



Child abduction

The reality of missing and abducted children

Every day in the United States, more than 2,000 children are reported missing.

We hear so much in the news about children being abducted. From these reports, it would appear that abduction is on the rise. That is not the case. According to the National Crime Information Center, missing person reports decreased by 4.1% in 2001. However, people

are becoming more aware of missing children because the media is covering more stories.

In most child abduction cases, the perpetrator is someone the parents and child know and trust. We should not live in fear and paranoia about this possibility but rather take a proactive approach in teaching ourselves and our children to be safety minded.



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What parents can do

- Never leave young children unattended. Make sure you know where your children are at all times.
- Lock the windows and doors of your car and home.
- Practice basic safety skills. Teach children to use pay phones, how to locate an adult who can help if they need assistance, what are suspicious requests from adults and what to do in that situation. Play the "what if" game.
- Teach them to say NO to any unwelcome, uncomfortable or confusing touch or actions from others.
- Keep up-to-date records of things like pictures, fingerprints, footprints, medical and dental records and birth certificates in a safe, easily assessable place.
- Know who your child's friends and get to know their parents. Keep updated lists of their names and phone numbers.
- Don't have your child's name printed on their clothing or backpacks.
- Carefully interview the babysitters and caregivers you hire and monitor their interactions with your children.
- Build your child's self-esteem. Children with low esteem are at greater risk.
- Listen to your children. Encourage them to not to keep secrets from you.
- Set reasonable rules for computer use by your children. Place the computer in the living room instead of a child's bedroom and learn who your child's online friends are.

Your donation helps provide needed programs. Contact
Child Abuse Prevention Fund
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www.capfund.org