

ATTENTION

All Florida 5th Grade Students and Teachers 2026 Florida Missing Children's Day Essay Contest Due by Wednesday, March 18, 2026



The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), the Florida Department of Education, and the Florida Missing Children's Day Foundation present the 2026 Florida Missing Children's Day Essay Contest to all 5th graders in Florida.

PRIZE: A winner will be selected from each FDLE region in the state. The 7 regional winners will receive \$100 dollars from the Florida Missing Children's Day Foundation. The state winner will be awarded an additional \$100 dollars, a prize package, and an invitation to Florida Missing Children's Day in Tallahassee on Monday, September 14, 2026.

PURPOSE: To promote safety awareness among Florida's children and encourage them to proactively think of ways to keep themselves safe from abduction.

To stay safe from abduction and predators, children should arm themselves with a good plan. There will be moments when children find themselves away from the safety of their parents. As they grow older, children encounter different situations. Whether at play, on the Internet, on social networking websites, walking to and from school, at the school bus stop or other places, all children should have a safety plan. They should ask themselves, "How can I stay safe from abduction, especially when my parents are not with me?" Parents should talk to their children and provide clear direction in this regard.

Fifth grade students across Florida are asked to write an essay about ways to stay safe from abduction. They will need to conduct research and construct their thoughts into a one page essay. The theme "This Is How I Stay Safe All Day" was chosen for the 2026 Essay Contest. The body of the essay must focus on things children can do to keep themselves safe from abduction.

We encourage all schools/programs to hold an essay contest among their 5th grade students. **Each school/program must choose only one "School Winner"** (except for homeschooled students, who may send their entries directly). Essays should be sent by email to FMCD@fdle.state.fl.us.

For full essay contest details, please visit the Florida Missing Children's Day (FMCD) Foundation's website at <https://www.fmcd.org/student-contests> or FDLE's website at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/MEPIC/Home/FMCD-Foundation/FMCD-Contest>.

