

*Protecting Ohio's Families*



Ohio Attorney General's Office

**2015**

# MISSING CHILDREN CLEARINGHOUSE

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**MIKE DEWINE**

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★





## **Mohamed Jaafar**

*Abduction by family member*

Missing from: Toledo, Ohio  
Missing since: 1/3/2006  
Missing age: 3  
Current age: 13  
Date of birth: 10/20/2002  
Gender: Male  
Race/Ethnicity: Kuwaitian/Lebanese  
Height: 3' 0"  
Weight: 50 lbs  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Brown

Mohamed speaks fluent English and Arabic. He was allegedly abducted by his father, Hilal Hasan Ali Jaafar, on January 20, 2006. They are believed to be in Muscat, Oman in Al-Khouair.

If you have any information, contact Federal Bureau of Investigation (Cleveland, Ohio) at 216-522-1400.



## **Edward Melanson**

*Abduction by family member*

Nickname or alias: Eddie (Haneul) Lee  
Missing from: Hubbard, Ohio  
Missing since: 8/9/2007  
Missing age: 4  
Current age: 12  
Date of birth: 7/12/2003  
Gender: Male  
Race/Ethnicity: Biracial  
Height: 3' 6"  
Weight: 36 lbs  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Brown

Edward was abducted by his non-custodial mother, Kyong-Mi Lee. They may be traveling to South Korea. Edward has a mark on his left lower cheek.

If you have any information, contact Hubbard Police Department at 330-534-1133.



## **Emily Sawyer**

*Lost, injured or missing*

Missing from: Toledo, Ohio  
Missing since: 4/1/1988  
Missing age: 4  
Current age: 32  
Date of birth: 4/6/1983  
Gender: Female  
Race/Ethnicity: White  
Height: 4' 0"  
Weight: 50 lbs  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Blue

Emily is believed to be traveling with her non-custodial mother. She was last seen on University Boulevard in Toledo, Ohio.

If you have any information, contact Toledo Police Department at 419-245-3340.



## **Amaria Ashanti-Watkins**

*Endangered runaway*

Missing from: Massillon, Ohio  
Missing since: 8/20/2014  
Missing age: 17  
Current age: 19  
Date of birth: 12/15/1996  
Gender: Female  
Race/Ethnicity: Black  
Height: 5' 2"  
Weight: 107  
Hair color: Brown  
Eye color: Brown

Amaria was last seen in Massillon, Ohio on August 20, 2014.

If you have any information, contact Regional Emergency Dispatch Center at 330-837-9346,



# MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

May 25, 2016

The Honorable John Kasich  
Governor, State of Ohio  
77 S. High St.  
Riffe Center, 30th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Cynthia Dungey  
Director, Department of Job  
and Family Services  
30 E. Broad St., 32nd Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Clifford Rosenberger  
Speaker, Ohio House of Representatives  
77 S. High St.  
Riffe Center, 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Keith Faber  
President, Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square,  
Statehouse, 2nd Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Tom Stickrath  
Superintendent,  
Bureau of Criminal Investigation  
P.O. Box 365  
London, OH 43140

Dear Colleagues:

Protecting Ohio's families and children is the mission that drives everything we do in the Ohio Attorney General's Office. As part of that responsibility, the Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse has been part of the Ohio Attorney General's Office for 21 years, collaborating with parents, schools, law enforcement agencies, and other partners to keep children safe.

I am pleased to present this report, which details the Clearinghouse's activities in 2015.

The Missing Persons Unit within my office's Bureau of Criminal Investigation oversees the Clearinghouse, which compiles state data on missing children, assists law enforcement and families, and works with the Ohio departments of Education and Job and Family Services to train and provide resources for peace officers, teachers, parents, and children. The Clearinghouse issues Ohio's Endangered Missing Child Alerts and Endangered Missing Adult Alerts, coordinates with law enforcement on AMBER Alerts, and promotes awareness of issues related to abductions, human trafficking, and runaway children.

More than 18,550 children were reported missing in 2015. Fortunately, 97 percent were recovered safely. The safe recovery of a missing child requires coordination and a quick response among agencies as well as critical help and input from the public. All of us have a role to play in making sure missing kids return home safely.

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

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine  
Ohio Attorney General

## Introduction and Overview

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse (MCCH) was established by the Ohio General Assembly in 1993. MCCH is a central repository for statistics and information about missing children in the State of Ohio. It serves as an investigative resource to help law enforcement and families locate missing children. MCCH also makes educational information available, including news releases, training updates, and dates for child abuse prevention and safety fairs.

In 2011, the Ohio Missing Persons Unit (MPU) was relocated to better coordinate and convey information about services related to missing children and adults. The unit operates MCCH and is part of the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). Because it is part of BCI's Criminal Intelligence Unit, the MPU 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 MPU plays an integral role in cases and issues involving missing adults, human trafficking, and unidentified human remains.

The MPU has a toll-free hotline, **800-325-5604**, to field calls from law enforcement, parents, community members, and the media. The hotline is answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The MPU's website, [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons](http://www.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 features details and photos of missing children and adults, and 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. BCI utilizes social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to raise awareness about missing person cases.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office prints pictures and information about missing person cases on its business envelopes to increase public awareness. Two missing persons are featured on each envelope along with the MPU's contact information. 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 MPU 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.
- Using social networking websites, public records, and law enforcement databases to help locate children.
- Providing a free program to collect DNA from a missing person's family so that person may be identified.
- Training law enforcement, other professionals, school children, and the public.
- Providing investigative guidance, resource recommendations, and assistance.

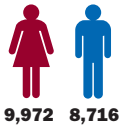
Parents should contact local law enforcement immediately if a child goes missing. MCCH also will take a supplemental report and ensure that the child's name is entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database. Parents also should file a report with the National Center for Missing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

# 2015 BY THE NUMBERS

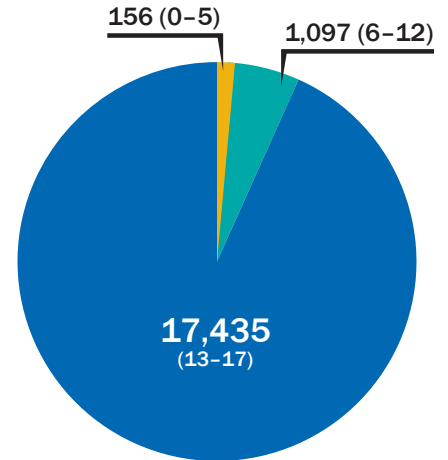


# 18,688

## MISSING CHILDREN REPORTS



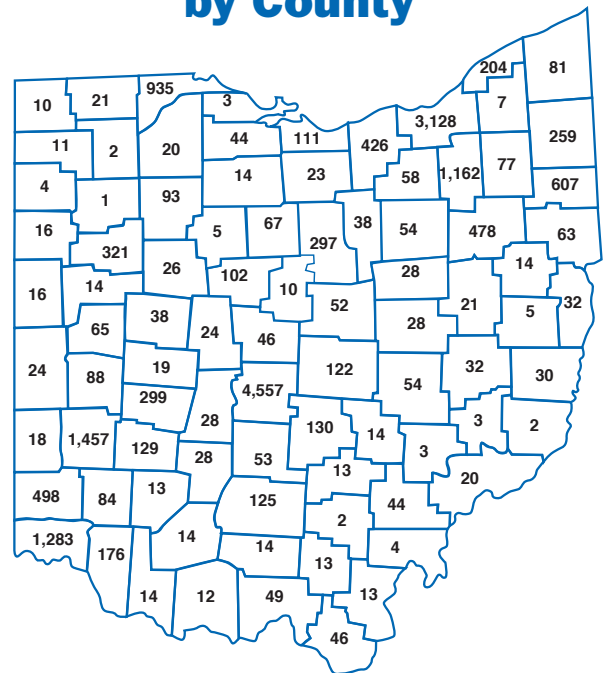
Missing Children Reports per Age



Missing Children Reports per Month



Missing Children Reports by County



**48**  
TRAININGS  
8,358 ATTENDEES

**2** INTERNATIONAL  
HAGUE CASES

**22 NEW**  
**LINK CASES**  
(6 CASES CLOSED)

**AMBER**  
**ALERT**  
**12**

## 2015 Statistics

The Clearinghouse receives monthly statistics on missing Ohio children whose cases law enforcement agencies have entered into the NCIC database.

Based on these statistics, the Clearinghouse documented 23,466 persons reported missing in 2015. Of those, 18,688 were children, with 9,972 females and 8,716 males reported missing. Authorities reported that 97 percent – a total of 18,099 children – were recovered safely.

Four children reported missing were recovered deceased in 2015. One male was the victim of homicide, and one female and two males died as a result of an accidental drowning.

NCIC implemented a Missing Person File in 1975 to track missing person reports nationwide. 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 the 2015 Ohio cases within each:**

- Individual under the age of 21 who is missing and does not meet any of the entry criteria set forth in other categories, **17,631 Ohio cases.**
- Person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety may be in danger, **236 Ohio cases.**
- Person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance may not have been voluntary (such as abductions and kidnappings), **21 Ohio cases.**
- Individual of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting him/her or others to personal and immediate danger, **67 Ohio cases.**
- Person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe, **0 Ohio cases.**
- Missing individual over the age of 21 who does not meet the criteria for any other category and for whom there is a reasonable concern for his/her safety, **225 Ohio cases.**

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

**Missing Person Circumstances and Ohio entries within each category in 2015 are:**

**Runaway:** A child leaves home without permission and stays away overnight. **11,295 Ohio entries.**

**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 can occur 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 across 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. **29 Ohio entries.**

**Abducted by Stranger:** Two scenarios qualify as nonfamily abductions. In the first scenario, a nonfamily perpetrator takes a child by using physical force or threat of bodily harm and/or detains a child in an isolated place by use of physical force, or threat of bodily harm, without lawful authority or parental/guardian permission. Under this scenario, the child is taken for at least one hour. In the

second scenario, the child is taken, 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, transports the child a distance of 50 miles or more, kills the child, demands ransom, or intends to keep the child permanently. **2 Ohio entries.**

**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 5799 (c). **5 Ohio entries.**

## Attempted Child Abductions

The Clearinghouse works with NCMEC to identify patterns involving attempted child abductions, provide technical assistance and resources for law enforcement, and raise awareness among parents and children.

In Ohio, the Clearinghouse documented 17 attempted child abductions involving 13 girls and eight boys. The suspects were driving vehicles in 98 percent of the situations, and 54 percent occurred between the hours of 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thirty-six percent of the incidents occurred while the children were walking to or from school.

Of incidents in which the outcome is known, 64 percent involved the children being able to walk or run away with no physical contact occurring. Of incidents in which the suspect's method of attempted abduction is known, 35 percent used physical force or a weapon; 47 percent offered the children a ride; 11 percent tried to entice the children with candy or an animal (such as a "lost puppy"); and 7 percent engaged the children in conversation by asking for directions or help. Four suspects were arrested.

## Tools for Finding Missing Children

### AMBER Alert

Ohio's statewide AMBER Alert Plan was launched on Jan. 1, 2003. The AMBER Alert Program is 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 inception of the AMBER Alert is rooted in the national effort to publicize child abductions that followed the 1996 kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Dallas, Texas. Although named for Amber, the program's title also stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response.

In 2015, Ohio law enforcement issued 12 AMBER Alerts related to the disappearance of 13 children. All of the children were recovered safely.

Thankfully, most AMBER Alerts lead to the child's safe recovery. Here are two such instances involving Ohio children in 2015:

- On Sunday, May 17, 2015, at 10:27 p.m., the Knox County Sheriff's Office issued an AMBER Alert for a 4-month-old female. The victim was taken by her mother, who was last seen leaving her home covered in blood. The alert was canceled at 12:03 a.m. The child was located safe, but the mother suffered from self-inflicted wounds. The mother received the AMBER Alert on her cell phone and called the sheriff's office to tell them her location.
- On Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2015, at 7:40 p.m., a 2-year-old female was believed to have been abducted by her father in Knoxville, Tenn. Tennessee issued an AMBER Alert for its state. The mother of the child was found deceased at her residence where the child was last seen. On Thursday, Oct. 29, 2015, at 11:05 a.m., the AMBER Alert was activated for Ohio because the mother's credit card was used in Lebanon, Ohio. At 11:37 a.m., the AMBER Alert was canceled after the Morrow County Sheriff's Office located the child safe and arrested the suspect after a traffic stop.

The Attorney General's MPU staff assists in training law enforcement and the media in AMBER Alert procedures and best practices. In 2015, the unit offered Clearinghouse workshops covering AMBER Alerts to 1,808 law enforcement personnel, media representatives, emergency management staff, children's services administrators, and victim advocates.

A staff member from the MPU also represents the Attorney General on the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee along with representatives from the Buckeye Sheriffs' Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP), FBI, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Ohio Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Communications Committee, and Ohio Association of Broadcasters as well as a victim advocate.

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 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 a 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, OSP, NCMEC, and MCCH are notified of the alert.
- The OSP and the investigating agency discuss case circumstances to verify the case meets AMBER Alert criteria. The Clearinghouse also may be consulted.
- OSP 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 OSP uses Clearinghouse alert software on the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), maintained by BCI, to issue e-mails, faxes, and cell phone text messages containing alert information. These go to all partners, including law enforcement, private and public agencies, businesses, and citizens who have signed up to receive the alerts.



- The OSP activates ODOT signboards and posts information on the AMBER Alert Plan website, [www.OhioAMBERplan.org](http://www.OhioAMBERplan.org).
- The OSP issues the alert using Twitter. To receive these alerts through Twitter, go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), search for “Ohio AMBER Alert,” and click “follow.”
- 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 NCMEC sends secondary alert notifications via sites such as AOL, Facebook, MySpace, Google, and Yahoo; notifies truck drivers; and sends Wireless Emergency Alert messages to cell phones.
- The BCI Child Abduction Response Team (CART) 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 whose disappearance otherwise meets all AMBER Alert criteria. Once local law enforcement makes a request to the Clearinghouse, an automated system alerts all Ohio law enforcement agencies of the missing child.

The Endangered Missing Child Alert provides a radio broadcast to law enforcement agencies in targeted areas, sends faxes and e-mails to the media, can activate the local CART if requested, and uses secondary notification systems to inform the public. The BCI CART coordinator will also contact the investigating agency to provide BCI assistance and resources.

The Clearinghouse also 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 e-mail – in their drivers’ lounges and dispatch offices and include the alerts in dispatches to their drivers.

In 2015, the Clearinghouse issued 17 Endangered Missing Child Alerts. All the children were recovered safe.

## Responsibilities of Law Enforcement

Under 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 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 children cases.
- Obtain dental records of children missing longer than 30 days.
- Submit information on found children to NCIC.

The federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (H.R. 4980) was signed by President Barack Obama on Sept. 29, 2014. Generally the law pertains to child sex trafficking, but a portion of the law requires social services to report children missing from foster care to law enforcement and to the NCMEC.

Section 104 of H.R. 4980: “Locating and responding to children who run away from foster care,” specifies responsibilities of children’s service agencies with a child missing from foster care. There are two specific areas state agencies need to be aware of to help fulfill these requirements:

“(A) **not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment** of this paragraph, the **State shall develop and implement specific protocols** for—

“(i) **expeditiously locating any child missing from foster care;**

“(ii) determining the primary factors that contributed to the child’s running away or otherwise being absent from care, and to the extent possible and appropriate, responding to those factors in current and subsequent placements;

“(iii) determining the child’s experiences while absent from care, including screening the child to determine if the child is a possible sex trafficking victim (as defined in section 475(9)(A)); and “(iv) reporting such related information as required by the Secretary; and

“(B) **not later than 2 years after such date of enactment,** for each child and youth described in paragraph (9)(C)(i)(I) of this subsection, the **State agency shall report immediately,** and in no case later than 24 hours after receiving, information on missing or abducted children or youth **to the law enforcement authorities** for entry into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, established pursuant to section 534 of title 28, United States Code, **and to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.**”

## National Missing Children’s Day

The nation marks National Missing Children’s Day each May 25. Throughout Ohio, a variety of events take place on or around that day. Below is a description of some of the 2015 commemorations:

- MPU representatives made child safety presentations focusing on runaway issues to more than 960 students in Reynoldsburg City Schools. After each presentation, the schools held balloon releases. Each balloon had a name of a missing child and the date they were reported missing.
- More than 600 Kirkersville Elementary School students attended an MPU presentation on child safety.
- MPU representatives also provided child safety presentations to over 1,300 students at the Columbus Spanish Immersions Academy, Pataskala Elementary, and Etna Elementary during the week.
- The MPU held a balloon launch and child safety presentations at Columbus Preparatory Academy involving 700 children.

The MPU, in coordination with the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, forwarded the work of Ohio’s poster winner for the National Missing Children’s Day Poster Contest to the U.S. Department of Justice. The Department of Justice hosts the annual competition to raise awareness about child abductions and promote safety. The Ohio winners were recognized at the Ohio Attorney General’s Two Days In May conference.

The Ohio winners below were selected by a panel of judges assembled by the MPU:

- First place, Caroline Fleming, home schooled in Grove City, Ohio
- Second place, Treston Iguchi, home schooled in Grove City, Ohio

## Collaborations

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

**Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force:** The MPU participates in the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, which also involves local, state, and federal law enforcement; victim advocacy agencies; and prosecutors' offices. The task force identifies human trafficking victims, investigates criminal activity, assists with victim services, and prosecutes offenders. The MPU staff supports investigative efforts, shares intelligence, provides resources, and identifies funding sources.

**Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition:** The MPU 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 (I-SEARCH) 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 L.I.N.K.:** BCI is the central repository for information regarding Ohio missing persons and unidentified remains. Project LINK (Linking Individuals Not Known) was created in 1999 to help connect Ohio's missing persons, including unidentified remains, to those across the country. After a person is missing for 30 days, a relative may submit a DNA sample to be deposited into a database for comparisons with unidentified remains. The samples are tested for mitochondrial DNA, nuclear DNA, and Y-STR (Y-chromosome, Short Tandem Repeat). Once the tests are completed, they upload the results to the national Combined DNA Index System, more commonly known as CODIS, database so that it may be compared across the country.

**NamUs:** The MPU participates in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). NamUs is the national online repository for records involving missing people and unidentified human remains. Launched in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Justice, the initiative is aimed at reducing the number of unidentified bodies held at coroners' and medical examiners' offices across the United States. In June 2007, the Office of Justice Program's Bureau of Justice Statistics confirmed that, in a typical year, medical examiners and coroners handle approximately 4,400 unidentified human decedent cases, 1,000 of which remain unidentified after one year. Coroners and medical examiners enter an individual's record into the database, which is cross-checked with an unidentified remains database in hopes of confirming identification. Families of missing people also may submit DNA to aid in the identification of remains.

**Ohio CART:** The Ohio Attorney General, along with the OSP, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police and the Buckeye State's Sheriff Association, launched a new CART model for Ohio. During the first part of 2015, over 300 law enforcement officers were trained on the new model. This caused a resurgence in Ohio, and has led to the formation of additional teams throughout the state. Additionally, nearly 50 law enforcement officers have signed up as individual CART coordinators. The CART teams and coordinators assisted in the recovery of multiple missing children throughout the state in 2015.

## Assistance to the Public

### Online resources

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

- Steps to take if a child is missing.
- Photographs/poster templates to raise awareness of missing children.
- Publications.
- Safety tips.
- Fingerprint identification cards and game sheets.
- Links to Ohio's AMBER Alert Plan, training information, other state clearinghouses, and the NCMEC.

The public plays a vital role in the recovery of missing children through another web-based resource, the Ohio Citizen Alert Network. The Ohio Citizen Alert Network is a critical missing child response software program that notifies the public when children are abducted or are missing in a life-threatening circumstance. By subscribing to alerts on the Ohio Attorney General's website at <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Ohio-Missing-Persons/Ohio-Amber-Plan>, citizens can learn of missing children alerts through text messages and e-mails.

### Training Sessions

The Attorney General's MPU gave training presentations on AMBER Alert, other missing person alert programs, CART, first responder programs, child safety, reunification, resources for law enforcement, intervention, and human trafficking to 8,358 individuals in 2015. These included law enforcement officers, community members, teachers, children, child protective services employees, and other interested individuals.

## Assistance to Law Enforcement and Other Agencies

### Trainings

The Clearinghouse conducted 48 trainings for law enforcement across Ohio in 2015. Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) students, juvenile officers, new sheriffs, and trainers received instruction on missing children investigations, safety tips for children, AMBER Alert protocol, and initiating other missing person alerts. The Clearinghouse partnered with the NCMEC and Autism Speaks to provide two different trainings and resource materials to experienced law enforcement trainers in Ohio. The focus was on missing children with special needs, specifically on missing children with autism. The training provided local trainers the curriculum and support materials so they can provide the training to local agencies.

The Clearinghouse is represented on the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee as well as the subcommittee that organizes the annual AMBER Alert Conference. More than 100 criminal justice professionals and members of the media attended the August 2015 conference in Columbus at the Columbus Police Academy. Clearinghouse representatives provided updates on the Ohio alert program and the CART program. Investigators from the Ottawa Police Department, the Putnam County Sheriff's Office, and BCI provided a panel case study on the Romes deaths, two teen brothers

who were murdered. FBI Supervisory Special Agent John Brunell, of the Behavioral Analysis Unit (Crimes Against Children), provided a presentation on FBI Missing Child Case Studies and Suspect Profiling.

The Clearinghouse provides three investigative manuals to law enforcement upon request:

- “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 in conducting abduction investigations.
- “Long-term Missing Children Guide for Law Enforcement” provides law enforcement strategies for finding long-term missing children.

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

The Clearinghouse also works with the Ohio Department of Education to promote child safety through school presentations and assemblies. In 21 presentations in 2015, more than 7,700 children received information on how to stay safe, how to prevent abduction, what to do in the event of an abduction, and common consequences of – and alternatives to – running away. Each child also received safety information and a fingerprint card for personal family records. In support of local child safety efforts, the Clearinghouse distributed more than 7,000 fingerprint cards in 2015.

## **Investigative Assistance**

Law enforcement resources for missing child investigations are also offered by the Clearinghouse. These include:

- Using Internet research tools, posting the child’s photo on the Clearinghouse website and advising peace officers of available resources.
- Conducting online searches to locate the addresses, telephone numbers, professional licenses, neighbors, and family members of people who may have taken or be associated with a missing child.
- Analyzing law enforcement records to see if 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 on which missing children may have posted profiles, which sometimes reveal details about children’s whereabouts, the reasons for their disappearance, their friends, and contacts.
- Providing suspect and associate work ups to try to determine possible locations the child may go and to determine the risk of danger to the child.
- Referring the local agency to other resources that can provide assistance or expertise.
- Working with staff from these BCI units:
  - Crimes Against Children Unit, which assists local law enforcement in child 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.

In 2015, the MPU posted 1,952 cases of missing children and adults on the Ohio Attorney General's website. The Attorney General's Office also featured hundreds of missing children's photos on posters in conjunction with AMBER Alerts and Endangered Missing Child Alerts.

Ohio BCI has trained forensic artists who will complete composite sketches, facial reconstructions, and image modifications. Composite imagery is the process of creating an image through a cognitive interview that will generate leads in locating a person of interest in an investigation. Facial reconstruction is completed when skeletal remains are located and a skull is present. The process is used to help generate an image or clay model of what the decedent may have looked like in life. The third service, image modification, can be used for post-mortem images or age progression. Post-mortem imaging is the process of taking an autopsy photo and creating an image of what the decedent may have looked like in life to generate tips or leads that assist in identification. The age-progression technique is utilized when missing individuals have not been located for extended periods of time. The forensic artists can modify the image of the missing person to resemble what he or she may look like at the age they would presently be.

The Clearinghouse works closely with human trafficking investigators and social service agencies and can help determine if a child is a victim of, or at risk for, human trafficking. When children are identified as victims or at high risk, the Clearinghouse forwards the information to human trafficking task forces, investigators, and social service agencies. Any tips that result are forwarded to the investigating law enforcement agency.

In addition, the Clearinghouse provides law enforcement with cell phone tracking information, details on obtaining satellite photos of areas pertinent to searches for missing children, direction on legal issues, CART assistance, details on alert procedures, and information on warrant procedures related to social networking sites. A BCI special agent serves as Ohio's CART 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 CART response to investigations. The Clearinghouse also can recommend other state and national resources.

Below is an example of how the Attorney General's assistance to law enforcement aided in the recovery of a missing child in 2015:

- On Tuesday, May 26, 2015, at 7:45 p.m., the MPU was made aware of an Endangered Missing Child Alert that was issued by the Jackson County (Tennessee) Sheriff's Office for an abducted child. The child, a 16-year-old, left her residence on a bicycle, and was en route to Toledo, Ohio, to meet a known sexual predator. The MPU contacted Jackson County, and was put in contact with a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) special agent. The TBI agent explained that the victim had been in contact over the computer with a registered sex offender in Toledo. They had arranged for the victim to ride her bicycle to the Louisville, Ky., Greyhound station and board a bus to Toledo. TBI was analyzing the victim's cellphone traveling in the direction of Louisville. TBI cellphone analysis indicated that the victim had

traveled approximately 100 miles on her bicycle and was now in a vehicle. The victim's last known location was south of Louisville.

TBI contacted the Toledo Police Department, and it contacted the offender. He was cooperating with the police, and had tried to contact the victim at their request but she had not responded. At approximately 9:45 p.m., TBI contacted the MPU and said it had a witness who saw the victim get on a bus to Cincinnati, and the bus would have arrived at 9:15 p.m. TBI stated the victim was to depart on another bus for Toledo at 10:15 p.m. TBI gave a description of the victim as well as a potential alias and departure bus. The MPU contacted BCI's Special Investigations Unit, which contacted a detective with the Cincinnati Police Department. The MPU helped develop the subject information. The detective was able to get road units and himself to the Greyhound station in Cincinnati, and recovered her safely.

## **Ohio Department of Health**

Under a policy the Clearinghouse forged 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**

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) case managers provide the Clearinghouse with information that can help locate a missing child and prevent future disappearances. The Clearinghouse provides training to ODJFS employees on 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 Ohio alone, more than 1,000 minors are believed to be forced to sell sex. Nationally, the number is estimated at more than 100,000. The MPU trains local law enforcement to identify and investigate human trafficking cases and assists law enforcement in returning missing children at risk of becoming trafficking victims. The unit provided 14 trainings about missing children and domestic sex trafficking to local first responders that was attended by over 700.

The MPU assists local law enforcement agencies in identifying missing children who are at high risk of victimization from domestic sex trafficking. The unit then refers the missing child case to BCI's Crimes Against Children Unit, which assists in efforts to locate children who are identified as being at high risk of victimization or children confirmed as sex trafficking victims. The MPU also shares information about missing children with local social service agencies that work with human trafficking victims.

## National Resources and Partners

**NCMEC** helps 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 [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com) or call **800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)**.

The MPU collaborates with the **U.S. Department of State** regarding outgoing and incoming child abduction cases with an international connection. Within the Department of State, the Office of Children's Issues assists parents whose children have been abducted to and from foreign countries. Country officers provide information for parents and/or legal guardians that they can use to identify options—both criminal and civil—to pursue the return of their abducted children. In doing so, the Department of State Office of Children's Issues works closely and cooperatively with a wide range of U.S. and foreign entities, including law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, and foreign governments. The Clearinghouse assisted the Department of State with two international child abductions in 2015.

The **National Runaway Safeline** is the federally designated national communication system for homeless and runaway youth. 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 [www.1800runaway.org](http://www.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 only be activated by law enforcement. No special equipment or personnel are needed, and the program is free. For information, visit [www.achildismissing.org](http://www.achildismissing.org).

**Code Adam**, one of the nation's largest child-safety programs, was created by Wal-Mart to assist businesses and others with public facilities in preventing a child from being abducted and removed from the premises. The Code Adam program was named for 6-year-old Adam Walsh, whose 1981 abduction and murder brought the horror of child abduction to national attention. The program lays out a series of steps to be taken in the event a child is reported missing in a store or similar location. All Ohio agencies, schools, libraries, law enforcement, and retailers are encouraged to promote Code Adam in their areas.

**Team Adam**, a program of the NCMEC, 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 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 NCMEC's resources, coupled with years of law enforcement experience, often provides departments with the added tools needed to better address complex, media-intensive cases.

**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 [www.teamhope.org](http://www.teamhope.org).



## **Related publications\***

Child Fingerprint ID Cards  
"Keep Your Child Safe" palm card  
Child Safety Game Sheet  
Child Safety on the Information Highway  
Eight Rules for Safety  
For Camp Counselors: Guidelines on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation  
Guidelines for Programs to Reduce Child Victimization  
Child Protection  
Personal Safety for Children  
Teen Safety on the Information Highway  
Family Abduction: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child is Abducted  
When Your Child is Missing: A Family Survival Guide  
Online Victimization (A Report on the Nation's Youth)  
National Runaway Safeline  
AMBER Alert for the Media  
For Healthcare Professionals: Guidelines on Prevention of and Response to Infant Abductions  
Non-Profit Service Provider's Handbook  
Parental Kidnapping: How to Prevent Abduction and What to Do if Your Child is Abducted  
Recovery and Reunification of Missing Children  
Youth at Risk: Understanding Runaway and Exploited Youth

## **Just In Case Series for Families**

Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You Need a Babysitter  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You Need Help Finding Professional Help  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You are Considering Daycare  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case You are Considering Family Separation  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case Your Child is Testifying in Court  
Just in Case ... Parental and Professional Guidelines in Dealing With Grief Following the Loss of a Child  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines in Case Your Child Might Someday be Missing  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines In Case Your Child Might Someday be a Runaway  
Just in Case ... Parental Guidelines In Case Your Child Might Someday Be a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation

## **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)

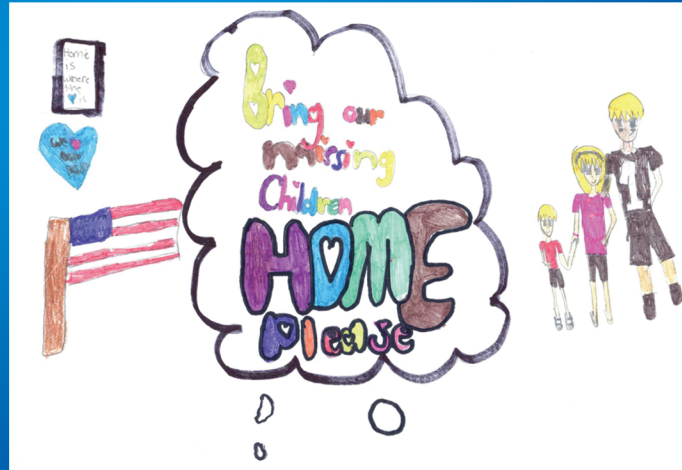
## **Enforcement Resources**

AMBER Alert Investigator Checklist  
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 and Exploited Children Publication Order Form  
Child Sex Rings: Behavioral Analysis  
Female Juvenile Prostitution Problem and Response  
Criminal Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Laws in Eight Midwestern States  
Children Traumatized in Sex Rings  
Child Abuse and Neglect  
Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation  
Investigator's Guide to Missing Child Cases

\* These publications are available from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children,  
703-224-2150.

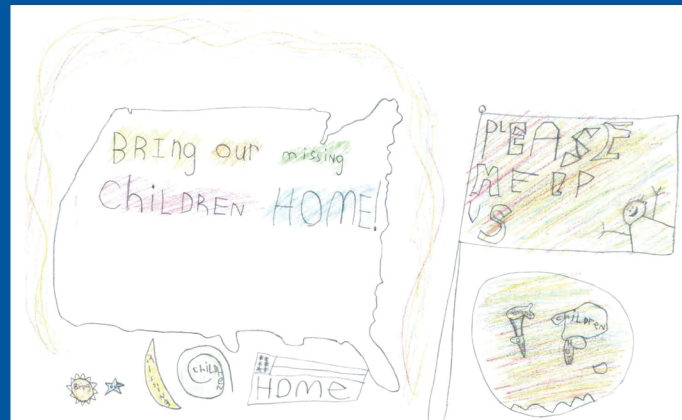
# Ohio's 2015 National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest



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## 1st Place

Caroline Fleming  
Home-schooled  
Grove City, Ohio



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## 2nd Place

Treston Iguchi  
Home-schooled  
Grove City, Ohio



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Ohio Attorney General's Office  
**Missing Children Clearinghouse**

**2015**

**Annual Report**

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Ohio Attorney General's Office  
Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation  
Missing Persons Unit  
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