

Attention Florida 5th Graders

We welcome your participation in the annual Florida Missing Children's Day Poster Contest!

The Florida Poster Contest winner will be invited to Florida Missing Children's Day, which will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026, in Tallahassee, Florida. The winner will receive an award and prize package during the ceremony.

Contest Rules

Students must create a poster that demonstrates the theme:
"Bringing Our Missing Children Home"

1. The finished poster must be 8½ by 14 inches.
2. The slogan "Bringing Our Missing Children Home" must appear somewhere on the poster.
3. Posters must be created by hand. Posters with printed images, collages, and stamping are not eligible.
4. Posters should be original in design. Be creative! Use acrylics, watercolor, pencil, charcoal, magic markers, spray paint, crayons, pastels, etc.
5. The physical poster must be submitted with a completed application, which includes a description of the poster, a brief biography of the artist, AND a signed parental release form. Visit www.fmcd.org/student-contests or use the QR code below to find the full contest packet and additional information.
6. Posters must be submitted via mail to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Attn. MPOE Operational Support, P.O. Box 1489, Tallahassee, FL 32302.

All posters must be received by Friday, March 20, 2026.

Florida's 2025 Winner: Cali



"My poster shows a young boy who is trapped in a terrible situation. He was kidnapped, and is now being physically and emotionally abused. I drew him getting a glimpse of the outside world. All he can think about is his home and his family. Even though he is going through the worst thing imaginable, he still has hope. This symbolizes the terrible reality for countless children gone missing. If we help to bring awareness, maybe we can give them hope, and bring them home."

Visit www.fdle.state.fl.us/MEPIC/Home/FMCD-Foundation/Poster-Gallery to see all of Florida's past Poster Contest winners.

If you have questions, please contact Florida's contest coordinator by emailing FMCD@fdle.state.fl.us or by calling 850-410-7498.



Florida Missing Children's Day

Poster Contest Fact Sheet

Contest Rules

1. Applicant must be a fifth grade student in the State of Florida. Contest is based on grade level, not the age of the student.
2. Artwork should reflect the theme "Bringing Our Missing Children Home." This phrase must appear somewhere on the poster.
3. The theme may be depicted in the student's artwork through one, or a combination of, illustrations (e.g., signs and symbols, people, abstract, industry, wildlife) and can be created using media such as acrylics, watercolor, pencils, charcoal, magic markers, spray paint, crayons, and pastels. Digitally produced images, collages, cut-outs, and stamping will not be eligible for consideration.
4. The finished poster must measure 8½ by 14 inches.
5. The poster must be submitted with a completed application, which includes a description of the poster, a brief biography of the artist (either typed or written legibly), and a signed parental release form.

Judging Criteria

1. Complete contest rules must be followed. Incomplete packages and incorrectly sized posters will not be eligible for judging.
2. Artwork will be judged on:
 - a. Creativity
 - b. Reflection of the contest theme
 - c. Originality in design
3. Written applications will be judged on:
 - a. Comprehension of the theme
 - b. Clarity
 - c. Grammar and syntax appropriate to the fifth-grade level

Competition Procedures

1. Contact the Florida contest coordinator at FMCD@fdle.state.fl.us or 850-410-7498 with any questions.
2. Submit your ORIGINAL poster, completed application, and signed parental release form to:

Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Attn. MPOE Operational Support
Post Office Box 1489
Tallahassee, FL 32302

ALL POSTERS ARE DUE BY FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026.

Awards

Florida's statewide Poster Contest winner will be invited to attend Florida Missing Children's Day, which will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026, in Tallahassee, Florida.

The winner will receive an award and prize package during the ceremony. Their artwork may be featured on the annual Florida Missing Children's Day banner and state billboard.

The winner's artwork may also be sent to represent Florida in the National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest.

Please Note:

Original posters will not be returned to contest participants. They become the property of FDLE and/or DOJ.

Non-winning posters will be displayed internally at FDLE in the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse.

Questions? Contact the Florida contest coordinator at FMCD@fdle.state.fl.us or via phone at 850-410-7498.

Florida Missing Children's Day

Discussion Guide

Below is a guide intended for a facilitator (i.e., teacher, parent) to reference as a discussion starter with students. We hope this discussion will make the subject less scary and provide students with an understanding of the poster contest topic to help generate ideas for their artwork.

What is Florida Missing Children's Day?

- An annual ceremony to remember children who are missing from Florida, and recognize the amazing people who help to protect Florida's children.
- These people include law enforcement officers, social workers, prosecutors, and everyday people (i.e., teachers, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, neighbors).
- The theme is "Bringing Our Missing Children Home."
 - There are people in this world that do bad things and break the law.
 - This is why we have police and judges.
 - Sometimes these people do bad things to children, like take them away from their families.
 - Police can help by searching and helping to return these children to their homes.

Questions for Students

- Have you or anyone you love ever been lost before?
- How did you feel?
- Did anyone help you or your loved one return home?
- Who found you or your loved one?
- How do you think your family felt?

Provide Guidance for Students

- When you create your artwork, think about:
 - How you felt when you were lost
 - Who helped you
 - How your family felt when you were lost

Poster Contest Application

Thank you for participating in the 2026 Florida Missing Children's Day Poster Contest! Please be sure to complete this application and ask your parent/guardian to complete the consent and release form before submitting your poster to the State Contest Coordinator. **Posters that are submitted without an application and consent and release form will not be considered for the contest.**

Name: _____

Grade Level: _____

Age: _____

School: _____

School Phone: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Educator's Name: _____

Educator's Email: _____

Salutation (circle one): Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.

Principal's Name: _____

Principal's Email: _____

Salutation (circle one): Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.

Please tell us about your poster and why you created it: *(100 words or less)*

Artist's Biography: Tell us a little bit about yourself! *(100 words or less)*

Parent/Guardian Release & Consent Form

If my child, _____ is selected as Florida's statewide Poster Contest winner, I hereby grant permission to use and reproduce my child's artwork and first name in any state-related publications, news features, blogs, or other advertisements relating to the annual Florida Missing Children's Day. I also grant permission for my child to participate in any interviews with media and understand that any recordings/interviews may be edited or used, in whole or part, or adapted with other materials, and I hereby waive all rights of privacy, compensation, control, or royalties that I may have.

Additionally, I grant permission to use and reproduce the picture of my child and use my child's name in U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention related publications, news features, blogs, or other advertisements relating to the 43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest. I also grant permission for my child to participate in any interviews with media relating to this event. I understand that any written statements may be edited or used, in whole or in part, or adapted with other materials, and I hereby waive all rights of privacy, compensation, control, or royalties that I may have.

I have read this document before signing below and warrant that I fully understand its contents.

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print)

Signature

Address

Date

City, State, Zip

Phone Number

Email Address

Child's Name as it will appear on their participation certificate (*please print*)



Visit www.fmcdof.org/student-contests
or use the QR code above for additional
information.