough child-protection response. Often the initial call forms the foundation and direction of the response to that missing and/or sexually exploited child.

All agencies must provide its members with the tools and training enabling them to act quickly and decisively when confronted with reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children. The single most important tool an agency may provide is a clearly worded policy directive containing understandable procedures and best practices for call-takers to follow as a guide whenever a call for a missing and/or sexually exploited child is received.

In an effort to develop best-practice guidelines for handling calls pertaining to missing and/or sexually exploited children, a joint steering committee on Call Center Best Practices in Cases of Missing and Sexually Exploited Children was developed. Members of the committee include the Association of Public Safety Communications Officers (APCO), National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED), National AMBER Alert Initiative (U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs and Fox Valley Technical College), National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), and National Emergency Number Association (NENA).

Specific training and awareness about the overall issue of missing and/or sexually exploited children will help each call-taker understand the critical role he or she plays in this important area of child protection. This best-practice guide is designed to enhance training. Most calls pertaining to the sexual exploitation of children will fall into the two categories of intrafamilial and extrafamilial. These categories are explained in the "Child Sexual Exploitation" on page 21. In addition call-takers should be aware they may encounter several types of missing-child cases, each with their own unique response requirements. They include

- A. **Nonfamily Abduction** involves a child who has been wrongfully taken by a nonfamily perpetrator through the use of physical force, persuasion, or threat of bodily harm.

- B. **Family Abduction** occurs when, in violation of a custody order, a 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. This is also referred to as parental kidnapping and custodial interference.
- C. The **Runaway** child, often a teenager, leaves home voluntarily for a variety of reasons. This would include any child 17 years of age or younger.
- D. The **Throwaway** is a child whose caretaker makes no effort to recover the child after running away, who has been abandoned or deserted, or who has been asked to leave his or her home and not allowed to return. While not necessarily reported to authorities as missing, children in this category frequently come to the attention of law enforcement.
- E. The **Lost, Injured, or Otherwise Missing** child is defined as a child who has disappeared under unknown circumstances. The incident may range from the child wandering off and becoming lost to the child being abducted, but nobody witnessed the act. These circumstances sometimes involve “foul play,” where those reporting the incident are attempting to cover up a crime involving the child.

It should be noted not all missing-child incidents occurring each year in this country result in a direct law-enforcement response. Many incidents are resolved by parents/guardians, relatives, friends, or neighbors while others are resolved before a report is able to be made such as the child escapes or returns home. This is a clear indication that law enforcement is usually called upon to handle the most serious reports involving missing or sexually exploited children – the difficult cases requiring decisive action and a carefully planned response.

When developing best practices or policy and procedures regarding cases involving missing or sexually exploited children it is essential that each response, regardless of what the initial indicators may be, should be governed by an assumption that the child is in danger until significant facts to the contrary are confirmed. Inflexible, unqualified assumptions may place a child in danger, therefore immediate action is warranted. Immediate response will be more likely to accumulate evidence or information that might otherwise be lost during the critical, early stages of an investigation.

Using This Guide

This Model Policy and guide has been designed to serve as a general reference specifically for call-takers. It attempts to present the missing and/or sexually exploited child response process in a logical progression from the initial call through the first response.

From the basic outline presented in this model, call-takers and administrators are encouraged to add topics unique to their agency or region of the country and incorporate actions mandated by federal, state, or local statutes. Finally this guide should be used in concert with the NCMEC publication titled *Missing and Abducted Children: A Law-Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management*.

That publication contains chapters covering each type of missing-child case and provides individual checklists offering step-by-step recommendations for successful case investigation. A free copy of this publication is available by calling 1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678) or visiting www.missingkids.com.

Pre-Incident Planning and Resource Development

Along with this policy and guide, pre-incident planning and resource development are equally important to the formation of an effective response to reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children. When these factors are given equal emphasis, a truly comprehensive response plan will result.

When any agency responds to the report of a missing and/or sexually exploited child without a plan critical time is lost and opportunities are wasted. By adopting planned strategies your agency will be able to exercise more control over events, react more effectively and predictably to unexpected occurrences, and enhance the likelihood of swift and successful case resolution. In each case, considerations should be given to contact your missing-children clearinghouse.

Comments or questions regarding this Model Policy and guide are welcomed via e-mail at 911@ncmec.org.

Model Policy for Call-Takers Regarding Reports of Missing and Sexually Exploited Children

Directive Type	Effective Date	Directive Number
Subject	Call Center Response to Reports of Missing and Sexually Exploited Children	Issuing Authority
Reference	Amends/Rescinds	
Distribution	Reevaluation Date	No. Pages

I. Policy Purpose

Describe the objective(s) of this policy.

Whenever a child is believed to be in danger individuals are instructed to call 911. Recognizing the importance of that initial call, the purpose of this policy is to establish best-practice guidelines and responsibilities regarding this agency’s response to reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children

II. Policy Statement

Describe the Agency’s intent or philosophy regarding this policy.

- A.** It shall be the policy of this Agency to take immediate and necessary action for all reports of missing and/or sexually exploited children. Additionally this Agency holds that every child reported as missing and/or sexually exploited will be considered **“at risk”** until significant information to the contrary is confirmed.

- B.** Jurisdictional conflicts are to be avoided when a child is reported missing and/or sexually exploited. If a missing or sexually exploited child either resides in, or was last seen in this jurisdiction, this Agency will immediately initiate the required reporting process. If a child resides in this jurisdiction and was last seen in another jurisdiction but the law-enforcement agency covering that jurisdiction chooses not to take a missing-child report, this agency will assume reporting and investigative responsibility to include working closely with law enforcement whose jurisdiction the child was last seen.

- C. Questions concerning parental custody occasionally arise in relation to missing-child reports. It shall be the policy of this agency to accept the report of a missing child even if custody has not been formally established. Reporting parties shall be encouraged to obtain legal custody as soon as possible; however, since the safety of the missing-child(ren) is paramount, members of this agency will open a case when it may be shown the child has been removed, without explanation, from his or her usual place of residence.

III. Procedures

A. Basic Assumptions

1. The call-taker will gather enough information to determine an appropriate response consistent with agency policy pertaining to the missing and/or sexually exploited child incident.
2. The focus of the call-taker should **not** be whether or not the case will qualify for an AMBER Alert. The AMBER Alert Program does not supersede nor in any way replace the core functions of law enforcement operational and investigative response.
3. The call-taker is trained and qualified to recognize basic call- handling and intake policies within his or her agency.

B. Guiding Principles and Values

1. Professionalism
2. Compassion
3. Respect
4. Patience
5. Commitment to Accuracy and Detail
6. Commitment to follow-through and accountability (Quality Assurance)

C. Goals for Initial Intake

1. Obtain and verify incident location along with callback and contact information.
2. Maintain control of the call.
3. Communicate the ability to **help** the caller.
4. Methodically and strategically obtain information through systematic inquiry to be captured in the agency's intake format.
5. Recognize the potential urgency of the missing-child incident and immediately begin the proper notifications consistent with agency policy.
6. Perform all information entries and disseminations, both initial and update. This includes mandatory entry of information about the missing child into the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) National Crime Information Center's (NCIC) databases accurately, including vehicle if known.

D. Instructions

1. The following protocol is intended as a solid framework for call intake but should not in any manner rescind or override agency procedures for the timing of broadcasts and messaging.

2. All information should be simultaneously entered, as it is obtained by the telecommunicator, into an electronic format when available, that will feed/populate any directed messages which will be sent to law enforcement in conjunction with on-air broadcasts.
3. Preferably, when an AMBER Alert request for activation intake form is used, this initial entry should be set-up to automatically populate that format as well to avoid double entry.
4. The checklist noted below shall be used to help ensure the appropriate information is obtained. The call-taker should feel free to obtain additional information as needed.

IV. First Response Call Intake Checklist

A. Location

1. Request exact location of the incident such as structure addresses, street names, intersections, directional identifiers, and mile posts along with callback information.
2. If specifics are not known request landmarks or estimated proximity to landmarks.
3. Tell caller and any witnesses to remain at current location, unless determined unsafe, until law enforcement arrives. Obtain names and locations of the caller and any additional witnesses.

B. What is the Emergency?

1. Ascertain exactly what happened.
2. Determine if there are any injuries.
3. Ask if weapons were involved.
4. If reported as an abduction continue to next page.
5. If reported as lost, injured, or otherwise missing go to page 11.
6. If reported as a runaway go to page 14.
7. If reported as child sexual exploitation go to page 20.

Abductions

Definition

- **Nonfamily Abduction** involves a child who has been wrongfully taken by a nonfamily perpetrator through the use of physical force, persuasion, or threat of bodily harm.
- **Family Abduction** occurs when, in violation of a custody order, a 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. This is also referred to as parental kidnapping and custodial interference.

A. Time Frames

1. When did this happen? **Determine if in progress or not.**
2. Where was the child last seen?
3. Who was the child last seen with?
4. Who last saw the child?
5. Descriptions and names, if known, of child and suspect.
6. Vehicle descriptions.
7. Direction of travel.
8. Relationships between child, suspect, and caller.
9. **If in progress, broadcast available information to patrols immediately!**
10. **Maintain telephone contact with caller until law enforcement arrives at the scene.**

B. Suspect

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion
11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing

- Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
13. Is the child familiar with the suspect?
 - If a relative, what relation?
 - Who allegedly has custody? Any custody disputes?
 14. Weapons involved/possessed?
 15. History of violence or mental illness?
 16. Does the suspect have a cellular telephone? **(DO NOT have anyone try to call the cellular telephone. This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**
 17. Assist responding law enforcement with as thorough background information as soon as possible.
 - Any and all prior entries about suspect, child, family, location, or proximity of incident.
 - Any suspicious activity in the area? Any history of attempted abductions in the area?
 - This should include any prior activity with your agency, surrounding agencies, Internet searches, and/or National Sex Offender Public Registry.
 - Consider contacting the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) to register the case and inquire about known sex offenders in the area, as well as any history of attempted abductions in the area.

C. Child

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion

11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing
 - Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
13. Was the child with anyone such as an adult, child, or pets?
14. Was anyone injured?
15. Medications being taken, medical conditions, mental or physical disabilities?
16. Does the child have a cellular telephone? **(DO NOT have anyone try to call the cellular telephone. This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**

D. Vehicle

1. **C.Y.M.B.A.L.S.**
 - Color
 - Year
 - Make
 - Model
 - Body
 - Additional descriptors such as rust, dents, other damage, or stickers
 - License Plate
 - If available, initiate plate/tag inquiry
 - State
2. Ascertain any upgraded onboard technology such as OnStar[®], LoJack[®], or any on-board navigation systems.

Lost, Injured, or Otherwise Missing (LIMs)

Definition

The **Lost, Injured, or Otherwise Missing** child is defined as a child who has disappeared under unknown circumstances. The incident may range from the child wandering off and becoming lost to the child being abducted, but nobody witnessed the act. These circumstances sometimes involve “foul play,” where those reporting the incident are attempting to cover up a crime involving the child.

A. Time Frames

1. When and where was the child last seen?
 - Any special regional considerations such as wildlife, weather, or wilderness?
2. Who was the child last seen with?
3. Who last saw the child?
 - Is the answer to Number 2 and 3 the same?
 - Help ensure information is conveyed to investigative personnel.
 - Complete background on this person for investigative personnel.
4. Was the child walking or using an alternate mode of travel such as a bicycle, skateboard, or vehicle?
5. Direction of travel?
6. Any suspicious circumstances?
7. What steps have been taken to locate this child?
8. Has this ever happened before?
9. What is the caller’s relationship with the child?

B. Child

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion
11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing

- Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
- 13. Was the child with anyone such as an adult, child, or pets?
- 14. Was anyone injured?
- 15. Medications being taken, medical conditions, mental or physical disabilities?
- 16. Does the child have a cellular telephone? **(DO NOT have anyone try to call the cellular telephone. This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**

C. Companion or Suspect

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion
11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing
 - Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
13. Is the child familiar with this person?
 - If a relative, what relation?
 - Who allegedly has custody? Any custody disputes?

14. Weapons involved/possessed?
15. History of violence or mental illness?
16. Does this person have a cellular telephone? **(DO NOT have anyone try to call the cellular telephone. This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**
17. Assist responding law enforcement with as thorough background information as soon as possible.
 - Any and all prior entries about suspect, child, family, location, or proximity of incident.
 - Any suspicious activity in the area? Any history of attempted abductions in the area?
 - This should include any prior activity with your agency, surrounding agencies, Internet searches, and/or National Sex Offender Public Registry.
 - Consider contacting the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) to register the case and inquire about known sex offenders in the area, as well as any history of attempted abductions in the area.

D. Vehicle

1. **C.Y.M.B.A.L.S.**
 - Color
 - Year
 - Make
 - Model
 - Body
 - Additional descriptors such as rust, dents, other damage, or stickers
 - License Plate
 - If available, initiate plate/tag inquiry
 - State
2. Ascertain any upgraded onboard technology such as OnStar, LoJack, or any on-board navigation systems.

Runaway or Throwaway

Definition

The **Runaway** child, often a teenager, leaves home voluntarily for a variety of reasons. This would include any child 17 years of age or younger.

The **Throwaway** is a child whose caretaker makes no effort to recover the child after running away, who has been abandoned or deserted, or who has been asked to leave his or her home and not allowed to return. While not necessarily reported to authorities as missing, children in this category frequently come to the attention of law enforcement.

A. Time Frames

1. When and where was the child last seen?
 - Any special regional considerations such as wildlife, weather, or wilderness?
2. Who was the child last seen with?
3. Who last saw the child?
4. Was the child walking or using an alternate mode of travel such as a bicycle, skateboard, or vehicle?
5. Direction of travel?
6. Any suspicious circumstances?
7. What steps have been taken to locate this child?
 - School – (School Resource Officer?)
 - After-school activities, sports?
8. Has this ever happened before?
9. What is the caller's relationship with the child?
10. Any ideas or suspicions about where the child may have gone?
11. Any notes, letters, or threats pertaining to this incident?

B. Child

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion

11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing
 - Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
13. Was the child with anyone such as an adult, child, or pets?
14. Was anyone injured?
15. Medications being taken, medical conditions, mental or physical disabilities?
16. Does the child have a cellular telephone? **(Has anyone tried to call the cellular telephone? This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**

C. Companion or Suspect

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Age/DOB
5. Primary language
 - Proficiency in English?
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair
9. Eyes
10. Complexion
11. Physical attributes such as marks, scars, tattoos, or limp
12. Clothing
 - Head to Foot, Outer to Inner
 - Hat/Head
 - Coat
 - Shirt
 - Pants/Shorts
 - Shoes
 - Socks
 - Any unique identifiers such as color, logo, or wording?
13. Is the child familiar with this person?

- If a relative, what relation?
 - Who allegedly has custody? Any custody disputes?
14. Weapons involved/possessed?
 15. History of violence or mental illness?
 16. Does this person have a cellular telephone? **(DO NOT have anyone try to call the cellular telephone. This information needs to be immediately forwarded for investigative follow-up.)**
 17. Consider contacting the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) to register the case.
 18. Assist responding law enforcement with as thorough background information such as Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System entries or card files as soon as possible.

D. Vehicle

1. **C.Y.M.B.A.L.S.**
 - Color
 - Year
 - Make
 - Model
 - Body
 - Additional descriptors such as rust, dents, other damage, or stickers
 - License Plate
 - If available, initiate plate/tag inquiry
 - State
2. Ascertain any upgraded onboard technology such as OnStar, LoJack, or any on-board navigation systems.

Additional Considerations

- A.** Most departments cannot “do it all” when faced with an emergency response to the abduction of a child. Child Abduction Response Plans, Action plans, interagency agreements, and Incident Command Management Programs should be developed so law enforcement at the scene will have access to a well-established and reliable framework of resources and assistance. Available resources, such as the ones noted below, must be researched **before** the incident, not during.
1. CAD searches for any information regarding that area such as lewdness, attempted abductions, and suspicious persons. Alert responding appropriate law enforcement of results.
 2. Consider requests for incident command and mutual aid.
 3. Consider establishing tactical perimeter posts if no immediate field command exists.
 4. Consider local, county, regional, and statewide broadcast as appropriate.
 5. Consider establishing a dedicated frequency and dispatcher for the incident.
 6. Initiate immediate leads/case-management system.
 - Simple Leads Management System may be obtained from NCMEC free-of- charge by contacting NCMEC’s Case Management Support at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).
 7. Coordinate resource deployment for field units such as air support and search dogs including the National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).
 8. Request staging area from Incident Commander to be conveyed to responding law enforcement.
 9. If photograph is obtained from responding law enforcement consider creating posters.
 - NCMEC has circulated millions of photographs of missing children recovering 1 in 6 children as a direct result of being featured in NCMEC’s photo-distribution program.
 - LOCATER™ is a free, Web-based, poster-creation and distribution program provided by NCMEC. For more information regarding LOCATER visit www.locaterposters.org.
- B.** Resources which should be used, and for which contact information should be readily available and organized within your communications center should include, but not be limited to
1. Federal law-enforcement agencies such as the FBI and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
 2. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE LOST (1-800-843-5678)

- Resource publications may be found at www.missingkids.com
- 3. Sex-offender tracking/mapping, attempted-abduction tracking/mapping, and public-record database searches may be obtained by contacting NCMEC's Case Analysis and Support Division at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)
- 4. CART Teams (Child Abduction Response Teams)
- 5. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System
- 6. Law Enforcement Terminal Data System
- 7. National Crime Information Center Databases
- 8. National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System
- 9. Leads/Tips management system/software
 - Available free-of-charge from NCMEC
- 10. Mobile Data Terminals for communications with field personnel and law enforcement
- 11. Public Information Officer(s)
- 12. Search and Rescue teams
- 13. K-9 teams
- 14. Aviation
 - FLIRS (Forward Looking Infrared System)
- 15. Global Positioning Systems
- 16. Night vision equipment
- 17. Scanning equipment for photographs and documents
- 18. Digital camera equipment
- 19. Mobile incident command post vehicle
- 20. Telephone bank resources/infrastructure
- 21. Logging recording system
- 22. Instant call capture and retrieval system (ANI)
- 23. Additional staffing
- 24. Consider logistics

C. If your agency serves as the control point for development and dissemination of messaging and broadcasts directly related to the issuance of the AMBER Alert, additional significant procedures will apply.

1. **Complete Broadcast and Messaging Follow-Up**
 - a) Complete all documentation as defined by agency policy and technology.
 - b) Help ensure all agency and state (and/or regional) personnel involved in the AMBER Alert Approval and Activation Process have been notified and supplied with all appropriate information.
 - c) Establish/activate dedicated communication line for incident updates from law-enforcement personnel.
 - As updates are received make all appropriate broadcasts/re-broadcasts.
 - As updates are received develop and disseminate all appropriate electronic messaging.

2. **Management of Leads/Tips**
 - a) Establish workload and lines of responsibility for taking calls regarding the abduction. If necessary call in additional staff members and supervision.
 - b) Capture leads/tips in order to effectively present them to investigative staff members and supervisors for determination of validity and subsequent update broadcasts. Consider using leads/case-management software to accomplish this.
3. **If AMBER Alert is Activated**
 - a) Update state, law-enforcement telecommunications system and NCIC record with the “AA” flag to indicate activation of an AMBER Alert.
 - b) Help ensure contact with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) is made. When the proper flags, “CA” and “AA” are used in NCIC, NCMEC will contact your agency. Help ensure contact is properly routed if your communications center is not responsible for interaction with NCMEC. The FBI is automatically notified as well.
 - c) NCMEC may be reached at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).
4. **When AMBER Alert is Cancelled**
 - a) Please note in an effort to protect the integrity of the AMBER Alert Program, responsible cancellation without delay is just as important. If the public is searching for children who have already been recovered confidence in this extremely valuable program will be lost.
 - b) Please be sure to alert everyone about the cancellation using the methods employed to issue the alert.

Child Sexual Exploitation

A CyberTipline® report at the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) is a report regarding the sexual exploitation of a child. For more information regarding the CyberTipline visit www.cybertipline.com.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE CYBERTIPLINE

These definitions may vary from your state's definitions.

Possession, Manufacture, and Distribution of Child Pornography

Child pornography has been defined under federal statute as a visual depiction of a minor (child younger than 18) engaged in sexually explicit conduct (18 U.S.C. 2256).

Online Enticement of Children for Sexual Acts

Use of the Internet to entice, invite, or persuade a child to meet for sexual acts, or to help arrange such a meeting, is a serious offense (18 U.S.C. 2425).

Prostitution of Children

Prostitution is generally defined as performing, offering, or agreeing to perform a sexual act for any money, property, token, object, article, or anything of value (18 U.S.C. 2431, 2423(a)).

Sex Tourism Involving Children

It is against the law for any United States citizen to travel abroad to engage in sexual activity with any child under the age of 18 (18 U.S.C. 2423(b)). Individuals who partake in this illegal activity are subject to prosecution in the United States even if they committed the crime on foreign soil.

Child Sexual Molestation (not in the family)

Child sexual exploitation (not in the family), also known as extrafamilial child sexual abuse, includes all sexual exploitation of a child by someone other than a family member.

Unsolicited Obscene Material Sent to a Child

It is an unfortunate reality of the Internet that children will encounter obscene material online. Many times this material is attached as an image(s) or hyperlink(s) sent to a child in an unsolicited e-mail or "spam."

Misleading Domain Name

It is a federal offense to use a misleading domain name on the Internet with the intent to deceive a minor into viewing material that is harmful to minors, regardless of whether the material meets the legal definition of obscenity (18 U.S.C. 2252B). Please report the use of a misleading domain name that has directed a child to a website containing harmful materials to children.

Extrafamilial Versus Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse/Exploitation

Extrafamilial sexual exploitation involves a nonfamily member. Intrafamilial sexual exploitation is sexual abuse by a family member. A family member is defined as a person who is related by blood or marriage. Traditional cases of intrafamilial sexual abuse are not covered by NCMEC; however, non-traditional incest cases are covered, as well as all extrafamilial cases.

Examples of non-traditional incest cases may include the offender

- Abusing or exploiting other children in addition to his or her own children
- Taking pictures of his or her own children or others in sexual situations
- Prostituting his or her child

Most law-enforcement agencies are mandated by law to notify their child-protective-services agency and/or prosecutor's office (district attorney's office) of any intrafamilial abuse. This protocol needs to be established **before** a call is received. When a traditional incest case by a family member is encountered other organizations may be considered, but should not be limited to include

Childhelp USA

15757 North 78th Street
Scottsdale, Arizona 85260-7629
1-800-4-A-Child (422-4453)
480-922-8212/Fax: 480-922-7061
Website: www.childhelpusa.org

Child Welfare League of America, Inc.

2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 250
Arlington, Virginia 22202-4815
703-412-2400/Fax: 703-412-2401
Website: www.cwla.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway

Child Welfare Information Gateway
Children's Bureau/ACYF
1250 Maryland Avenue, Southwest, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20024
1-800-394-3366
703-385-7565/Fax: 703-385-3206
Website: www.childwelfare.gov

Questions for the Reporting Person (RP) Regarding Child Pornography

Federal Definition of Child Pornography

The Child Protection Act of 1984 (18 U.S.C. 2251-2255) defines anyone younger than the age of 18 as a child. Therefore, a visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct constitutes child pornography. Possessing, manufacturing, and distributing child pornography is a federal violation. In addition all states have similar legislation. Please review the state statutes in your jurisdiction.

Note: Nude images of children may constitute child pornography.

The suggestions noted below are designed to help the call-taker obtain critical information that may no longer exist once investigative personnel are called.

Where Did the RP View the Child Pornography?

Website

1. What is the specific Uniform Resource Locator (URL) (Web address)?
2. When did the RP access the site?
3. Please describe the images including the type of activity and estimated age of the child.
4. Did the RP find an e-mail address or any other identifying information for the person who created this site?
5. Does this site require a username and password?

Newsgroup

1. What was the exact name of the newsgroup?
2. What is the e-mail address of the individual who posted the child-pornography images? Get the complete information about the e-mail address and nickname of the posting person.
3. How many postings did this individual make?
4. Please describe the images viewed including the type of activity and estimated age of the child.
5. What time and date were these postings made?

E-Mail

1. What is the e-mail address of the individual who sent the child pornography?
2. How many images were sent?
3. What time and date was/were the e-mail(s) sent to the RP?
4. Please describe the images including the type of activity and estimated age of child.

5. Was this an unsolicited e-mail or did the RP have prior communications with this individual?
6. Did the RP “save” any of the e-mails and/or images?

Chatroom

1. What is the name of the chatroom, and where is it located such as AOL, Inc.[®], or Yahoo![®]
2. What was the suspect’s screenname or e-mail address?
3. How many child-pornography images were viewed or traded?
4. Please describe the images including the type of activity and estimated age of the child.
5. What was the exact time and date of this incident?
6. Did you write down any of the related chat or images?

Internet Relay Chat (IRC)

1. What was the exact name of the channel on which the network is located such as DALnet, Eris Free network or EFnet, or Undernet?
2. What was the offender’s nickname/handle?
3. Do you know the specific Internet Protocol (IP) address the suspect was using?
4. How many child-pornography images were posted or traded by this suspect?
5. Please describe the images including the type of activity and estimated age of the child.
6. What was the exact time and date of this incident?
7. Did you write down any of the related chat or images?

“I Seek You”: A Type of Instant Messenger Program (ICQ)

1. What was the offender’s ICQ number and e-mail address?
2. How many child-pornography images did this individual send?
3. Please describe the images including the type of activity and estimated age of the child.
4. Did you write down any of the related chat or images?

For All Reports of Child Pornography

Did You Download the Child-Pornography Images?

Did you specifically save these images onto a particular drive on your computer? If so, where?

Questions for the RP Regarding Child Sexual Molestation

Questions Regarding the Incident

1. How was the child victimized?
2. When and where did the victimization occur?
3. To whom did the child first disclose the victimization?
4. When did the child disclose?

Questions Regarding the Suspect

1. What is the relationship of the suspect to the child?
2. What is the relationship between the RP and the suspect?
3. Does the suspect still have access to the child victim?
4. Does the suspect have access to other children?

Critical Questions to Ask

1. Is there any contact information?
2. Has the child been examined medically?

Questions for the RP Regarding Child Victims of Prostitution

If the Child Is Currently Missing

If the RP has information about a suspect, such as a pimp or john, or concrete information about the child victim

1. How does the child know the suspect?
2. How long has the child known the suspect?
3. Is it believed the suspect took the child over state boundaries?
4. Has the child changed his or her circle of friends recently? If so, has the RP provided the names of those people?
5. Where is the child being victimized?
6. If that is not known, are there any local hangouts believed to be fronts for prostitution?

If the Child is Not Currently Missing

Any information about child victims of prostitution should be entered into the CyberTipline report.

1. Why does the RP believe the child is a victim of prostitution?
2. How do they know this information?
3. Has the child been victimized in this way in the past?
4. If there is a suspect, how does the child know the suspect and for what length of time have they been associating?
5. Are there any additional children who may be currently victimized in this way? If so, has the RP provided the names of those people?
6. Where is the child being victimized? If that is not known, are there any local hangouts believed to be fronts for prostitution?

Questions for the RP Regarding Online Enticement of Children for Sexual Acts

If the Case Involves a Child and Suspect

1. What is the suspect's e-mail address?
2. What is the child's e-mail address?
3. How long have they been communicating on the Internet?
4. What forum(s) on the Internet were they using to communicate?
5. Have their conversations been sexually explicit and/or have they discussed the possibility of the child or suspect traveling to meet in person?
6. Has the child received any images from the suspect?
 - Are they pictures of the suspect?
 - Are they pornographic in nature?
7. Does the RP have any logged conversations or saved e-mails?
8. Have the child and suspect communicated over the telephone?
9. Has the suspect or child sent anything to one another through the U.S. Postal Service or other delivery services?
10. Does the RP believe the child will run away or meet the suspect in person?

If the Case Exclusively Involves a Known Suspect

1. Why is the RP reporting the suspect?
2. What is the suspect's e-mail address, screenname, or handle?
3. What was the time and date of the incident?
4. What Internet forum(s) was the suspect using?
5. Was the suspect being sexually explicit in his or her communications?
6. Does the RP have any logged conversations or saved e-mails?

If the Case Exclusively Involves a Child

1. How was the child victimized?
2. What is the child's e-mail address, screenname, or handle?
3. What was the time and date of the incident?
4. What Internet forum was the child using?

Internet-Related Intakes

If the Child May Be With an Adult Internet Companion

1. What is the suspect's e-mail address?
2. What is the child's e-mail address?
3. How long have they been communicating on the Internet?
4. What forum(s) on the Internet were they using to communicate?
5. Have their conversations been sexually explicit and/or have they discussed the possibility of the child or suspect traveling to meet in person?
6. Has the child received any images from the suspect?
 - Are they pictures of the suspect?
 - Are they pornographic in nature?
7. Does the RP have any logged conversations or saved e-mails?
8. Have the child and suspect communicated over the telephone?
9. Have the suspect or child sent anything to one another through the U.S. Postal Service or other delivery services?

Additional Information

Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Regional Task Forces

The U.S. Department of Justice currently provides funding for 46 ICAC regional Task Force agencies. They serve as an excellent resource for assistance when investigating Internet-related crimes committed against children. Visit www.icactraining.org to locate the Task Force nearest to your agency.

Electronic Service Providers

Electronic Service Providers (ESP) are required to report to the CyberTipline in accordance with Title 42 U.S.C. Whomever provides an electronic communication service or a remote computing service to the public through a facility or means of interstate or foreign commerce is required to report. After Title 42 U.S.C. 13032 was passed in 1999, NCMEC created a secure CyberTipline specifically for ESPs. This secure site requires the ESP to register in order to obtain a username and password. Once registered an ESP may begin to report to the secure CyberTipline. Only registered ESPs

have the ability to upload images of possible child pornography to the report. Only registered ESPs receive a receipt for complying with Title 42 U.S.C. 13032 when they submit a report.

Additional Resources

For a current glossary of Internet terms visit www.netlingo.com. See the list of questions, beginning on page 22, to ask when taking a CyberTipline report.

Child Victims of Prostitution

Children of the Night

Children of the Night (COTN) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1979 by Dr. Lois Lee to rescue America's children from prostitution. COTN is committed to assisting children between the ages of 11 and 17 who are forced to prostitute on the streets and helping them learn to function in mainstream society.

14530 Sylvan Street
Van Nuys, California 91411-2324
1-800-551-1300
818-908-4474/Fax: 818-908-1468
Website: www.childrenofthenight.org

The Paul and Lisa Program, Inc.

Paul and Lisa's mission is to address the growing crisis of children, youth, and young adults who are at risk for sexual exploitation including juvenile prostitution and pornography. The organization provides crisis counseling for families and operates a street-outreach program in Connecticut to rescue children from prostitution and pornography.

PO Box 348
Westbrook, Connecticut 06498-0348
860-767-7660/Fax: 860-767-3122
Website: www.paulandlisa.org

Human Trafficking

Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline

The Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline was established to help law-enforcement officers, healthcare practitioners, and social-service providers

- 1) Determine if they have encountered victims of human trafficking
- 2) Identify local resources available in their community to help victims
- 3) Help coordinate with local social-service organizations to help protect and serve victims to begin the process of restoring their lives

The hotline is also prepared to take calls directly from victims. The hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with multiple language capability. The hotline is operated by Covenant House, the nation's largest privately funded international-child- welfare agency. Their well-trained and experienced staff members from the NINELINE have 16 years of experience in the field of telephone crisis intervention and information/referral.

370 L'Enfant Promenade, Southwest
Washington, DC 20447
1-888-373-7888
Website: www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking

Incest

Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA)

Survivors of Incest Anonymous is a 12-step, self-help recovery program for adult survivors of child sexual abuse. SIA provides literature and support groups throughout the United States and in 12 foreign countries.

World Service Office
PO Box 190
Benson, Maryland 21018-0190
410-893-3322
Website: www.siaawso.org

Sex-Offender Registries

Links to individual, state, sex-offender registries may be found on the FBI's website at www.fbi.gov. From the home page click on the link to "Sex Offender Registry" under the heading titled "Be Crime Smart." Then click on the link to "State Sex Offender Registry Websites." This will bring you to an alphabetical listing of the state registries.

STOP IT NOW![®]

STOP IT NOW is a public-education and research resource founded on the principle that adults, not children, have the responsibility of stopping sexual abuse. They work to help sexual offenders stop and seek help. The toll-free helpline is for anyone who is sexually abusing a child or knows about a child who is being sexually abused. The hotline operates Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. EST.

351 Pleasant Street, Suite B-319
Northampton, Massachusetts 01060
1-888-PREVENT (1-888-773-8368)
413-587-3500/Fax: 413-587-3505
Website: www.stopitnow.com

What Can NCMEC Do For You?¹

EXPLOITED CHILD SERVICES

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILD VICTIMS

NCMEC's Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP) serves two main functions. First, the CVIP Analysts work to assist law enforcement in identifying unknown child victims featured in pornographic images using Image Analysis. Image Analysis is the process of documenting "clues" within the images that may reveal the location of the child victim(s) **and/or** information about where the crime was committed. Once a possible location is identified, law enforcement is contacted and a localized search for the child victim/perpetrator is launched. Second, CVIP Analysts help ensure convictions for the possession, production, and distribution of these illegal images are obtained using NCMEC's Child Recognition & Identification System (CRIS). CRIS automatically recognizes which images contain identified child victims and generates a report detailing information about the law-enforcement agency handling that case and providing age verification for each of the identified child victims. CVIP has developed an evidence guide, containing text descriptions, identifiers, and a list of partial filenames for child-pornography series featuring identified victims.

ONLINE REPORTING OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The CyberTipline, at www.cybertipline.com, allows concerned individuals and Electronic Service Providers to report information online regarding the possession, manufacture, and distribution of child pornography; online enticement of children for sexual acts; child victims of prostitution; sex tourism involving child victims; extrafamilial molestation of children; unsolicited obscene material sent to children; and misleading domain names. The CyberTipline also maintains a contact list for many major Electronic Service Providers in the United States.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

NCMEC's Exploited Child Division (ECD) serves as a resource center for the public, families, law enforcement, and others regarding issues of sexual exploitation of children. ECD Analysts process CyberTipline reports; disseminate leads; and provide technical assistance to federal, state, local, and international law-enforcement agencies investigating cases involving the sexual exploitation of children. In addition ECD hosts NetSmartz411TM, a free resource in which anyone online is able to access an extensive library to search for information related to online safety and ask specific questions of NCMEC experts.

¹ The information in this section is adapted from and reprinted with permission from *Nationwide support services for families and professionals in the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of abducted, endangered, and sexually exploited children*. Alexandria, Virginia: National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2001 and 2007. All rights reserved.

MISSING CHILDREN SERVICES

CALLS FOR SERVICE REGARDING MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

NCMEC's Call Center receives toll-free calls from many countries throughout the world via a 24-hour, toll-free Hotline at **1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)**; handles lead/sighting information received from the public via the toll-free Hotline and "voice-over" calls received through NCMEC's website; provides assistance to professionals and families in the search for missing children and attempt to assist sexually exploited children; handles requests from families with travel-reunification needs; assists hearing-impaired callers and coordinates access to communicate with callers in 140 different languages; provides direct after-hours assistance to law enforcement; and provides safety information to help prevent the abduction and sexual exploitation of children. The NCMEC Call Center also manages the Child Pornography Tipline[®] on behalf of ICE, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the FBI.

ASSISTANCE IN INTERNATIONAL MISSING-CHILDREN CASES

NCMEC's International Missing Children's Division assists families, law enforcement, attorneys, and others in locating, recovering, and reunifying children who are the victims of international, family abduction. This division also provides technical assistance regarding prevention, civil and criminal legal remedies for abduction, and family reunification. The legal and factual complexities of international, family-abduction cases present a series of investigative and legal hurdles requiring international family law expertise. NCMEC has recruited a network of *pro-bono* attorneys who volunteer their time to represent left-behind parents of children wrongfully removed from or retained in the United States.

ASSISTANCE IN NATIONAL MISSING-CHILDREN CASES

Staff members within the National Missing Children's Division work with families of missing and abducted children and the investigating law-enforcement agencies to provide technical assistance and all available search resources. Staff members also maintain up-to-date case information and regular contact with families and investigative agencies.

Many services are provided within the National Missing Children's Division. They include those listed below.

! Forensic Assistance

- NCMEC provides support and resources to the "cold" cases of long-term missing children and cases of unidentified human remains to victims believed to be children or young adults through the Forensic Assistance Unit. This Unit also provides strategies for and assistance to law enforcement and medical examiners/coroners in cases of child homicides and identification.
- Through this Unit NCMEC also provides computerized age progression of the photographs of long-term missing children, reconstruction of facial images from morgue photographs of unidentified deceased juveniles so posters may be made to assist in the child's identification, computer assistance in creating

artist composites, assistance in identifying children whose images are found in confiscated pornography, and training in imaging applications and techniques.

;
On-Site Assistance to Law-Enforcement Agencies

- Patterned after the National Transportation Safety Board's system for sending specialists to the site of serious transportation incidents, **Team Adam** sends experienced, investigative Consultants to the site of serious child abductions and cases of child sexual exploitation. These "rapid-response" Consultants, who work in full cooperation with federal, state, and local law-enforcement agencies, advise and assist local investigators, provide access to NCMEC's extensive resources, and assist the victim's family and media as appropriate.
- Project ALERT (**A**merica's **L**aw **E**nforcement **R**etiree **T**eam) is composed of skilled, retired, law-enforcement officers who travel at the request of a law-enforcement agency to provide free, on-site assistance to hard-pressed local law enforcement in difficult missing- or exploited-child cases.

;
Photo Distribution

- The **Lost Child Alert Technology Resource (LOCATER™)** Program was created to enhance law enforcement's ability to recover missing children by providing the tools and technology necessary to rapidly disseminate missing-child images and information. LOCATER 6.8 is an advanced, Web-based, poster-creation and dissemination program offered exclusively to law-enforcement agencies at no cost allowing immediate creation of professional-looking posters and dissemination locally, statewide, or across the nation.
- Through a network of more than 300 active private-sector partners, millions of photographs of missing children have been disseminated. NCMEC maintains an up-to-date database of missing-children posters online; coordinates national media exposure of missing-children cases through its partnership with major television networks, leading nationwide publications, and major corporations; and coordinates features such as "broadcast" fax and targeted poster distribution to quickly disseminate vital information regarding missing and abducted children to key locations throughout the nation.

CASE ANALYSIS

CASE SUPPORT AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Analysts assigned to the Case Analysis Unit (CAU) provide research and analytical support to NCMEC Case Managers working both domestic and international, missing-child cases. One of the primary responsibilities of the CAU is to assess new leads regarding missing-child cases and add value to the information by providing the most current and relevant information possible to law enforcement. By using the NCMEC database and external, public-data sources, Analysts track leads, identify patterns among cases, and help coordinate investigations by linking cases together.

ATTEMPTED ABDUCTION AND SEX OFFENDER TRACKING

NCMEC's Special Analysis Unit (SAU) is comprised of three analyst teams including Sex Offender Tracking, Attempted Abductions, and Research. The main duty of NCMEC's Sex Offender Tracking Team (SOTT) is to serve as the information clearinghouse for any law-enforcement agency regarding noncompliant,

absconded sex-offender issues. SOTT will conduct searches to assist law-enforcement agencies and state registries in their investigations of noncompliant, absconded sex offenders and provide them with lead packages to assist in the location and apprehension of these fugitives. The SAU also consists of Attempted Abduction Analysts who verify attempted abductions reported in the media and to NCMEC, analyze the data received for trends and patterns among the incidents, and prepare and disseminate special bulletins when necessary to alert NCMEC staff members and law enforcement of any emerging abduction patterns. The Attempted Abductions team also compiles a weekly summary, which is made available to law-enforcement agencies nationwide, in hopes of generating leads and identifying similarities among cases. Research Analysts collect and analyze data about child abduction and sexual exploitation to develop a broader body of knowledge about specific cases and national trends. Quantitative and qualitative reports are produced for use by internal staff members and law enforcement. These reports also assist in the development of data-driven prevention strategies.

FAMILY ADVOCACY SERVICES

NCMEC's Family Advocacy Division provides case-specific intervention designed to enhance service delivery to the families served by NCMEC. The Division proactively works with families, law enforcement, family-advocacy agencies, and legal professionals to provide technical assistance regarding appropriate reunification practices for missing children, referrals, and crisis-intervention services. The Division coordinates the Office of Victims of Crime grant-funded Victim Reunification Travel program assisting in the return of children from other countries who are victims of international abduction. The Division's team also triages cases of extrafamilial child exploitation upon request of the family and/or law enforcement and provides appropriate referrals, support, and case follow-up. The Division manages the Family Advocacy Outreach Network, a group of licensed mental-health professionals who provide local, brief therapeutic intervention to families, as well as long-term support when indicated. The Division also manages Team HOPE, a peer-support program for families of missing children.

TRAINING

NCMEC provides training in all aspects of missing- and exploited-child cases. NCMEC's investigators' courses are conducted at regional sites; the Jimmy Ryce Law Enforcement Training Center in Alexandria, Virginia; the Missouri Law Enforcement Training Center near Kansas City, Missouri; and the Polisseni Law Enforcement Training Center in Rochester, New York. NCMEC provides technical assistance to nursing associations, hospital-security associations, and law-enforcement agencies and also conducts site assessments of healthcare facilities regarding the **prevention of newborn and infant abductions and the investigation of such cases.**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PROSECUTORS AND OTHERS IN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY

NCMEC's Office of Legal Counsel provides technical assistance to prosecutors, civil attorneys who represent children, law enforcement, legislators at the state and federal

levels, and other child-exploitation-related professionals. Additionally the office writes and files *amicus* briefs with the U.S. Supreme Court, and other courts nationwide, in cases of significance to NCMEC's mission and goals.

PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY AWARENESS:

CHILD-PROTECTION EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

NCMEC/Florida is the central point for NCMEC child-protection education and prevention. To learn more about prevention programs and publications to assist with educational needs, call 561-848-1900.

NETSMARTZ[®] WORKSHOP

NetSmartz is an educational resource for children of all ages, parents, guardians, teachers, and law enforcement and uses animation, real-life stories, music, and games to teach children how to be safer while online and in the real world. NetSmartz engages children while empowering them to make smarter choices about their personal safety. This resource is a program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and may be accessed at www.NetSmartz.org.

Publications Available

A variety of publications addressing different aspects of the missing- and exploited-child issue may be downloaded from www.missingkids.com or ordered by calling 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).

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