

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

# 2022 MISSING CHILDREN CLEARINGHOUSE



**DAVE YOST**

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

## **Tiffany Papesh**

**Lost, injured or missing | MAPLE HEIGHTS**  
**Missing since June 13, 1980**



Went missing at age: 8  
Current age: 51  
Gender: Female  
Race/Ethnicity: White  
Then height: 4'0"  
Then weight: 58  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Blue



Age progression

Tiffany left home to go to a neighborhood store on an errand. She never returned home. She was last seen wearing a red t-shirt, navy blue shorts, and navy blue tennis shoes. Foul play is suspected.

*If you have information, contact the Maple Heights Police Department at (216) 662-5884.*

## **Jasmine Collins**

**Lost, injured or missing | AKRON**  
**Missing since Oct. 8, 1991**



Nickname or alias: Jas  
Went missing at age: 8 months  
Current age: 32  
Gender: Female  
Race/Ethnicity: Black  
Then height: 1'6"  
Then weight: 25 lbs  
Hair color: Black  
Eye color: Brown



Age progression

Jasmine was last seen leaving with her mom, Melissa Collins, to go to the grocery store.

Melissa did not take any extra clothing for herself or Jasmine or any of Jasmine's baby items with her when they left. Jasmine requires medication for asthma and Melissa has a scar on her upper left arm.

*If you have any information, contact the Fairfax Police Department at (513) 717-7250.*

## **Zaden McKnight**

**Lost, injured or missing | DAYTON**  
**Missing since March 26, 2014**



Went missing at age: 4  
Current age: 13  
Gender: Male  
Race/Ethnicity: Black  
Then height: 3'1"  
Then weight: 95 lbs  
Hair color: Black  
Eye color: Brown



Age progression

Zaden was last known to be wearing blue jeans, a yellow hat, a yellow and blue coat, and red velcro shoes with "Lighting McQueen" on them. Zaden was last seen with his mother, who was recently found deceased, a victim of homicide.

*If you have information, contact the Dayton Police Department at (937) 333-2677.*

## **Deklon Ford**

**Lost, injured or missing | COLUMBUS**  
**Missing since May 6, 2015**



Went missing at age: 8 months  
Current age: 8  
Gender: Male  
Race/Ethnicity: Biracial  
Then height: 2'3"  
Then weight: 35 lbs  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Brown



Age progression

Deklon and his mother, Brittany, were last seen traveling in a 2007 white Nissan Versa with Georgia license plates BUG 16859. The vehicle has since been located. They were last known to be in the area of Hardin, Montana.

*If you have any information, contact the Fairfax Police Department at (513) 717-7250.*

**For more information, visit [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingChildren](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingChildren).**



# DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 25, 2023

Mike DeWine  
Governor, State of Ohio  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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Matthew Damschroder  
Director, Department of Job and  
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Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Colleagues,

It's the nightmare nobody wants to think about: A child goes missing. Yet it happens with alarming frequency.

Each year during the past decade, nearly 18,000 children have been reported missing in Ohio. Although the vast majority were recovered safely, some, tragically, have not been found, and some have been found dead.

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) has a duty to protect the unprotected, a duty especially poignant in matters concerning children. This report details the work done in 2022 by the Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse, part of the Missing Persons Unit of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, an arm of the AGO.

The clearinghouse compiles data about missing children statewide and assists local law enforcement agencies and victims' families. It also works with the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to educate and aid law enforcement officers, teachers, parents and children.

The findings from 2022 are overwhelmingly positive. Of the 15,555 children reported missing, 14,940 – or 96% – were recovered safely by the end of the year. The success rate, which is in line with previous years, stands as a testament to the perseverance and passion of Ohio's outstanding law enforcement professionals.

Still, there's work to be done. Kids run away every day, and abductions, sadly, are a fact of life. My office is committed to providing the expertise and resources so that all of these kids – 100% of them – can be returned to the arms of loved ones and given the hope for a brighter future.

For more information, please visit [OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons](https://OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons) or call 800-325-5604.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost  
Ohio Attorney General

## Introduction and overview

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse was established by the Ohio General Assembly in 1993 as a central repository for statistics and information about missing children throughout the state. It serves as an investigative resource to help law enforcement and families locate missing children. It also makes educational information available and coordinates training, collaboration and information sharing in Ohio.

The Ohio Missing Persons Unit, housed in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation within the Attorney General's Office, operates the Missing Children Clearinghouse. Because it is part of BCI's Criminal Intelligence Unit, the Missing Persons Unit can better coordinate BCI resources, facilitate the quickest possible response to missing person cases and provide immediate access to important investigative tools. In addition to focusing on missing children, the Missing Persons Unit plays an integral role in cases and issues involving missing adults, human trafficking and unidentified human remains.

The Missing Persons Unit has a 24-hour toll-free hotline (**800-325-5604**) through which the unit fields questions from law enforcement, parents, community members and the media.

The unit's website ([OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons](http://OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons)) is also available to provide visibility for missing person cases and as a central location for families and the public seeking resources and guidance. The site, which features details and photos of missing children and adults, allows visitors to submit tips and print posters for specific cases. It also includes links to information about Ohio's unsolved homicides and unidentified remains. To raise awareness about missing person cases, BCI utilizes social-networking websites, including Facebook and Twitter.

To further increase public awareness, the Attorney General's Office prints pictures and information about missing person cases on its business envelopes. Two missing persons are featured on each envelope, along with contact information for the Missing Persons Unit. Different individuals are featured each time a new order of envelopes is printed, with missing children and adults alternated on envelope orders.

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

- Issuing Endangered Missing Child and Endangered Missing Adult Alerts.
- Collaborating with others on the issuance of AMBER Alerts.
- Analyzing public websites and law enforcement databases to help locate children.
- Providing a free program to collect DNA from a missing person's family so the missing person can be identified.
- Providing training to law enforcement, other professionals, students and the public.
- Providing investigative guidance, resource recommendations and assistance.

When a child goes missing, parents should contact local law enforcement immediately. The clearinghouse will take a supplemental report and ensure that the child's name is entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database. Parents should also file a report with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC).



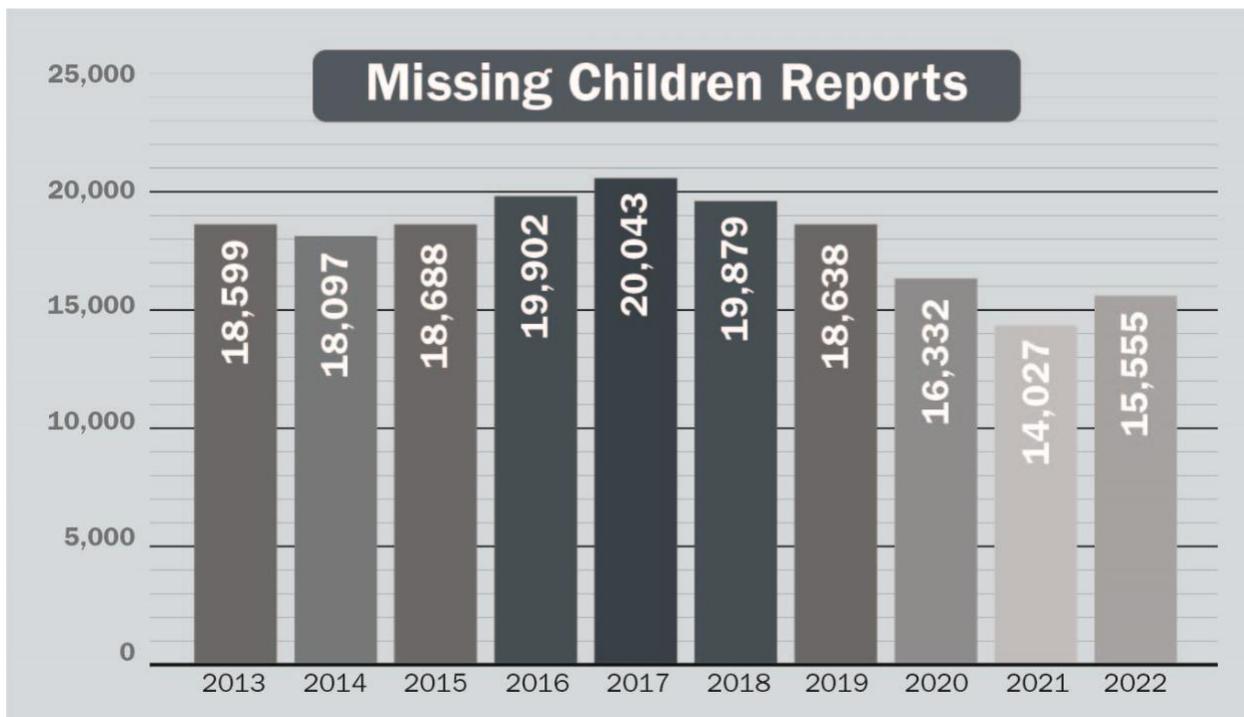
## 2022 statistics

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse receives statistics on missing persons in Ohio whose cases have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database by law enforcement agencies.

Based on the 2022 entries, the clearinghouse documented reports of 20,617 people missing, 1,603 more than the year before. Of the 2022 total, 15,555 involved reports of missing children, 1,528 more than the previous year.

Trend: Although the total number represents an increase from the previous year, reports of missing children had been trending downward in recent years.

The trend line for the past 10 years:



The gender of children reported missing were 8,224 female and 7,331 male. Authorities reported that 96% of the missing children – 14,940 – were recovered safely by the year’s end. **Open source data revealed that four of the children reported missing were found deceased in 2022.**

The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) implemented a Missing Person File in 1975 to track missing person reports across the United States. Records in the Missing Person File are retained until the individual is located or the record is canceled by the entering agency.

**Here are NCIC categories of missing persons and Ohio’s 2022 case numbers:**

- Individuals under the age of 21 who are missing and do not meet the criteria set forth in other categories: **14,668 Ohio cases**

- Persons of any age who are missing under circumstances indicating that their physical safety may be in danger: **2,262 Ohio cases**
- Persons of any age who are missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance may not have been voluntary (such as abductions): **85 Ohio cases**
- Individuals of any age who are missing and under proven physical/mental disability or who are senile, thereby subjecting them or others to personal and immediate danger: **714 Ohio cases**
- Persons of any age who are missing after a catastrophe: **Four Ohio cases**
- Missing individuals over the age of 21 who do not meet the criteria for any other category and for whom there is a reasonable safety concern: **2,404 Ohio cases**

When entering a missing person into NCIC, law enforcement agencies have the option of noting the circumstances of the disappearance, if known. About half of all missing person reports filed with NCIC contain this information.

### **Missing person circumstances**

In cases for which circumstances were specified, these are the NCIC descriptions and Ohio's 2022 numbers:

**Runaway:** A child leaves home without permission and stays away overnight. **8,525 Ohio cases**

**Abducted by noncustodial parent:** A parent, other family member or person acting on behalf of the parent or other family member takes, keeps or conceals a child (or children), depriving another individual of his or her custody or visitation rights. Family abductions often happen before or after a court issues a custody determination. Ohio Revised Code Section 2919.23 spells out what constitutes family abduction, also known as "interference with custody," and the accompanying penalties. Criminal statutes throughout the country vary as to the title of the offense and the conduct considered unlawful. Other terms for "family abduction" include "parental kidnapping," "child abduction," "child snatching" and "custodial interference." **34 Ohio cases**

**Abducted by stranger:** Two scenarios qualify as nonfamily abductions. In the first, a nonfamily perpetrator takes a child using physical force or threat of bodily harm and/or detains a child in an isolated place using physical force or threat of bodily harm without lawful authority or the permission of a parent/guardian. Under this scenario, the child is taken for at least one hour. In the second scenario, the child is taken and detained, or voluntarily accompanies a nonfamily perpetrator who conceals the child's whereabouts, demands ransom or expresses the intention to keep the child permanently. Within this category, a "stereotypical kidnapping" is defined as involving someone the child does not know, or someone of slight acquaintance, who holds the child overnight, kills the child, demands ransom or intends to keep the child permanently. **Five Ohio cases**

**Adult (federally required entry):** Missing person cases involving individuals older than 18 and younger than 21 must be reported to NCIC under 42 U.S. Code 5779 (c). **One Ohio case**

## Attempted child abductions

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse works with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) to identify attempted abductions and other suspicious incidents involving child victims, to provide technical assistance and resources for law enforcement, and to raise awareness among parents and children.

In Ohio, the clearinghouse documented eight attempted child abductions involving six girls and two boys. These stats include incidents reported to NCMEC and to the media. The suspects were driving vehicles in 33% of the situations.

Among the incidents for which the outcome is known, 78% involved children being able to walk or run away with no physical contact having occurred. Among the incidents for which the suspect's method of attempted abduction is known, 75% used physical force or a weapon and 25% engaged the children in conversation by asking for directions or help. Four suspects were arrested.

Local law enforcement is encouraged to contact NCMEC or Ohio MCCH with reports of attempted abduction, sexual assault, indecent exposure, short-term abductions (abduct and release) and any other suspicious incidents involving child victims and adults unknown to them. Please email [OhioMCCH@OhioAGO.gov](mailto:OhioMCCH@OhioAGO.gov) for more information or to report an incident in your jurisdiction.

## Tools for finding missing children

### AMBER Alert

Ohio's statewide AMBER Alert program was launched on Jan. 1, 2003 – a voluntary partnership involving law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, transportation agencies and the wireless communications industry to activate an urgent bulletin in the most serious child-abduction cases. The goal of an AMBER Alert is to instantly galvanize the entire community to assist in the search for, and safe recovery of, the child.

The AMBER Alert is rooted in the national effort to publicize child abductions following the 1996 kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman of Dallas, Texas. Although named for Amber, the program's title also stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response.

In 2022, Ohio law enforcement issued eight AMBER Alerts through the Ohio AMBER Alert Plan involving 11 children. All 11 of the children were recovered safely.

Thankfully, most AMBER Alerts lead to the child's safe recovery. For example:

- On Sept. 19, 2022, the Akron Police Department issued an AMBER Alert for an abducted 4-year-old boy. The child had been taken by his mother's boyfriend after the boyfriend shot the mother multiple times in her home. After the alert was issued, the suspect dropped the child off at a friend's house.

A staff member from the Missing Persons Unit represents the attorney general on the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, along with a victim advocate and representatives from the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol, FBI, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Communications Committee and Ohio Association of Broadcasters.

Here are the steps taken during an Ohio AMBER Alert:

- Law enforcement receives the initial call of a missing child and responds to the scene.
- Law enforcement confirms that the missing child's case meets AMBER Alert criteria:
  - The abducted child is younger than 18.
  - The abduction poses a credible, immediate threat of serious bodily harm or death to the child.
  - The child is not a runaway and has not been abducted as a result of a child custody dispute (unless such a dispute poses a credible, immediate threat of serious bodily harm or death to the child).
  - There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, the abductor and the circumstances to indicate that the alert will help locate the child.
- Law enforcement issues a radio broadcast to all neighboring law enforcement agencies and enters pertinent information into the NCIC database. The FBI, State Highway Patrol, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse are notified of the alert.
- The Highway Patrol and the investigating agency discuss case circumstances to verify that the case meets AMBER Alert criteria. The clearinghouse also may be consulted.
- The Highway Patrol sends a statewide teletype to all Ohio law enforcement agencies alerting them to a child abduction.
- Law enforcement and broadcasters use the Emergency Alert System to air a description of the missing child and suspected abductor.
- The Highway Patrol uses clearinghouse alert software on the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway, maintained by BCI, to issue emails, faxes and cellphone text messages containing alert information. These go to all partner, including law enforcement agencies, private and public agencies, businesses and citizens who have signed up to receive the alerts.
- The Highway Patrol activates ODOT signboards and posts information on the Ohio AMBER Alert Plan website, [OhioAmberPlan.org](http://OhioAmberPlan.org).
- The Highway Patrol disseminates the alert via Twitter. To receive these alerts, visit Twitter and follow [@ohioamberalert](https://twitter.com/ohioamberalert).
- The AMBER Alert phone number is activated. Members of the public can call **877-AMBER-OH (877-262-3764)** to report a tip or listen to the AMBER Alert description.
- The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children sends secondary alert notifications via sites such as AOL, Facebook, Twitter, Google and Yahoo; notifies truck drivers and Uber drivers; and sends Wireless Emergency Alert messages to cellphones.
- The BCI Child Abduction Response Team coordinator contacts the investigating agency to provide BCI resources and assistance.

## Endangered Missing Child Alert

This alert is designed to seek assistance for a missing child when law enforcement cannot determine whether the child was abducted but the disappearance otherwise meets AMBER Alert criteria. Once local law enforcement makes a request to the clearinghouse, an automated system alerts all Ohio law enforcement agencies about the missing child.

The Endangered Missing Child Alert provides a broadcast to law enforcement agencies in targeted areas; sends faxes and emails to the media; can, if requested, activate the local Child Abduction Response Team (CART); and uses secondary notification systems to inform the public. The BCI CART coordinator also contacts the investigating agency to provide BCI assistance and resources.

The clearinghouse sends Endangered Missing Child Alerts to participating trucking companies within a local or regional area designated by law enforcement. The companies post the information — sent by fax and email — in their drivers' lounges and dispatch offices, and they include the alerts in dispatches to their drivers.

In 2022, the clearinghouse issued four Endangered Missing Child Alerts involving five children. All five children were recovered safe.

## Responsibilities of law enforcement

According to Ohio Revised Code Section 2901.30, which addresses missing children cases, law enforcement must:

- Take missing children reports and investigate them promptly.
- Make a concerted effort to locate the child.
- Submit information about missing children to the NCIC immediately after a report.
- Notify the missing child or children's parents, guardians, custodians or caregivers of updates and of the submission of information to the NCIC.
- Notify the missing child's school to have the child's school records flagged, if appropriate.
- Notify other law enforcement agencies of missing children reports.
- Assist other law enforcement agencies in the investigation of their missing child cases.
- Obtain dental records of children missing longer than 30 days.
- Submit to NICC information on found children.

## National Missing Children's Day

The nation marks National Missing Children's Day each May 25. In a campaign to commemorate the day, the U.S. Department of Justice hosts the National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest to create an opportunity to discuss the issue of missing and exploited children with students and to promote child safety.

BCI's Missing Persons Unit manages the contest in Ohio and invites fifth-graders to send artwork with the theme of "Bringing Our Missing Children Home." The state's first-place poster contest winner is submitted to compete in the national competition.

The Ohio winners below were selected by a panel of judges assembled by the Missing Persons Unit:

- First place: Asa Gatliff, Bataan Memorial Intermediate, Port Clinton
- Second place: Marley Ousley, Wellston Intermediate, Wellston
- Third place: Jackson Howell, Bataan Memorial Intermediate, Port Clinton

The Ohio winner is honored at the annual Attorney General's Two Days in May Conference on Victim Assistance.

## Collaborations

The Ohio Missing Persons Unit collaborates with many agencies and organizations to locate missing and abducted children and prevent future incidents. Among them are:

**Ohio human trafficking task forces:** The unit aids various human trafficking task forces in Ohio – including local, state and federal law enforcement; victim advocacy agencies; and prosecutors’ offices. Staff members from the unit support the task force investigations, share intelligence and provide resources – efforts that help victims and bring offenders to justice.

**Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition:** The unit is a member of the Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition, which works to end human trafficking through public awareness, service to trafficked persons, advocacy, and resource and training support for law enforcement.

**I-SEARCH:** The InterState Enforcement Agencies to Recover Children Advisory Council aids in the identification and recovery of missing children. Midwestern member states are Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

**Project LINK:** BCI is the central repository for information regarding Ohio missing persons and unidentified remains. Through BCI’s Project LINK (Linking Individuals Not Known), after a person is missing for 30 days, a relative may submit a DNA sample for deposit into a database to compare with unidentified remains found throughout the country. The Project LINK program was created in 1999 under Ohio Revised Code Section 109.573. In 2022, 114 LINK cases were submitted to BCI and 93 were closed.

**NamUs:** The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System is the online repository for records involving missing people and unidentified human remains. The initiative, launched in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Justice, aims to reduce the number of unidentified bodies held at coroner and medical examiner offices throughout the United States. Missing person records in the database are cross-checked with an unidentified remains database in hopes of confirming identification.

**Ohio Child Abduction Response Team (CART):** A Child Abduction Response Team is designed to respond when a missing child is considered to be in immediate danger. The Ohio Attorney General’s Office – along with the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police and the Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Association – leads the Child Abduction Response Team model for Ohio. Multiple teams are located throughout the state, and they have helped recover missing children statewide.

## Assistance to the public

### Online resources

The Missing Persons Unit website, [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons), provides valuable information to the public, including:

- Steps to take when a child is missing.
- Photographs and printable posters to raise awareness of missing children.
- Publications.
- Safety tips.
- Links to Ohio's AMBER Alert program, training information, other state clearinghouses and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

The public plays a vital role in the recovery of missing children through another web-based resource, the Ohio Citizen Alert Network. The critical software program notifies the public when children are abducted or missing in life-threatening circumstances. By subscribing to receive alerts on the Ohio Attorney General's website, you can learn of missing children alerts through text messages and emails. To subscribe, go to [www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Ohio-Amber-Plan](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Ohio-Amber-Plan).

## Assistance to law enforcement and other agencies

### Training

The Missing Persons Unit gives training presentations on AMBER Alerts, other missing person alert programs, the Child Abduction Response Team, first-responder programs, child safety, reunification, human trafficking and resources for law enforcement.

During 2022, the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee hosted a one-day Alerts Conference. The conference was held at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy and was attended by more than 100 law enforcement officers and dispatchers statewide. Other trainings offered during the year focused on law enforcement assistance and resources, Project LINK and human trafficking.

The clearinghouse conducted 12 training sessions for law enforcement throughout Ohio in 2022. Law enforcement officers, dispatchers and analysts received instruction on missing children investigations, safety tips for children, AMBER Alert protocol, and protocols for initiating other missing person alerts.

Upon request, the clearinghouse provides three investigative manuals to law enforcement:

- “Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigations and Program Management,” which provides step-by-step investigation checklists for family and nonfamily abductions, lost children and runaways
- “The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Child Abduction Response Plan,” which details techniques essential to conducting abduction investigations
- “Long-term Missing Children Guide for Law Enforcement,” which provides strategies for finding long-term missing children

The clearinghouse also offers a best-practices guide for law enforcement for missing person cases. The guide, titled “Legal Mandates and Best Practices Protocol for Law Enforcement in Missing Persons Cases,” can be obtained through the clearinghouse or the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. Copies of other materials, brochures and applicable Ohio Revised Code citations are distributed at training sessions and, upon request, by mail. A list of all available publications can be found at the end of this report.

### Investigative assistance

Law enforcement help for missing child investigations is also offered by the clearinghouse. This help includes:

- Using internet research tools, posting the child’s photo on the clearinghouse website and advising peace officers of available resources, including other local agencies with expertise.
- Conducting online searches to locate the addresses, telephone numbers, professional licenses, neighbors and family members of people who may have taken or may be associated with a missing child.

- Analyzing law enforcement records to see whether the child has been incarcerated, taken into the custody of child protective services, obtained a new driver's license or state ID card, or had other contact with law enforcement agencies.
- Accessing various social-networking websites to determine which missing children may have posted profiles, which sometimes reveal details about children's whereabouts, the reasons for their disappearance, and their friends and contacts.
- Providing suspect and associate work-ups to determine possible places the child might go and the risk of danger to the child.
- Working with staff from these BCI units:
  - Special Victims Unit, which aids local law enforcement with abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking and internet crimes against children.
  - The Criminal Intelligence Unit, which can provide background information on missing individuals and suspects.
  - The Special Investigations Unit, which can provide an agent to directly assist with a local investigation.
  - The Cyber Crimes Unit, which provides forensic analysis of many types of technology.
  - The Laboratory Division, which can identify best family candidates for submission of DNA and processes samples for DNA.

In addition, the Ohio Attorney General's Office featured hundreds of missing children's photos on posters in conjunction with AMBER Alerts and Endangered Missing Child Alerts.

BCI employs a trained forensic artist who specializes in combining art and science to help identify suspects and missing persons. The artist offers three main services:

- Composite imagery, which can generate leads in locating a person of interest in a missing person investigation, is the process of creating an image through cognitive interviews of witnesses.
- Image modification can be used to create postmortem or age-progression images. Postmortem imaging converts an autopsy photo into an image of what the person may have looked like when alive and serves as a tool to generate tips that assist in identification. An age-progression image is utilized years after a person went missing. The forensic artist modifies the image of the person to resemble what he or she might look like currently.
- Facial reconstruction can be used for cases in which an unknown person's skull has been found. One process the artist uses starts with a CT scan made of the skull at a local hospital. The scan is converted to a 3-D image that is then 3-D printed, producing an exact replica of the skull. The replica is used to create an image or a clay model of what the person looked like, which can be forwarded to law enforcement and the news media to generate tips. The process also preserves the remains and any evidence that might be left behind.

It is important to employees of BCI to help give faces – and, with some luck, names – back to unidentified persons.

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse works closely with human trafficking investigators and social-service agencies and can help determine whether a child is a victim of (or at risk for) human trafficking. When children are identified as victims or at high risk, the clearinghouse shares the

information with human trafficking task forces, investigators and social-service agencies. Any resulting tips are shared with the investigating law enforcement agency.

In addition, the clearinghouse provides law enforcement with cellphone-tracking information, details on obtaining warrants for social-networking sites, satellite photos of areas pertinent to searches for missing children, direction on legal issues, Child Abduction Response Team assistance and details on alert procedures.

A BCI special agent serves as Ohio's Child Abduction Response Team coordinator. The coordinator contacts agencies during any endangered missing person case and offers additional assistance and resources, participates in Ohio CART Steering Committee meetings, updates the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, helps create policy and procedures, and coordinates the CART response to investigations.

### **Ohio Department of Health**

Under a policy the clearinghouse developed with the Ohio Department of Health, the department flags and holds the birth certificates of missing children involved in an AMBER Alert or Endangered Missing Child Alert and notifies law enforcement of requests for missing children's birth certificates.

### **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**

Case managers from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) provide the clearinghouse with information that can help locate a missing child and prevent future disappearances. The clearinghouse provides training to ODJFS employees about procedural issues involving the agencies and other information about missing children.

### **Other assistance**

#### **Human trafficking**

Human trafficking forces the most vulnerable members of society, including children, into modern-day slavery. In 2022, the National Center for Missing & Exploited received more than 19,000 reports of possible child sex trafficking. Of the children reported missing to NCMEC in 2022 who had run from the care of child welfare, 18% were likely victims of child sex trafficking.

The Missing Persons Unit assists local law enforcement agencies with identifying missing children who are at high risk of victimization for sex trafficking. The unit then refers the missing child case to BCI's Special Victims Unit, which assists in efforts to locate these children, including those confirmed as sex trafficking victims. The Missing Persons Unit also shares information about missing children with local law enforcement, federal partners, and social-service agencies that work with human trafficking victims.

## National resources and partners

The **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children** works to prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation, find missing children, and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families and the professionals who serve them. For details, visit [missingkids.org](http://missingkids.org) or call **800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)**.

The Missing Persons Unit collaborates with the **U.S. State Department** regarding outgoing and incoming child abduction cases with an international connection. Within the State Department, the **Office of Children's Issues** assists parents whose children have been abducted in Ohio and taken to a foreign country or taken from foreign country and brought to Ohio. The State Department provides information for parents and/or legal guardians that they can use to identify options – both criminal and civil – to pursue the return of an abducted child. The Office of Children's Issues works closely and cooperatively with a wide range of U.S. and foreign entities, including law enforcement, nongovernmental organizations and foreign governments. Call **888-407-4747** for more information.

The **National Runaway Safeline** is the federally designated national communication system for homeless and runaway youths. The organization provides crisis intervention, referrals to local resources, and educational and prevention services to youth, families and community members around the clock. The group is known for its Home Free Program – which, in conjunction with Greyhound Lines and United Airlines – provides runaways with free transportation home. For information, visit [1800runaway.org](http://1800runaway.org).

**A Child Is Missing Inc.** provides a first-responder program to law enforcement. The program's rapid response telephone system alerts residents in a targeted area about a missing child, elderly person or individual with mental impairments or disabilities. The program serves several states, including Ohio. A Child Is Missing works in concert with AMBER Alert and other child-safety programs and can be activated only by law enforcement. No special equipment or personnel are needed for the program, which is free. For information, visit [achildissing.org](http://achildissing.org).

**Code Adam**, a National Center for Missing & Exploited Children program sponsored by Old Navy, is a powerful search tool for lost and potentially abducted children used in hundreds of thousands of locations across the United States. It is designed to help businesses, parks, government buildings and other establishments put safety protocols in place to respond when a child goes missing. The program was created in memory of 6-year-old Adam Walsh, who was abducted from a Florida department store and later found murdered. Adam's parents, John and Revé Walsh, founded the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Code Adam Kits can be obtained through that nonprofit organization. They include a training video, a protocols reference poster, a manager's checklist to ensure full implementation, and a quiz for employees. For details, visit [missingkids.org/education/training/codeadam](http://missingkids.org/education/training/codeadam).

**Team Adam**, another program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, provides rapid, on-site assistance to law enforcement agencies and families in serious cases of missing children. Team Adam consultants are retired law enforcement professionals with years of investigative experience at the federal, state and/or local levels. Consultants from Team Adam rapidly deploy to sites where these cases are unfolding. They provide on-the-ground technical

assistance and connect local law enforcement to a national network of resources. The program's unique access to the center's resources, coupled with its consultants' years of law enforcement experience, often provides departments with the added tools needed to better address complex, media-intensive cases. For more information, visit [esp.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/publications/nc170.pdf](http://esp.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/publications/nc170.pdf).

**Team HOPE** (Help Offering Parents Empowerment) assists families with missing children by offering counseling, resources, empowerment and support from trained volunteers who have (or have had) missing children. For information, call **866-305-HOPE (866-305-4673)** or visit [missingkids.org/gethelpnow/support/teamhope](http://missingkids.org/gethelpnow/support/teamhope).

## Related publications

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse can provide the following publications, most produced by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children or the National Runaway Safeline, to local agencies:

- Child Fingerprint ID Cards
- "Keep Your Child Safe" palm card
- Child Safety Game Sheet
- A Child is Missing
- A Family Resource Guide on International Parental Kidnapping
- What About Me? Coping with the Abduction of a Brother or Sister
- When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide
- You're Not Alone
- Children Missing From Care
- For Healthcare Professionals
- Family Abduction: Prevention & Response
- Litigating International Child Abduction Cases
- Missing Children, State Care & Child Sex Trafficking
- Safe to Compete
- Staying Home Alone
- KidSmartz: Preventing Abduction

## Know the Rules for Child Safety

- Know the Rules (After School Safety for Children Home Alone)
- Know the Rules (For Child Safety in Amusement or Theme Parks)
- Know the Rules (For Child Safety in Youth Sports)
- Know the Rules (General Parental Tips to Help Keep Your Child Safer)
- Know the Rules (Safety Tips for the Holidays)
- Know the Rules (School Safety Tips)
- Know the Rules (For Going to and from School More Safely)

## Law enforcement resources

- AMBER Alert Investigator Checklist
- Investigative Checklist for First Responders
- Checklist for Public-Safety Telecommunicators
- Investigative Checklist for Law Enforcement When Responding to Missing Children with Special Needs
- A Law Enforcement Guide on International Parental Kidnapping
- Missing Child Emergency Response- Quick Reference Guide
- Investigative Checklist for Law Enforcement When Helping Unsupervised and Runaway Children
- Law Enforcement: Resource Information
- Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management
- Long-term Missing Children Guide for Law Enforcement: Law enforcement strategies for finding long-term missing children
- Child Molesters Who Abduct
- Child Molesters (A Behavioral Analysis)
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Publication Order Form
- Child Sex Rings: Behavioral Analysis
- Children Traumatized in Sex Rings
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation
- Investigator's Guide to Missing Child Cases

# OHIO'S 2022-2023 NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY POSTER CONTEST

The U.S. Department of Justice sponsors the National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest, which asks fifth-graders to design around the theme of "Bringing our missing children home." Here are the winners from Ohio for 2023:



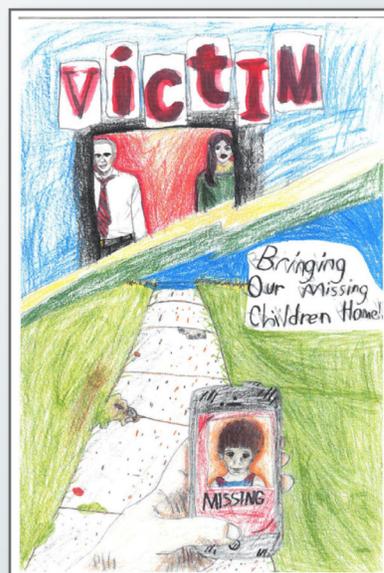
**1st place | Asa Gatliff**  
Bataan Memorial Intermediate, Port Clinton



**2nd place | Marley Ousley**  
Wellston Intermediate, Wellston



**3rd place | Jackson Howell**  
Bataan Memorial Intermediate, Port Clinton





**DAVE YOST**  
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

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**MISSING CHILDREN  
CLEARINGHOUSE  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

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Ohio Attorney General's Office  
**OHIO BUREAU OF CRIMINAL  
INVESTIGATION**  
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