

Be Brave, Be Safe

A Parents' Guide to Prevention



*"Samantha's motto was 'BE BRAVE'.
In honor of her courage, it is my hope that we will all take
the initiative to ensure the rights of our children – to be free,
to be brave, to live without fear, but with compassion,
integrity and confidence to reach their highest potential."*

Erin Runion

TOGETHER WE CAN STOP PREDATORY CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN.

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The Truth about Sex Crimes and Abduction

It is estimated that one in every five girls and one in ten boys is sexually abused by the end of their 13th year (1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys overall by the age of 18). This is an overwhelming number of children in need of protection and intervention; but to do this effectively, we first need to understand child sexual abuse. To help understand the problem of sexual abuse this booklet will discuss multiple forms of child abuse: neglect, physical, sexual, emotional abuse and abduction as well as how to prevent them.

Did you know that most children, who are sexually abused, over 90%, are abused by a family member or close family friend, not a stranger? Stranger danger and stranger abduction, in comparison, are quite rare.

Every year in this country over 58,000 children are abducted by non-stranger, non-family members such as neighbors, babysitters, and friends. In addition over 204,000 children are abducted by a relative, frequently a parent. Fortunately, 99% of missing children are recovered alive within 24 hours. Over half of all abducted children are abused in some way before being recovered by law enforcement and their families. According to the FBI's Crime Index there are an average of 100–125 stranger abductions every year and approximately 100 children are murdered by predators.

Whether perpetrated by a stranger or non-stranger, abduction is a traumatizing crime but combined with just over 33% of girls and 16% of boys who are sexually abused by adulthood, we are facing a devastating social epidemic. Survivors of childhood trauma are significantly more likely to suffer from physical, emotional, and behavioral disorders that contribute to the cycle of violence in society.

What We Can Do to Protect Our Children

It is at this point that most parents find themselves horrified by the prospect that someone they trust could violate their children and it is our natural inclination to believe that it could not have already happened and gone unnoticed. This realization is often followed by disbelief, fear, and even hopelessness. This handbook is designed to aid you in protecting your children against sexual abuse and abduction.

A child is abused once every 32 seconds in this nation and you can do something about it!

How many children will you save...?

Statistics of Abuse and Abduction

National Statistics

- An estimated 1,100 children died as a result of abuse and neglect in 1999, and 1200 in 2000.
- The Health and Human Services agency estimates there were 3 million referrals of maltreatment to child protective service agencies in 2000. Approximately 879,000 cases were substantiated. Of these substantiated cases, 739,000 were abused by a parent or parents, and 140,000 by someone other than a parent.
- Child abuse kills more children in America than do falls, choking, suffocation, or fires.
- An estimated one of every three female children will be molested by age 18.
- An estimated one of every six male children will be molested by age 18.
- The Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention reports there were an estimated 58,200 child victims of non-family abduction, defined more broadly to include all non-family perpetrators last year — over half were sexually assaulted by the perpetrator.
- The direct and indirect cost of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. is estimated at \$258 million per day.
- The majority of victims of sexual assaults, about 84%, do not report their victimization to law enforcement.

California Statistics

- In 2001 there were 671,422 reported cases of child abuse.
- Physical abuse and neglect represented over 50% of all reported cases.
- From 1990–2000, child abuse reports increased 18%.
- One-tenth of all substantiated cases of child abuse in the U.S. are from California.

Miscellaneous

- 68% of released prisoners were rearrested within 3 years. Of this 68%, half were reconvicted.
- In 1990, the mean sentence lengths for rape and other sexual assault were 10 and 6 years, respectively. The percent of actual time served for rape was 7 years and for other sexual assault, 4 years (US Department of Justice, 1996).
- The re-arrest rate for convicted sex offenders is over 52% (US Department of Justice, 1996).
- There are approximately 170,000 sex offenders under the supervision of criminal justice authorities and this is believed to represent only about 10% of all sex offenders living in our communities nationwide.

Facts about Sex Offenders

- In 2003, there were approximately 455,000 registered sex offenders in United States.
- Most sex offenders (80 – 95%) assault people they know.
- Over half of convicted child molesters report also having sexually assaulted an adult.
- Research shows that most convicted sex offenders have committed many, many assaults before they are caught.
- Young victims who know or are related to the perpetrator are least likely to report the crime to authorities.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996)

It is frightening enough to think that a sex offender could be living in your neighborhood, let alone your own house. This is why we must remember that people who commit sex crimes are usually just like everyone else. They are often educated, successful, skilled people with family, friends, and very strong social networks.

The percentage of minors who disclose that they have been sexually abused is believed to be about 33%. Children often don't come forward because they are afraid of retaliation from predators or loss of love from family. Most victims are threatened with bodily harm to themselves and their families as well as loss of love. Victims of sexual abuse experience a tremendous amount of guilt, pain, and fear. The delay of disclosure for most children is about 15 years. This means that sexual abuse is not being disclosed until the victims have reached adulthood. Children often do not disclose because they are either afraid of the consequences or they feel responsible for the abuse (London, Bruck, Ceci, and Shuman, 2005). It is estimated that approximately 3% of child molesters get caught (Abel et. al, 1987). Fewer than 1% are arrested, convicted, and imprisoned (Russell, 1984).

Characteristics of Sex Offenders

- Most offenders commit multiple crimes against multiple types of victims with whom they have varying types of relationships (adults, children, male, female, known, and unknown). This behavior is known as “crossover.”
- Sex offenders rarely commit just one type of offense, but those who do generally target children or women who share the same physical characteristics (coloring, weight, age).
- Many offenders have NO official criminal record or sex crime history of any kind.
- Sexual deviancy often begins in adolescence.
- Sex offenders usually do not commit their crimes impulsively. They usually carefully plan their crimes.
- Many sex offenders volunteer or work with their preferred type of victims (e.g., children) and seek to earn the trust of their community in order to elude suspicion and prevent people from reporting their crimes should their victim(s) speak out.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996)

Sadly, this means that sometimes we must be vigilant child protectors around the people we trust the most. For many families, this means reevaluating the criteria for who might spend time with or have access to their children. Recognizing and avoiding high-risk situations is as critical as being present and available to your child so that they are not vulnerable to inappropriate affection. A high-risk situation is one that involves your child being alone with someone who is more than five years their senior and appears to take a special interest in your child and/or appears to enjoy spending most of their free time with children. This person may be likeable, but the circumstances dictate that you quietly ensure that your child not spend time alone with this person. Being present and available to your child requires the parent to be the listener and the observer so that your child has the opportunity to share. Being present is also to be taken literally — avoid ‘dropping off’ your child at sports practices and other extracurricular clubs. Whenever you leave your child with another adult, make it very clear that you are an involved parent. . . predators are rarely interested in a challenge.

Safety Tips from a Convicted Child Molester

- Give quality love, time, and attention to your child so that he or she won't look for it elsewhere.
- Know the people who are involved with your child who are in a position of trust, even a relative or close friend.
- Be aware of an adult or older child who spends a large amount of time with your child, or seems to be focused on your child.
- Be aware if your child is avoiding a particular person that they used to be comfortable with.
- Be aware of your child spending a lot of time with or talking about an adult or someone older who is not a parent or guardian.
- If you suspect that your child has been abused, ask him or her in a caring, non-threatening way. Do not accuse.
- Let your child know that he or she does not have to keep secrets. Many times shame will keep children silent.
- Believe your child when he or she says there has been abuse, no matter who it is.
- If you believe abuse is going on with your child, act on that belief.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996)

Would you believe that your husband was a sex offender? What about your son? Every sex offender is related to someone. We all like to believe that we are good people and, furthermore, that we are a good judge of character but since 1 in every 20 men is a sexual predator, chances are you interact with at least one every week. It is impossible for most people to believe that their children can be abused without them knowing, but this denial and disbelief are characteristics that sex offenders depend upon. In many cases, parents cannot accept that abuse has occurred and do not report the situation to law enforcement, deciding to deal with the problem inside the family. Unfortunately, convicted child molesters are reported to have abused an average of 70 children before they are arrested for the first time. As individuals and as a society, we must err on the side of protecting children rather than predators.

Adult Behavior that may Signal Sexual Interest in Children

- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want this affection.
- Is overly interested in the sexuality of a particular child or teen.
- Manages to get time alone or insists on time alone with a child without interruptions.
- Spends most of his/her spare time with children and has little interest in spending time with someone his/her own age.
- Regularly offers to baby sit many different children for free or takes children on overnight outings.
- Buys children expensive gifts or gives them money for no apparent reason.
- Frequently walks in on children/teens in the bathroom or while the child is changing.
- Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors.
- Talks about the sexual activities of children or teens.
- Talks about sexual fantasies with children and is not clear about what's not appropriate behavior.
- Encourages silence and secrets in a child.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996)

The behaviors listed above may seem to some to be obvious warning signs of a sexual predator. To others, however, someone expressing interest in their child is a blessing. Would you spend time with someone else's kids on a regular basis for free? If the answer is no, then consider why someone else is spending time like this with your kids? This is only a starting point. If someone is very involved with your family or children, it does not necessarily mean that they are a child molester; but ask yourself why they are involved and whether or not they are more interested in having a relationship with the children in your family or the adults. You should, at the very least, be able to come up with an answer that you are comfortable with. If you are uncomfortable or concerned, follow your instinct. If you make your children wear a seat belt, it is probably because you don't trust other drivers on the road with your child's life; but by leaving them alone with other people you are doing just that.

Additional Findings about Sexual Predators

Of people known to sexually abuse children, men outnumber women over 8:1. Most often, the person who sexually abuses children is a heterosexual male ranging in age from adolescence to middle age (Hanson and Steffy, 1993). This finding is important to note as we tend to think of sex offenders as adult males. It is very common for sex offenders to begin abusing others when they themselves are adolescents. Studies have revealed that over 60% of adult sex offenders began offending as adolescents. It is also important to note that children who have been sexually abused often attempt to act out their experience even among their peers or younger children. This is one reason to focus discussions with your child on inappropriate behavior rather than the “bad people” who hurt children. Later we will discuss “Talking with Your Children About Sexual Abuse” and this point will be elaborated upon. Our children must understand that *no one* has a right to hurt them or touch them in the places that their bathing suit would cover.

A study was completed in 2001 by Abel and Harlow, who sampled over 16,000 adults with sexual boundary issues. They defined a child molester as anyone who commits any act of sexually touching a child of 13 years or younger. In their study, in which they chose the 4007 people who clearly fit the definition of child molesters ages 18–95 they found that the child molesters who were themselves severely sexually abused (50+ times), committed well over 100 more acts of child molestation than the never-abused molesters. Of the pedophiles who molest girls, 21% also molest boys. Of those pedophiles who molest boys, 53% also molest girls. Most of the men who molest boys rated themselves as heterosexual in their adult sexual preferences. These men are married, divorced, widowed, or living with an adult partner.

There is no specific profile for a child molester. Child molesters match the U.S. population in education, percentage married or formerly married and religious observance. It was found that 68% of molesters sexually abuse children in their own families (children, siblings and relatives) and only 10% of child molesters molest children they do not know at all. In addition, in this study it was found that over 88% of child molesters are pedophiles (actually sexually attracted to children). Regardless of the motivation behind the molestation, whether it is sexual attraction or pathology, one cannot underestimate the compulsivity of child molesters. Research indicates that the majority of offenders do not feel that they can stop the behavior by their own volition; they may resist one child because the risk of getting caught is especially high, but they will move on to another.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse and Abduction

A Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan

The following Abuse Prevention Plan has been edited by The Joyful Child Foundation for the purposes of inclusion in the Samantha's PRIDE program. The original Be A Child's Hero Network (BACHNET) plan can be found in its entirety at www.beachildshero.com.

It is possible to greatly decrease the chances of your child being sexually abused since the overwhelming majority of child molesters (over 90%) abuse children within the family and/or children of trusting friends. This plan is designed to prevent the most common type of sexual abuse, that which is perpetrated by someone who the family of the victim trusts.

Continual support and open communication within the family is the best means to effectively deter, prevent and/or stop a child from being sexually abused. The more confident and comfortable a child is with this information, the less likely they are to be targeted for molestation. This plan can be implemented as soon as a child is able to communicate with sentences. We have listed the essential steps to the BACHNET Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan below:

1. Step one is to sit down with your child and ask them to list all of the people that they could go to if they were scared or upset. This list becomes a network of people that your child can turn to in the event that they are harassed, intimidated or sexually abused. It is important to make your child aware of all of the people who care about them and it is empowering for a child to know that they have options when they are confused or scared.
2. Next have your child promise that if anyone ever makes them feel scared or uncomfortable, gives them secret presents, plays games they have never heard of or wants to see or touch the area that their bathing-suits would cover, they will tell at least one person on their list and they will keep telling until the problem stops.
3. Let your child know that they have your permission and you will not be upset if they go to anyone on this list when they are scared or confused. It is very common for children to feel that they cannot speak to their parents in spite of a parent's attempt to ease this fear. The majority of children who do report sexual abuse do not report it to their parents. Sexual predators often tell their victims that what is happening is the victims' fault, that they will get in trouble, that they will be taken away or that their parents will stop loving them and will hate them. Molesters who are related to the child also scare them into silence by telling them that no one else will take care of them if they go to jail. It is very important to talk with your children and reassure them of your unconditional love and remind them of all the people who care about them. Talk with your children about these lies and let them know that some people tell children scary lies like this so that they

won't get in trouble. When you take away an offender's ability to keep his victim silent, you take away his power.

4. Once you and your child have made a list, let all the people on your child's list know that they are part of this emergency network. Let them know your child has your permission to contact them and ask them if they are comfortable with this responsibility.
5. The next step is probably the most important step of the prevention plan. Attached is a form letter you can give to each adult in your child's life and on the list. You may copy the letter or write your own version of the letter. By notifying all of the adults in your child's life (family, friends, teachers, coaches, and parents of your child's friends), you have in effect warned most potential predators in your child's life that they will be caught should they target your child for abuse or inappropriate behavior. Sex offenders generally target children where the risk of getting caught is sufficiently low. This plan puts your children in an unacceptable risk category as you are telling any would be offender that your child is prepared and as parents you are involved.

Safety Letter *(Adapted from the Be A Child's Hero Network; www.beachildshero.com)*

Dear Family and Friends:

Our family is implementing a Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan recommended by The Joyful Child Foundation – In Memory of Samantha Rynn. We have learned that sexual abuse is a pervasive social problem with 33% of girls and 16% of boys being molested before the age of 18. The perpetrators of these crimes are most often (over 90% of the time) family members or close friends of the family. As a result of this information, we have decided to take a proactive approach to our child's/children's safety.

Part of this plan is notifying ALL of our family and friends that we have an Abuse Prevention Plan in place to protect our children from being sexually abused. In addition, our child/children will be putting together their own list of people that they may contact if they feel they need help; creating their safety network. Some of you may be a part of our child's/children's network. If you are not comfortable being contacted by our child/children should they feel scared, hurt or otherwise in need of a trusted adult, please notify us as soon as possible. Our purpose is to empower our child/children with safety education and training so that they know that no one has a right to hurt them or make them feel bad inside and that, if this happens it is not their fault so they can tell the grown-ups on their list until they feel safe again.

We hope that this letter does not offend you. We know that sexual abuse statistics do not apply to the majority of people in society, but the fact remains that there are sexual predators from whom we need to protect our child/children. After learning that the largest numbers of victims are abused by family and friends, we believe that it is in our child's/children's best interest to do this. In fact, we welcome our family and friends to introduce this program in their home as well.

We are letting everyone know we have discussed everything in the Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan with our child/children at great length. Our child/children are well prepared for any one who would want to hurt them. Our child/children have our unconditional love, support and reassurance. They have also been well informed about the lies that predators will use to silence them. We are committed to ensuring our child's/children's safety and will review, reinforce and update this plan with them often.

We would expect no less from our families and friends because we know you love your children as we do ours. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss such a sensitive subject with you. Together we can stop predatory crimes against children.

Sincerely,

Talking with Your Children about Sexual Abuse

The following is a combined list of different suggestions on ways to talk to your children about sexual abuse. The sources for this information are The Joyful Child Foundation, The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, FamilyWatchDog.com, The Center for Behavioral Intervention in Beaverton, Oregon, and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's: Convicted Sex Offender Web Site, BACHNET, and Child Lures, Inc.

Talk openly and often with your children about sexual development, behavior and abuse. Keep in mind that if you discuss sexual development with your children appropriately from a very young age, they will not be embarrassed by the subject matter and will be less vulnerable to the grooming tactics of many child molesters.

Use proper names or semi-proper names for body parts (penis and vagina), and phrases like: private parts are "private and special".

Tell your children that, if anyone: touches or tries to see their private parts, tries to get them to touch or look at another person's private parts, shows them pictures of or tries to take pictures of their private parts, talks to them about sex, walks in on them in the bathroom or does anything that makes them feel uncomfortable to tell you, a trusted adult or a support "network" person from their list right away.

Avoid scary details. Use language that is honest and age appropriate. Explain that no one should touch a child on the parts of their body that are covered by their bathing suit. Also let your child know that there are exceptions to this situation such as mommy or daddy helping a young child bathe, diaper changes or a doctor examining a child with their parent present.

When discussing sexual abuse with younger children, refer to sexual predators as adults with "touching problems." These people can make "secret touching" look accidental (such as tickling or wrestling) and they should still tell you even if they think (or were told) it was an accident. This is a way for a young child to understand that an adult has an inappropriate behavior without giving your child nightmares or age-inappropriate details about what the "touching" might entail.

Tell your children that people who have touching problems need special help so they don't continue to have problems or get into trouble. Don't describe it as a sickness and don't say that "bad" people do this, as most of the time the "bad" person is someone who seems good or is known to the child.

Referring to "touching problems" instead of "bad people" also gives the child the ability to judge and tell you about the behavior without the understandable confusion that arises when the perpetrator is someone they love or care about.

Tell your children that some people try to trick kids into keeping the touching a secret. It is very important to tell at least two grown-ups you trust if someone touches you in a weird way or tries to see you without your clothes.

Tell your child that if they were or are ever tricked into doing something that made them feel weird, bad or confused, it is not their fault no matter what. It will always be okay to tell you and, no matter what happens, you will always love them.

Give your children examples of things that someone might use to trick a child into keeping a secret: candy, money, special privileges, threats, subtle fear of loss, separation or punishment.

Tell your children that touching other people's private parts is not okay either, and you do not want them to participate in "secret touching" with other people no matter who they are. Make sure they understand that you will NOT be mad at them if they tell you it has already happened. The important thing is to tell someone so it can be stopped. Very few children ever tell their parents about sexual abuse, so please give them the reassurance to come forward . . . before something happens.

Help your child create a list of their trusted adults. Give your child a copy of their list. Make sure their support "network" peoples' phone numbers are by the telephone with phone numbers and/or in a place that your child has easy access to.

Know where registered sex offenders live in your community. Tell your children to avoid these people and to tell you if a sex offender initiates contact with them.

Teach your child: DON'T take rides from strangers; DON'T harass or visit any sex offender's home or yard; DO tell a safe adult if anyone acts inappropriately towards them (e.g., creepy, too friendly, threatening, offering gifts in a secret way, or touching them); DO RUN, SCREAM, and GET AWAY if someone is bothering them; DON'T keep secrets; DON'T help strangers instead run and get a grown-up; DON'T go places alone; DO ask questions; DO RUN to get a grown-up for help if someone you don't know asks for help or tries to talk to you; and DO talk about uncomfortable feelings or interactions.

Be aware of people who are involved with your child who are in a position of trust, even a relative or close friend. Be aware of adults or older children who spend a large amount of their time with your child or if your child goes out of their way to avoid a person.

Most of all, trust your instincts. If you believe abuse is going on, act on that belief. If someone your family socializes with makes you or your child uncomfortable, don't ever leave your child alone with that person. Honor your children's instincts as you would your own. You know your child and you know when their behavior changes.

Report suspicious behavior to law enforcement and the suspected child abuse of other children to Child Protective Services. Even if you are not sure that there is a problem, let the experts make that determination. People like you rescue children from abuse every day; be a child's hero.

Understanding Sex Offender Registries

There are a variety of online sex offender registries that people may use to search for registered sex offenders in a given neighborhood. These registries are a valuable tool, but it is important to understand the service and level of accuracy that these databases provide. First and foremost, you should remember that online registries are databases of convicted sex offenders who are required to register themselves as sex offenders. It is up to states to determine which sexually based crimes warrant registry. Not all states, counties or even judges use the same criteria for establishing which crimes warrant registry. The federal government, furthermore, has established guidelines for recommended sentencing and registries, but they are guidelines and not mandates, which means that, ultimately, the decision to register a sex offender is up to state governments and/or based on the individual case. In fact, few states comply with federal law.

Not all convicted sex offenders are required to register publicly. This means that there are sex offenders who will not appear on public registries although they do register with local law enforcement agencies. When a convicted sexual predator is required to register, it is also important to understand that they do not necessarily have to register for life. The term of the registry may be as little as a few months or as long as the perpetrator's life. Furthermore, registries are created based on publicly available records and self reporting. If someone's record is protected by the court system, it will not appear in a registry. Most states rate sex offender's level of risk to re-offend from 1 to 3, 1 being the lowest risk. Some states only publish the information of high-risk offenders. If a sex offender fails to register himself or herself, they may not be in the registry at all or their information may be incorrect. Furthermore, if a sex offender registers as homeless, they will only be searchable by name and not by location.

Harassing anyone on the offender registry is a punishable crime that can not only result in jail time and monetary fines, but may lead to a sex offender's registry record becoming protected by the court. The purpose of sex offender registries is to identify sexual predators so that you may keep yourself and your children away from them. The registries are not to be used as a tool to hunt them down. Vigilante aggression against registered sex offenders will jeopardize public notification thereafter, reversing the progress we have made.

There are a variety of sex offender registries available online and some of them are listed in the resource section of this handbook. While this information is troubling, sex offender registries are a terrific tool to help protect your family. Considering how few offenders are ever accused, much less convicted, the least we can do is be aware of those who have been released.

What to do if a Registered Sex Offender Lives in Your Neighborhood

Once you begin checking the sex offender registries, you will find sex offenders in your neighborhood. It is a good idea to find out what type of sex offender this person is based on what crimes they have been convicted of. Keep in mind that many offenders have had their offenses reduced as part of a plea bargain process to avoid a criminal trial. Many prosecutors or district attorneys' offices do not want to put a child victim on the stand, and sexual abuse is a very difficult crime to prove if the child did not go to a doctor immediately after the crime.

Don't be afraid to talk with your children about sexual abuse prevention. Consider talking with older children about the predators in your neighborhood and warning them that this person is a "dangerous stranger" they need to stay far away from.

It is understandable to not want a sexual predator living in your neighborhood, but do not try to harass this person or force them out of the neighborhood as you may create serious legal trouble for yourself and your family. The Joyful Child recommends the Samantha's PRIDE Neighborhood Child Protection Program to organize neighbors to provide an ongoing presence of vigilant child protection to deter predators. The radKIDS Personal Safety Empowerment Program teaches children in an interactive curriculum how to recognize, avoid, resist and, if necessary, escape dangerous situations. In combination, these two programs provide comprehensive prevention education and empowerment for the whole community.

Child ID Kits

Recommended Content:

- Folder or large manila envelope labeled with your child's name, one per child
- Current photos of each child with names and dates on the back
- Photocopy of Birth Certificate
- Photocopies of Dental Records
- Photocopy of Medical Records
- List of ongoing or chronic medical conditions and/or prescription medication(s)
- Photocopy of School Records
- Photocopies of custodial agreements and/or judgments
- Information about your child: Name, birth date, gender, weight, height, school name and grade, ethnicity, blood type, moles, scars, birthmarks
- Scheduled activities (schedule of school, after-school or extracurricular programs with contact info for the school(s) and/or caregivers)
- Fingerprint cards
- DNA Samples

ID Kits are used to aid law enforcement in searching for or identifying children who are missing. ID Kits are made available to the public by a variety of organizations, but you can make your own. You should make a separate child ID kit for each child. Keep each child's ID kit in a folder or large manila envelope labeled with that child's name. Keep all of the ID kits in a safe and accessible place such as a file cabinet or safe. Your ID kit should include several recent photos of your child. School photos are appropriate as they provide a concise image of the child's face that is not obscured by activity or other objects in the photo. Remember to write the date on the back of the photo. Make sure you update the ID Kit every year and replace old photos and records with new ones.

This kit should also include a copy of your child's Birth Certificate, Dental, Medical and School Records. You want to include simple information about your child such as name, birth date, gender, weight, height, school name and grade, ethnicity, blood type, and identifying features such as moles, scars and birthmarks. Include a list of your child's schedule and activities such as After School Programs and daycare as well as the phone numbers and names of supervisors or caregivers.

It is extremely important that you **include copies of any custodial agreements** in this kit. If you are a divorced or a single parent and your child/children are taken by another parent, you must be able to show police the guidelines of the other caregiver's custodial agreement. Also include copies of restraining orders, and judgments.

Fingerprint cards are also a good addition to your ID kit and can be provided by law enforcement agencies at a minimal fee. It is best to have your children printed by a professional. You may, however, make your own shoe print captures for camping trips and family outings. To capture your child's shoe prints, press their shoes into a sheet of tin foil. Then store the tin foil in a place where it will not be crinkled or destroyed such as an empty shoe box. As long as you include the child's name on the foil you can store multiple foils together. The purpose of shoeprints is to help find a lost child on a camping trip or outing where footprints are useful. When camping or hiking, you want to bring the foils of the shoes your child is currently wearing and keep them near by in your car or at your campsite.

The final step in preparing an ID kit for your child is DNA. DNA collection is intimidating for some people but does not need to be. The first rule of DNA collection at home is: **DO NOT STORE DNA IN PLASTIC** storage containers or plastic sandwich bags. Any moisture on the DNA you have collected will degrade or rot the DNA if it is kept in a plastic bag or container. **USE PAPER ENVELOPES TO STORE DNA.** The envelope should be clearly marked with your child's name. Do not put samples from different children in the same envelope. Also, do not lick the envelope seal or glue it shut as your DNA may contaminate the sample and moisture from glues will also cause damage. It is best to secure the envelope with a small piece of tape on the outside. You do not need to refrigerate DNA samples.

There are several types of DNA that you may collect and easily store in the ID Kit. Fingernail clippings are the easiest DNA sample to collect. Wash and dry your child's hands thoroughly (after bath time may be easiest). Thoroughly clean your nail clipper prior to use so that you don't include someone else's DNA in the sample. If you are unsure as to whether or not the fingernail clippings are dry you may set them on a tissue to dry them completely. You may also collect strands of hair that fall out naturally. The best hair sample comes with the bulb at the end of the hair shaft near the root. The easiest way to collect hair is to use a clean comb on your child's hair and collect the loose hair that falls out naturally.

The best DNA sample to include in your kit is an oral swab, and this can be done with a clean cotton swab and a small strip of clean paper that is free from finger prints. The strips of paper should be about 3" X 4". Have your child brush their teeth and rinse their mouth thoroughly as the plaque and tartar on teeth can degrade DNA. Take the clean cotton swab and roll it across the inside of both of your child's cheeks. Next place the wet cotton swab on the paper strip and let it dry completely. Do not move the sample on the paper. Once it is thoroughly dry, fold the paper tightly around the cotton swab on all sides before placing it in the envelope. The reason you wrap the paper tightly around the cotton swab is due to the fact that the epithelial (skin cells) will fall off of the cotton swab as they dry. If the cotton swabs are loose in the envelope, the skin cells will fall off and spread out, making them impossible to use if needed.

Code Words

One tactic of predators, whether they are strangers, acquaintances or family, is to tell a child that something terrible has happened to their parent or that there has been some kind of emergency and therefore the child must go with this person. For example, someone might try to pick them up from school and say, "Your parents have been in an accident. I am supposed to take you to the hospital to see them." TJCF recommends you ask your child to choose a code word should there be a need in a situation like this. You must impress upon your children that they never share this code word with anyone. In the event of an emergency, an authorized person would know your child's code word.

Talk with your child about the people in your lives who you both trust. Together, determine which adults you would ask to assist your child in an emergency, such as a neighbor or their best friend's mother. Make it clear that these are the only people you would send to help them in an emergency. At the same time, write down this list of trusted adults and put their phone numbers and other contact information in one place so that your child knows where to find it. Make sure your child knows that they do not have to go with anyone at anytime if they do not feel safe. If someone tells them Mom or Dad sent them to pick them up and they know the code word, the child should know that they can still ask to call another trusted grown-up to make sure. If a person is being honest and good, they will not be bothered by your child being empowered to ensure their own personal safety.

If You Think Your Child Has Been Abducted

What to do:

If your child is missing, but you have no reason to believe that they were abducted, search your home, closets, piles of laundry, in and under beds, inside large appliances, and inside vehicles, including trunks or wherever a child may crawl or hide. As a PRIDE member, contact the PRIDE Leader or a fellow Protector and ask that they activate the phone tree so that the entire PRIDE can help check with neighbors or friends. If you still cannot find your child, immediately call 911. After giving the police all of the necessary information, ask for your child to be entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing Persons File.

If Your Child HAS Been Abducted

What to do:

If your child has been abducted, immediately call 911. When you call law enforcement, provide your child's name, date of birth, height, weight, and any other unique identifiers such as eyeglasses and braces. Tell them when you noticed that your child was missing and what clothing he or she was wearing. If you have a child ID kit available, give it to the investigator. Be sure to retain a business card of the law enforcement officer(s) responding to your call or the lead investigator in your case so that you can contact law enforcement for updates in the search for your child. Contact the PRIDE Leader or another Protector to activate the phone tree. If you do not have a PRIDE ask neighbors to help search for your child.

After giving law enforcement the necessary information, immediately ask for an Amber Alert (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) as well as A Child is Missing Phone Alert (ACIM). Amber Alert uses the Emergency Alert System (formerly the Emergency Broadcast System) highway signs and subscribed cell phones to send out an urgent news bulletin with information relevant to recovering a missing child. (To subscribe for free to receive a text message when an Amber Alert is issued in your area, please visit: www.wirelessameralerts.org. It only takes a couple of minutes.)

The other program, A Child Is Missing (ACIM), is a national non-profit organization offering free assistance to law enforcement to aid in recovering missing persons (including children, teens, and elderly). ACIM provides immediate telephone alerts to the surrounding community when an individual goes missing. ACIM alerts have led to more than 320 recoveries, and they do not require the same stringent criteria as the Amber Alert. Your local law enforcement agency must have already contracted with ACIM in order for their service to be available in your area.

There are criteria that a missing child case must meet in order to utilize the Amber Alert system. First and foremost, law enforcement must have evidence that an abduction has occurred. To order an Amber Alert there must be descriptive information available for use in a digital alert, such as the make and model of a car or a license plate and the age, height and weight of the child. An Amber Alert is only helpful if the public is given descriptive information about the person or vehicle that took the child. If a child disappears and an abduction is a possibility, the family is encouraged to speak to the media directly to seek the public's help in finding the child, but an Amber Alert will probably not be issued if there were no witnesses.

Of the over 670,000 reports of missing children each year, over half of the children have not been abducted and return home quickly, usually within 24 hours. In addition, due to the large number of family/relative abductions that occur each year (204,000), if a child is taken by a non-custodial parent, the other parent must provide a copy of the legal custodial agreement or judgment in order to activate an Amber Alert. If a custodial agreement has not been violated, the situation may not be considered an emergency. In most cases these family-related abductions are resolved quickly, but if you believe your child is in danger, do everything you can to seek the public's help in recovering the child.

Within two hours of a missing child report, Law Enforcement is required to enter the necessary information about the child and the circumstances, with a special flag if it is a suspected abduction, into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). It is recommended that parents ask the lead investigator assigned to your case if it has been entered into NCIC because that information will be shared immediately with neighboring law enforcement agencies, which increases the search for your child. Although the guidelines for receiving an Amber Alert are similar across the United States, they do vary slightly from state to state and you must work with law enforcement in your state.

It is within a parent's right to ask local law enforcement to involve the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) if there is reason to believe the child is a victim of abduction. If your local law enforcement agency does not want to contact the FBI, you may contact the FBI directly by going to <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm> to find a phone number for your local FBI Office.

If your child is missing, it is very important to be as cooperative with law enforcement as possible. In over 90% of child sexual abuse and abduction cases, the perpetrator is either within the family or is a trusted friend. Thus, it is standard procedure for family members and people close to the child to be questioned by the police. You may be asked to take a polygraph (lie detector test). Cooperating with the police expedites the investigation and increases your chances of recovering your child.

If Your Child Disappears in a Store or Business

What to do:

If your child disappears in a store, notify the store manager or security office. Then immediately call 911. Many large chain stores have a Code Adam plan of action for missing children whereby the store clerks are instructed to close all exits and employees immediately mobilize to look for the missing child. If your child is not found quickly, call 911 or have a store employee call 911 as they will know the address and location of the store and their phone lines should be linked with emergency response.

Missing Child – Quick Reference Points

- If your child has disappeared from your home, do not touch or move anything until after law enforcement tells you it is okay to do so.
- Do not lie to the police or media. Cooperating with law enforcement's investigation can only help recover your child more quickly.
- Ask for the name and phone number of the investigator assigned to your case.
- Write a detailed list of items that may help law enforcement. What was your child wearing? Does your child have any scars, birth marks, or distinguishing marks?
- Provide law enforcement with information about anyone who may have had contact with your child. Certainly note if someone has been showing an increased interest in your child or who has been a problem in the neighborhood or family.
- Request that your child's name and identifying information be immediately entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing Person File and ask for an Amber Alert.
- Do not divulge or share any information they have asked you to keep quiet. Chances are they do not want the perpetrator or opportunists to know certain things about the case.
- Do not speak to the media until you have cleared it with law enforcement.
- Do not criticize law enforcement to the media.
- You do not have to speak to the media, but it can be helpful in garnering the public's assistance. If you are asked a question you are not comfortable with, simply state that you are not comfortable with the subject or cannot discuss certain details to protect the case. (Whether your child is missing, the case is under investigation or in preparation for a trial, it is better to err on the side of caution with the media and not share details publicly that may jeopardize the judicial process later.)

Recognizing Signs of Abuse

Behavioral and Physical Warning Signs That a Child is Being Abused

It is often difficult to know if a child has been abused if you did not witness the abuse. Included below are examples of situations that may indicate abuse. While it is common for many of the behaviors listed below to show up in a child's life at one time or another as a result of the stresses and changes associated with childhood, they can be signs of deeper problems. One such problem may be abuse. If you see several of these signs in a child you know well, please contact your local Child Protective Services agency or seek other resources to help the child.

- Nightmares
- Trouble walking or sitting
- Trouble sleeping or sleep disorders
- Fear of the dark at an inappropriate age
- Extreme fear of "monsters" or aliens
- Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, anger, or withdrawal
- Fear of certain people or places. For example, if a child does not want to be left alone with a certain person, even a friend, relative, or other child, you may want to consider why, especially if the change is sudden.
- An older child behaving like a younger child, such as bed-wetting or thumb sucking
- Sexual activities with toys or other children, such as simulating sex with dolls or asking other children or siblings to behave sexually. While some sexual curiosity is normal for children it should not involve sexual knowledge beyond the child's years.
- New words for private body parts
- Refusing to talk about a "secret" he or she has with an adult or older child
- Talking about a new older friend
- Suddenly having money or gifts
- Cutting or burning oneself as an adolescent
- Resistance to going home or to a specific location
- Fear of adults

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse • Sexual Abuse • Emotional Abuse • Neglect

What is Physical Abuse?

Physical child abuse is a physical injury caused by physical aggression toward a child. If the injury is an accident as a result of intentional aggression, it is still considered abuse. There are many examples of physical abuse and some of them are listed below as a reference.

- Beating, slapping, hitting, pinching, biting, choking, hair-pulling, pushing, shaking, kicking, or throwing
- Burns, bite marks, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- Severe physical punishments
- Bruises in multiple stages of healing. Bruises change color as they heal from reddish/dark purples/blues to browns and yellowish browns
- Burning with cigarettes, scalding water, or other hot objects

Evaluating an Injury

A child with an unintentional and accidental cigarette burn will have a small, light, usually uneven burn. An intentional cigarette burn will be deep and circular. A cigarette or cigar size burn represents severe physical abuse. When a child is accidentally burned with water, they will react by splashing violently. This results in uneven or blotchy burns. A child who has been intentionally burned by immersion will have a burn with clean edges, and the burn may even be in a straight line indicating the water level.

What is Sexual Abuse?

It is estimated that there are 60 million survivors of childhood sexual abuse in America today (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000).

Sexual child abuse is any sexual act between an adult and a child. Child abuse is also classified as an older child (14 or over) engaging in sexual activity with a younger child (13 and under), especially if it is not a consensual activity. Most state and federal laws require a five-year age difference between the perpetrator and the victim to be criminal abuse. Regardless of the child's behavior or reactions, it is the responsibility of the adult not to engage in sexual acts with children. Sexual abuse is never the child's fault at any age.

- Intercourse, rape, oral sex, sodomy, fondling
- Incest
- Sexual abuse also includes violations of bodily privacy (forcing a child to undress or spying on a child in the bathroom or bedroom)
- Exposing children to adult sexuality — performing sexual acts in front of a child, exposing genitals, telling “dirty” stories, showing pornography to a child
- Commercial exploitation — sexual exploitation through child prostitution or child pornography

Signs that a Child is Being Sexually Abused

- Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts
- Seductiveness
- Avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or body
- Either over compliance or excessive aggression
- Fear of a particular person or family member
- Unexplained bruises, redness, or bleeding of the child's genitals, anus, or mouth or pain in these areas
- Genital sores or milky fluids in the genital area. If there is injury or unusual fluid in the genital area, take your child to a doctor or rape crisis center immediately!

What is Emotional Abuse?

Emotional child abuse can be any act that interferes with a child's mental health or social development. It can be as simple as insults and subtle humiliation or extreme punishment. Emotional abuse is almost always present when another form of abuse is found.

- Intimidation — yelling, screaming, threatening, frightening, bullying
- Belittling, shaming — humiliating, making negative comparisons
- Lack of affection and warmth
- Habitual blaming
- Ignoring, rejecting, confinement, intentional exposure to witnessing violence
- Emotional trauma or duress from kidnapping (of a parent) or being forced to witness abuse
- Smothering a child's development through over-protection

Signs of Emotional Child Abuse

- Apathy, depression
- Hostility
- Difficulty concentrating
- Expressing feelings of self-hatred or worthlessness

What is Neglect?

Neglect is a chronic failure to provide for a child's basic needs. A single act of neglect may not be considered abuse, but recurring acts of neglect are. There are four basic types of neglect: physical neglect, educational neglect, emotional neglect, and medical neglect.

- **Physical Neglect:** Failure to provide food, clothing appropriate for the weather, supervision, a home that is hygienic and safe, and/or medical care, as needed.
- **Educational Neglect:** Failure to enroll a school-age child in school or to provide necessary special education. This includes allowing excessive absences from school.
- **Emotional Neglect:** Failure to provide emotional support, love, and affection. This includes neglect of the child's emotional needs and failure to provide psychological care, as needed. Neglect is not about what you do to a child but what you don't do.
- **Medical Neglect:** Failure to provide adequate medical care or response to injury or illness.

Signs of Neglect

- Clothing that is filthy or never changed or unsuited to the weather
- Slovenly or carelessly dressed, dirty or un-bathed
- Extreme hunger, signs of malnourishment, hunger or begging for food
- Apparent lack of supervision
- "Failure to thrive" — inadequate growth or size as well as delays in socialization or development that are not related to a disorder

Long-Term Effects of Child Abuse

Survivors of childhood trauma are significantly more likely to experience the following:

- Emotional problems
- Low self-esteem
- Depression and anxiety
- Eating disorders
- Relationship difficulties
- Alienation and withdrawal
- Personality disorders
- Physical injury
- Death
- Lifelong health problems
- Cognitive difficulties
- Behavioral effects
- Problems in school and work
- Delinquency
- Teen pregnancy
- Suicide attempts
- Criminal or antisocial behavior
- Substance abuse
- Aggressive behavior
- Spousal and child abuse

Reporting Abuse

Why People Don't Report

Reporting abuse can be stressful and confusing. What will happen if I'm wrong? Will a child lose their family? If they end up in foster care won't that be worse? What if I report my neighbors and they retaliate? Can I report anonymously? I have a bad feeling about this child's situation, but I just don't have any proof!

These are all valid concerns, but none of them should deter you from attempting to protect a child from harm. Regardless of the outcome, take solace in knowing that you made an effort to protect a child you believed to be in danger. It is always best to err on the side of the child.

It is important to understand how to report abuse and what happens when you do. Law enforcement and Child Protective Services (CPS) request that an adult report any *reasonable suspicion* of abuse. You may report anonymously or identify yourself. When you report abuse, CPS will start a file or, if previous reports have been made, add to an existing file. If there is cause for concern, they will have a wellness visit with the family. This is an opportunity for an individual trained in recognizing the signs of abuse to visit the child's environment and make note of any problems. If the situation can be corrected in a simple manner such as instructing a parent on better parenting practices, the investigator will provide the care givers with the information and resources necessary to correct the problem. CPS will follow up with additional visits if necessary. It is the goal of CPS to keep children with their family or reunite families when possible. When a child is removed from the home, it is because CPS has determined it is the best thing for the child and there is serious cause for concern.

How to Report

If you witness abuse, call Child Protective Services. This is the agency responsible for tracking and responding to reports of abuse. You may also call the police. Most reports of suspected child abuse, but not all, are forwarded to Child Protective Services. The phone number for Child Protective Services in your area can be found in your local phone book, online or by calling information (411).

What NOT to do

Do not discuss the incident with other people without asking law enforcement officers first. If a witness is needed to testify, it is important that they are able to keep their impressions from being influenced by others. If you are merely suspicious of child abuse, it is your decision whether or not you feel you should discuss your concerns with other people; but you should be cautious not to spread rumors. Do NOT speak to the media during an investigation or if the situation involves a minor. You might accidentally give out confidential information that the police have withheld from the public. In addition, if you speak to the media about a child, you are violating that child's right to privacy.

Internet Safety

In 1999 it was determined that 25% of minors (age 10-17 years) saw unwanted sexual materials on the Internet. It is now 34%. This increase is in spite of a 22% increase in the use of filtering and blocking software. There has also been a small increase in aggressive sexual solicitation in which solicitors attempt to meet or lure victims offline often by offering money or gifts.

One in every 25 minors is asked for nude or sexually explicit photographs of themselves while online.

The amount of online sexual solicitations and harassment is increasing. Less than 9% of families report online solicitation to authorities.

*U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention and University of New Hampshire's
Crimes Against Children Research Center*

Sixty-one percent of 13- to 17-year-olds have a personal profile on a social networking site such as MySpace.

Seventy-one percent of these minors have received messages online from a stranger, 45% have been asked for personal information by a stranger, 30% have considered meeting a stranger in person, and 14% have actually met a stranger offline. Forty percent of teenagers will chat with a stranger who sends them an unsolicited message online. The scary part of personal networking is that if you have a fake user name with no identifying characteristics and no profile, a predator can still find out your name, address and other personal information. This is due to the fact that everything you type online is searchable.

Cox Communications and NCMC2

Twenty percent of teens believe that it is safe to share personal information online while 37% believe that personal information will not be used inappropriately.

It has also been found that teens whose parents talk to them about Internet safety are much less likely to instant-message, post pictures of themselves online or talk to strangers online.

The Internet is a valuable tool for education, entertainment and social networking, but it can also be dangerous as Internet predators pose an extreme risk to minors and adults using the Internet. More than a million U.S. children use the Internet. This content can include nudity or other sexually explicit material; hate group or racist web sites; promotional material about tobacco, alcohol, or drugs; graphic violence; information on satanic or cult groups; or even recipes for making bombs or other explosives. Adult and child pornography is also readily available and exchanged online. And remember, someone online may not be who they say they are. Someone who says that "she" is a "12-year-old girl" could really be an older man.

There are some important rules to teach your children to increase their Internet safety as well as yours. It is important to share the following guidelines with your children.

- Do not post photos of you, your friends, family or home online. Although you may be able to remove the photos from the areas you posted them, thanks to Internet archiving services they can never be removed from the World Wide Web and can help a predator find you offline.
- You should never share your personal information such as name, address, phone number, social security number, passwords, birth date, school name, or sports teams that you are part of. Establish an online name that has no similarity to your real name and do not put your personal information in an online profile.
- Never open unknown email attachments. They may contain viruses and should be deleted.
- If a person writes something that is mean or makes you uncomfortable, don't respond. Show your parents and allow them to report it to your online service provider.
- Most people do not realize it, but nothing you write on the Web is completely private including e-mail or private accounts. Be careful—what you type can remain online permanently due to Internet archiving services.
- Never meet anyone offline.
- If you are solicited online or receive unacceptable materials, do not respond. Report the abuse or ask an adult to help you report it.

Internet Lingo: What Every Parent Should Know

Below are common abbreviations used in email text messages.

POS - Parent Over Shoulder	2NITE - Tonight
PIR - Parent In Room	AEAP - As Early As Possible
P911 - Parent Alert	ALAP - As Late As Possible
PAW - Parents Are Watching	AWGHTGTTA - Are We Going To Have To Go Through This Again
PAL - Parents Are Listening	
ASL - Age/Sex/Location	B4YKI - Before You Know It
MorF - Male or Female	BOHICA - Bend Over Here It Comes Again
SorG - Straight or Gay	BRB - Be Right Back
LMIRL - Let's Meet In Real Life	BRT - Be Right There
KPC - Keeping Parents Clueless	CWYL - Chat With You Later
TDTM - Talk Dirty To Me	C-P - Sleepy
IWSN - I Want Sex Now	CYT or SYT - See You Tomorrow
NIFOC - Nude In Front Of Computer	E123 - Easy as 1, 2, 3
GYPO - Get Your Pants Off	EM? - Excuse Me?
ADR - Address	EOD - End Of Day
WYCM - Will You Call Me?	F2F - Face To Face
KFY - Kiss For You	FOAF - Friend Of A Friend
MOOS - Member(s) of Opposite Sex	HAK - Hugs And Kisses
MOSS or MOTSS - Member(s) Of the Same Sex	ILU or ILY - I Love You
LOL - Laugh Out Loud	J/C - Just Checking
NAZ - Name, Address, Zip	KOTL - Kiss On The Lips
N-A-YL - In A While	L8R - Later
NM - Never Mind or Nothing Much	LD - Long Distance
IMNSHO - In My Not So Humble Opinion	LMK - Let Me Know
NALOPKT - Not A Lot Of People Know That	OLL - Online Love

Resources

Association of Missing and Exploited Children's Organizations
www.amecoinc.org

Be A Child's Hero — A sexual abuse prevention plan for families
www.beachildshero.com

Childhelp USA — For children or teens who have been abused
1-800-4-A-CHILD, www.childhelpusa.org

Child Molestation Research and Prevention Institute
www.childmolestationprevention.org

Crimes against Children Research Center
www.unh.edu/ccrc/

Cyber Tip Line — Report online sexual solicitation
www.cybertipline.com

Family Watch Dog — A comprehensive nationwide sex offender registry that includes convicted sex offenders whose information may not be displayed on state Web sites
www.familywatchdog.us

FBI — Current information on the FBI's most wanted
www.fbi.gov/wanted.htm

Good Touch Bad Touch
www.goodtouchbadtouch.com

HelpGuide.org
http://www.helpguide.org/mental/child_abuse_physical_emotional_sexual_neglect.htm

International Child Abuse Network — Child abuse prevention and response information
www.yesican.org

Klaas Kids — Extensive resources on abduction prevention and responses
www.klaaskids.org and www.beyondmissing.org

Megan's Law

www.meganslaw.ca.gov

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children – Report missing children after contacting law enforcement

www.Missingkids.com 1-800-The Lost

National Center for Sex Offender Management

www.csom.org

National Center for Victims of Crime

www.ncvc.org/ncvc/main.aspx?dbID=dash_Home

National Association to PROTECT Children – A nonpartisan advocacy center for child protection legislation

<http://protect.org/>

Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website – A public service of the U.S. Department of Justice including information provided by states on registered sex offenders

www.nsopr.gov/

radKIDS – Personal Safety Empowerment Education

<http://www.radkids.org/>

SNAP – Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests

www.snapnetwork.org

Stop it Now – A resource for sex offenders seeking help for their problem

www.stopitnow.org

Surviving Parents Coalition – Parents of children who have been kidnapped, sexually assaulted, murdered, recovered or are still missing working together to present a unified voice for child protection

www.survivingparentscoalition.org and www.notonemorechild.org

US Department of Justice National Sex Offender Registry

www.nsopr.gov

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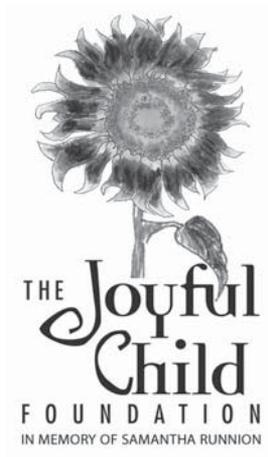
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U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency. Prevention and University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center.



About The Joyful Child Foundation – In Memory of Samantha Runnion

Eleven days before her 6th birthday in July of 2002, a bright, beautiful little girl named Samantha Runnion was kidnapped and murdered by a complete stranger while she was playing outside with a friend. Samantha was found the following day, over seventy miles away on a cliff. The perpetrator was arrested ten days later and eventually convicted of multiple counts including sexual assault, kidnapping and murder. One year earlier, the man who killed Samantha had been acquitted of multiple charges of child sexual abuse against two other little girls.

When Samantha's parents started The Joyful Child Foundation, they did so in part because, in the days after Samantha's murder, they began researching crimes against children. They quickly realized that it wasn't so much that what happened to Samantha was especially rare as it was rare for the national media to cover such a story. They also realized that these kinds of crimes are on the extreme end of the spectrum of the pandemic of violence against children. And so, in memory of their artistic, loving and infectious joy child, they established The Joyful Child Foundation to raise awareness about predatory crimes and empower communities to protect the joy and wonderment of all children.

Please visit www.thejoyfulchild.org to learn more about us.

Together we can stop predatory crimes against children.

Notes

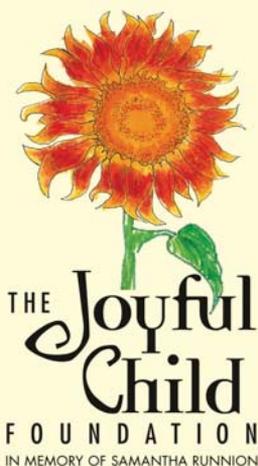
A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



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