

FLORIDA

Missing Endangered Persons Information
Clearinghouse Advisory Board (MEPICAB)

MISSING & ENDANGERED

Summer 2022
Issue 7

THE FLORIDA ALERT SYSTEM SAVES LIVES

4 AMBER Alerts with 4 Recoveries

19 Missing Child Alerts with 19 Recoveries

119 Silver Alerts with 119 Recoveries

Information from January 1, 2022 – June 14, 2022

A subject is **recovered when he or she has been located alive and well, and reunited with family. You can locate current missing person alerts by visiting FDLE's [Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse](#).*

What is the MEPICAB

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse Advisory Board (MEPICAB) was created in 1996 to address issues concerning Florida's missing children. MEPICAB is a diverse mix of law enforcement officials, impacted families, government agencies, missing children non-profit organizations and community members interested in missing children issues.

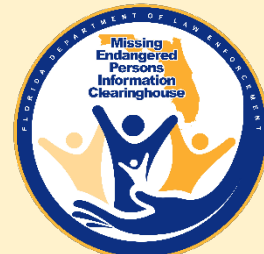
MEPICAB's mission is to support awareness, education and training for the prevention, response and recovery of missing and endangered persons.

The Advisory Board meets quarterly to discuss and implement plans and policies to combat and create an awareness of the large number of children that go missing every year. Board members are chosen by FDLE's Commissioner from around the state to provide a balanced representation of Florida.

Want to support Florida Missing Children's Day?

Florida Missing Children's Day (FMCD) is an annual observance that is held the second Monday of September to honor the families of missing children as well as law enforcement officers and citizens who have made significant contributions protecting Florida's citizens.

Any person, business or agency interested in donating to the Florida Missing Children's Day Foundation can visit the FMCD Foundation [website](#).



MISSING & ENDANGERED

Page 2

Critical Information in Reporting Your Child Missing

Information provided by: Sergeant Neil Rambaran, Special Victims Unit, St. Petersburg Police Department

There is NO waiting period if your child is missing - CALL 911.

If your child is missing, call 911 immediately to report them missing. Be able to provide their demographic information to include the child's full name, date of birth, eye color, hair color, height, and weight. You will also be asked to provide a recent photograph, a description of clothes the child may be wearing, and a description of any distinguishable physical characteristics such as glasses, tattoos, or birthmarks.

Law enforcement strives to locate your child as quickly as possible in order to keep them safe from harm; details regarding alcohol or drug use, social media accounts, private chat room information, cell phone activity, significant other information and friend information may help lead investigators to your child more swiftly.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), runaways make up the majority of missing child cases. In 2021, [NCMEC](#) reportedly had an intake of 25,174 endangered runaway cases. Children who run away are vulnerable to homelessness, gang involvement and child sex trafficking. Of the more than 25,000 cases of children reported missing to NCMEC in 2021 who had run away, 1 in 6 were likely victims of child sex trafficking. It is important to remember that every minute counts to a child that has gone missing.



Be able to provide the reason you believe your child is missing to law enforcement.

Family members are generally the best resource in locating missing children and identifying possible reasons they may be missing. When you call 911 to report your child missing, it is important to articulate why you think your child is missing and the circumstances surrounding their possible disappearance.

According to [NCMEC](#), only 1 percent of children are abducted by nonfamily members. Abducted children are most at risk on school days before school (7 a.m.- 9 a.m.), after school (3 p.m.- 4 p.m.), and after dinner (6 p.m.- 7 p.m.) Attempted abductions most often occur on the street while children are playing, walking, or riding bikes. If your child does not arrive to school or home around their scheduled time without notice, contact local law enforcement to report them missing.

MISSING & ENDANGERED

Critical Information Parents May Be Asked by Law Enforcement

Information provided by: Sergeant Neil Rambaran, Special Victims Unit, St. Petersburg Police Department

A missing child case requires a preliminary investigation by law enforcement to obtain possible case information and to structure a missing child search. Law enforcement may ask some of the following questions in order to help in the search for your child. If you do not know the answers to the below questions, you may wish to obtain contact information for the person most likely to know this information such as a teacher or friend.

- Does your child have a physical or mental impairment? Are they dependent on medication? If so, what medications do they take and when was the last time they took the medication? Have they recently had a medication change? Have they ever self-harmed, been suicidal, or Baker Acted? Have they ever had a problem with substance abuse or been Marchman Acted?
- Does your child have autism or a learning disability? It is important to immediately report if your child has autism or a communication disorder. Studies show that children with autism tend to wander and be drawn to dangerous environments. NCMEC's [10-year analysis](#) from 2011 to 2020 shows that drowning deaths are a major concern for children on the autism spectrum and account for 84% of accidental deaths. Encourage local law enforcement to contact FDLE's Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC) to activate an Enhanced Missing Child Alert. This alert sends a targeted Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) to a specific area, such as a neighborhood, 5-mile radius, or geographical feature.
- Where was the child last seen? When was your child last seen? How long have they been missing? What was the weather when they went missing? When was the last time the child ate? Does your child have a favorite place (malls, parks, fast food restaurants, or friend's house)?
- Does your child have access to transportation? This may include public transportation, vehicles, water vessels, electric scooters, bicycles, push scooters, and skateboards. It may also include friends and family that may be transporting the child. If your child or transportation has GPS/Bluetooth tracking, immediately let law enforcement know.
- Does your child have access to a cell phone or any social media/gaming accounts? Unfortunately, electronic child sexual exploitation is on the rise due to the internet and social media. Online enticement and grooming occur when an individual is communicating with someone they believe is a child via the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offense such as traveling to meet a minor or by soliciting a minor's sexually explicit conversation, images, audio, or video. These minors often have never met the individual and believe the individual is around their age. You can find additional information on online enticement by visiting [NCMEC](#). In 2021, [NCMEC](#) received 44,155 tips regarding online enticement including sextortion. In addition, NCMEC received 29,309,106 tips regarding child sexual abuse material, which includes inappropriate images and videos of children.

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CART is an organized, rapid, and planned response to an abducted child or other missing child incident.



Resources are available as needed and are requested by the agency handling the missing child incident by calling any FDLE Regional Operations Centers.

Resources include mobile command posts, all terrain vehicles, search dogs, communication equipment, computers, or any other specialty equipment that may be needed to safely rescue a child.



Putting Children First

A Multi-Agency Multi-Jurisdictional Response Team

For additional information, please contact the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse at 1-888-FL-MISSING (356-4774).

Child Abduction Response Team (CART) Investigator Linda Pollard, Regional CART Coordinator, FDLE

A Child Abduction Response Team (CART) is a multi-disciplinary, rapid-response team that is trained and prepared to respond to a missing/endedangered or abducted child. CART pulls together resources to aid in the search and rescue effort and to assist the agency of jurisdiction in its investigation using an Incident Command Model. The team is comprised of, but not limited to, law enforcement, victim advocates, child protection team members, mental health specialists, public information officers, search and rescue groups, and legal counsel in addition to resources from other government and non-government organizations. CART creates a mutual aid resource inventory and allows for a rapid and organized response to missing children investigations.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) has a CART in each of its seven regional offices. The Regional CART is activated in response to an AMBER Alert, but may also be activated at the request of a Sheriff or Police Chief with approval of the FDLE Regional Special Agent in Charge. The role of the Regional CART is to provide law enforcement agencies with investigative resources during a child abduction incident. The Regional CART provides manpower and resources that the requesting agency either does not have or has exhausted. Each Regional CART has a coordinator who is responsible for the CART activation and their team members' activities and assignments when responding to a requested activation.

Regional CART Coordinators must also ensure yearly certification of their CART, whether that be through a CART call-out or through a field exercise or tabletop training. The Regional CART Coordinator must also maintain lists of active team members, equipment and resources available in the event of a call-out. The Regional CART's mission is to quickly and effectively recover a child that has been abducted or is missing under suspicious circumstances by utilizing resources and a team of individuals with prior training and expertise related to child abductions.

Autism Awareness Telecommunicator Training

FDLE's Autism Awareness Telecommunicator Training was created, with the help of experts in autism, to speed up the process of issuing an Enhanced Missing Child Alert for children with autism. This training targets emergency dispatchers, teaching them not only to ask callers whether the missing child is autistic, but how to recognize signs that the child may be autistic.

Dispatchers also learn to ask about hazards such as nearby bodies of water, to ask whether the child is nonverbal, and to quickly communicate this information to law enforcement in case the child qualifies for an Enhanced Missing Child Alert. Identifying missing children as autistic at this early stage is critical. The earlier the missing child can be identified as autistic or likely to have autism, the more effective law enforcement can be in their search.



The training also outlines a few key points for community awareness. When a community receives an Enhanced Missing Child Alert for an autistic child, individuals searching for the child should remember:

- Autistic children may wander from a safe place.
- They may seek sensory stimulation or objects of interest, including water, highways, vehicles, abandoned buildings, and heavy equipment.
- They may seek a favorite place, or may hide in a small, enclosed space.
- 60 percent of children with autism have difficulty with verbal communication, and they may not respond to their name being called.

As 1 in 44 children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, this training is a valuable educational aid for emergency dispatchers, and is part of a larger effort to educate law enforcement on autism and the unique risks that autistic children face. As of May 15, 2022, the training has been completed 982 times. You may watch this training by visiting FDLE's [webpage](#).

MISSING & ENDANGERED

Missing Child Alert: Adji Desir

Adji Desir, age 6, was last seen in Immokalee, Florida, on January 10, 2009. He was outside playing in the front yard with other children when he went missing. He was wearing a blue and yellow t-shirt and shorts, and black and gray sneakers. Adji would be 19 years old today and may have difficulty communicating.

If you have any information concerning Adji Desir, please contact the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC) at 1-888-FL MISSING (1-888-356-4774) or the Collier County Sheriff's Office at 239-252-9300.

You can view active AMBER Alerts by visiting MEPIC's current AMBER Alert page [here](#). You may also search all current missing and unidentified persons through the MEPIC database which can be found [here](#) or by visiting the Florida Missing Children's Day Foundation's website which stores long term missing cases in their "[Have You Seen Me?](#)" section.



Florida Missing Children's Day

Have You Seen These Missing Persons?



ANDREW CABALLEIRO



GEORGE BLEUEL



JARKEIUS ADSIDE



OLGA BARREIRO LOPEZ

FOAA

Florida Ombudsman Association



MissingChildrenAlert.com | FMCDF.org | 1-888-FL-Missing (356-4774)

The 2022 Florida Missing Children's Day Ceremony will be held on September 12th, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, please scan the QR code below via phone, tablet, or other smart device.

