

ADDING VALUE TO YOUR SEARCH

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC) was created in 1983 to store, collect and disseminate information on missing persons. The program provides a centralized file for the exchange of information as well as analytical and investigative support in the processing of leads associated with missing persons cases. MEPIC also provides liaison among citizens, private organizations and law enforcement officials regarding missing persons information.

Parental abduction is often the act of a broken marriage or the accumulation of events that follow a divorce or separation. The abduction can leave damaging and lasting effects for the child who is deprived of the other parent, uprooted from home and friends, and forced to spend life on the run.

In an effort to assist parents in case of a family abduction these preventive suggestions are offered by the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse.



Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Gerald Bailey
Commissioner



MISSING ENDANGERED PERSONS
INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE
1-888-FL-MISSING
(1-888-356-4774)

www.fdle.state.fl.us

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ★ MEPIC

KEYS TO PREVENTING A PARENTAL ABDUCTION

A Parent's Guide





KEYS TO PREVENTION



HEALTHY

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILD

Assure your children that you love them and you always want to see them, no matter what anyone else says. Establish an atmosphere of trust and support so that your children feel secure in discussing situations that make them afraid. Teach your children your telephone number including area code and how to dial the telephone.



Instruct them how to contact your family or close friend.

PREPARATION

FOR THE UNFORSEEN

If you feel that a family abduction is possible, keep lists of information about your estranged spouse or family member:

- ◆ social security number
- ◆ driver's license number
- ◆ vehicle registration tag
- ◆ bank account numbers



CUSTODY AND PROVISIONS

- ◆ Even if you are not legally married, you should obtain legal custody (parental responsibility) of your child. File legal papers called pleadings in family court. Obtain legal assistance by either hiring an attorney, seeking legal aid or attending a self help legal clinic.
- ◆ Consider requesting special provisions in your custody order addressing visitation rights (exact dates and times for pickup and return of the child), removal of the child from the state, posting of bonds to ensure custody, and provisions for joint or shared custody to protect against abduction.



PREPARATION OF

DOCUMENTS

- ◆ Take color photographs of your child every six months; head and shoulder photographs from different angles.
- ◆ Keep a written description of your child, including hair and eye color, height, weight, date of birth and specific physical attributes.
- ◆ Assemble your child's birth certificate, photos, dental records and fingerprint card, custody decree and keep them in a secure place.
- ◆ Notify your child's school of your family situation and provide them with a copy of your custody decree, a photo of your estranged spouse and a list of persons who are permitted to pick up your child.



IF YOUR CHILD IS

ABDUCTED

- ◆ Immediately report to your local police department your child is missing. In order for the police officer to enter your child in the FCIC/NCIC computer provide the officer with a current photograph and a physical description of your child and spouse.
- ◆ Have a certified copy of your valid custody decree.
- ◆ Give the police information about your estranged spouse or family member.
- ◆ Call the **FDLE Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse** at 1-888-356-4774.
- ◆ Consider filing charges against your ex spouse or other family member for interference with custody.
- ◆ Keep law enforcement officials advised of any communications with the abductor.
- ◆ If your child is located contact your police department to assist in the recovery of your child.
- ◆ Take steps to prevent a repeat abduction.



For Additional Information
visit our website at:
www.fdle.state.fl.us