



MISSING CHILDREN

SOCIETY OF CANADA

...because the search must continue

The Missing Children Society of Canada is a national non-profit organization dedicated to the active search for abducted and missing children.

Since 1986, MCSC has assisted law enforcement and searching families through professional investigations, public awareness and family support programs.

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WHAT DO I DO? INFORMATION SERIES

RUNAWAYS

- STAY CALM.** Contact neighbours, friends, spouse, siblings and anyone who may know where your child may be. Invite a friend or acquaintance with a "calm" manner to be with you.
 - Conduct a telephone search.** Call family, friends and relatives who may wish to help. Encourage them to use their telephones to make inquiry calls so your line will remain free for incoming calls. If you have to leave the house, have an answering machine on the line or have a friend or neighbour take incoming calls.
 - Conduct a basic land search of the neighbourhood area while you are making a police occurrence report.** With family and friends, try to recall the present and past few days of family situations and activities (a recent argument or disciplinary action could be the reason for hiding).
 - File a missing child report, if the telephone and land search has not been successful.** This report is important as it allows the police to place a description of the child who is missing on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) computer system so all police forces in Canada will know the child is missing. Depending on your geographical location, the police may wish to notify border crossing and ferry-rail-airport facilities.
 - Provide the police with the information in your prepared Child Identification Kit.** This kit should include updated clear photographs, foot and fingerprints, birth certificate, medical history, passport, dental records, X-rays, child's name and description including location of scars, birthmarks and any other identifiable data (glasses, braces, earrings, ect.). A videotape or a recent home video of the child may be made specifically for the kit.
- Try to keep a mental note of what your child is wearing each day.
 - Contact the Missing Children Society of Canada (1-800-661-6160) and register the missing child.** MCSC will provide support and give you suggestions regarding steps that can be taken to assist in the search of your child.
 - Conduct a complete physical search of your area.** Organize a search party of areas such as, child's route home from school, community centre, friend's house, favourite hang-out ect. Be on the lookout for articles of clothing, toys, books other personal belongings scattered on the ground. If found, do not disturb. Contact police immediately.
 - Leave someone at home at all times to answer the telephone.** Keep the telephone lines FREE at all times.
 - Solicit media support such as radio, television and newspapers only at the advice of the police and searching agency involved with the case.** It is not advisable to leave or publicize your home or work number or address. Calls and mail can mislead investigations and can be very upsetting to the family.
 - Distribute a photograph of the missing child.** All police and searching agencies have services available to complete this task. It is important to work cooperatively and keep the agencies searching for your child well informed of your personal searching procedures.
 - Keep a detailed diary of people and agencies you have contacted and steps you have already taken.** Logging the events lessens the duplication of efforts and allows a review of inquiries.

TIPS FOR SUSPECTED RUNAWAYS

- **Search your child's room**, pockets of clothing and school locker (including gym locker) for telephone numbers, addresses, and any other information that may be useful in determining whom they might have called or where they might have gone.
 - **Check your child's attendance at school** and attendance of close friends.
 - **Check the activity on your child's bank account** if he or she has one.
 - **Call the phone company to request a copy of any calls made from your home since your last bill.** Call any numbers you do not recognize to see if they have heard from your child.
 - **Call hospitals and clinics to see if your child has been treated recently.** If your child could be sexually active, check with Planned Parenthood or similar organizations.
 - **Call your child's friends and any phone numbers you find during search of room and locker.** Speak to both friends and their parents, if possible. The following is a list of possible questions to ask them:
 - Have they seen your child?
 - Do they know where he or she might have gone?
 - Had he or she talked about running away?
 - Who do they think would help conceal your child?
 - Have you ever seen anyone suspicious in the neighborhood?
 - Do they have knowledge of any problems he or she might have been experiencing? Express your concern for your child's safety.
 - Ask them to please call you immediately if they hear from your child.
 - Ask them to please have your child call you if they hear from him or her.
 - Give them the number of the runaway hotlines to give to your child if for any reason he/she is fearful of calling home. Express that you want to know if he or she is safe.
 - **Re-contact friends on a regular basis.**
 - **Call out-of-town friends, relatives, etc.,** to determine if they have heard from your child.
 - **Talk to teachers, counselors and administrators at your child's school.** Find out if your child is having any problems of which you are not aware. Ask them to identify your child's friends whom you may not be aware of, and ask to interview them.
 - **Go to places where your child "hangs out", show flyers and talk to people to determine whether he or she has been seen since the disappearance.** Show the kids on the street a current photograph of your child, or your missing child flyer.
 - **Check runaway shelters, soup kitchens, coffee houses, movie theaters, malls and teen hangouts in areas where you believe your child might be.** Ask to post flyers. Show photograph or flyers and ask people if they have seen your child.
 - **Ask family, friends, groups to which you belong, friends of your child, or anyone else you can find to help you post flyers.** If money is a problem, ask your bank, employer, church or friends to make copies at their places of business.
 - **Ask local media to become involved** by broadcasting child's picture and information on his/her disappearance. Identify the radio stations your child listens to and request the station run a personal message.
 - **Keep concise records** of everything you do, including all expenses and receipts.
- If your child has been missing over a period of months or even years:**
- Review all information obtained from the initial investigation.
 - Re-interview family, friends and classmates.
 - Arrange for periodic media coverage, taking advantage of key dates such your child's birthday or date of disappearance.
 - Compare and critique information you have received with the appropriate law enforcement agency.
 - Consider offering a reward for information leading to the safe return of your child. Contact the Missing Children Society of Canada for guidelines and assistance.

For more detailed information on what to do or what to expect if your child goes missing, please visit the Missing Children Society of Canada website at www.mcsc.ca.