



May 15, 2003

Dear Mayor:

As President of The United States Conference of Mayors, I am pleased to provide you with the latest volume in our Best Practices series – ***Best Practices of Community Policing in the Prevention and/or Resolution of Child or Adult Abduction: The Success of the Amber Alert.***

The recent abduction of Elizabeth Smart followed by her safe return home and the capture of her kidnappers brought the issue of child abduction to the forefront of America's mind. The signing into law of the National Amber Alert by President Bush on April 30, 2003, cemented this program's success in resolving child and adult abduction.

This publication examines Amber Alert programs in cities across the country, as well as other efforts that have successfully built or strengthened relationships between law enforcement and the community to prevent and resolve child and/or adult abduction. These include educational programming in schools, as well as efforts targeted at the elderly and those with Alzheimers.

In this time of tightened city budgets and declining revenues, it is key to look for innovative ways to use existing resources in a more productive manner to ensure safety in our neighborhoods. By utilizing the eyes and ears of residents in resolving child and/or adult abductions, police departments across the nation are tapping into a useful and successful crime fighting tool.

I want to express the appreciation of the mayors of this nation to the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) of the U.S. Department of Justice, for funding the Mayors' Institute for Community Policing, and thus making possible the compilation and dissemination of this valuable book on community policing.

Your continuing contributions to our Best Practices Center and its publications have been crucial in gathering up-to-date community information that is vital to the sharing of the exemplary programs you have developed to improve the quality of life across urban America.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston
President, The U.S. Conference of Mayors

**AKRON, OHIO
AKRON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT
RIVERSIDE, CA
THE RIVERSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**SAN JUAN, PR
CITY OF SAN JUAN AMBER ALERT PROGRAM**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL
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**VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
THE VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**WEST ORANGE, NJ
WEST ORANGE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

AKRON POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution:

AMBER ALERT— When credible information has been received by the police department that a child has been abducted, the police department, in cooperation with regional media, may issue an AMBER ALERT. This alert will be broadcast over the radio, as a crawl on the bottom of the T.V. screen and on highway signs describing the abduction/abductor and urging anyone with information to contact the police department issuing the alert. Four criteria must be met before an alert will be issued. They are:

1. The child is under eighteen (18) years of age
2. There is credible information suggesting the child was forcibly or intentionally removed or lured away from their location and remains missing
3. The law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death
4. There is enough descriptive information about the child and/or alleged abductor(s) and /or abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.

Following these criteria is extremely important. If not we risk overuse of the program. If the program is overused the media and the public will no longer pay attention to the alerts.

2. When was the program created and why?

The Northern Ohio program was created in October of 2002. The Ohio statewide program was created in 2003. Both programs were in response to several other plans throughout the United States. (The first AMBER ALERT plan was created in Texas in 1997.)

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program's effectiveness is measured by the safe recovery of abducted children. Currently the Northern Ohio plan has been activated three times with the safe recovery of all three children!

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

There is no cost to our department other than the manpower to develop, train and if needed, activate the alert.

5. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a similar program?

The key to the program is selecting the right committee to work on the implementation. It is imperative the committee consist of area police administrators (heads of county chiefs associations would be an excellent start), local administrators from t.v. and radio, someone from the Emergency Alert System (EAS), state missing children's clearing house, F.B.I. and other professionals with interest in child abduction. The committee should be kept at no more than 12-15 people.

6. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or program such as yours?

This program is an absolute must! We, as civil servants, must be able to use all available options in protecting our children. The program comes with little cost and the rewards are priceless.

7. Contact person:

Sgt. Brian Harding
Juvenile/Missing Persons Unit
330-375-2530

AKRON, OHIO
Mayor Don Plusquellic

STRANGER AWARENESS SEMINAR/SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program:

The Akron Police Department Community Relations Bureau deploys detectives from within the unit to different schools and civic organizations for talks on stranger awareness and abduction prevention. Examples of civic organizations include; the Girls Scouts, Brownies, Indian Princesses, Boy Scouts, Indian Guides and church groups. The parents are encouraged to attend and often become part of the dialogue/role playing.

The detectives use handouts that are designed by the Community Relations Bureau as well as handouts from the National Crime Prevention Council. Examples of the handouts are; "Babysitters Guide to Being Safe." "At Home Alone. A Parent's Guide" and "Cybersafety for Kids Online: A Parents Guide."

The talks are designed to be interactive. Children are given scenarios for open discussion. The detectives will role-play along with the adults from the respective

target group. The adults are also taught what to look for and how to teach their children about strangers, predators and abductors. Specific attention is paid to developing the memory for detail about a suspect. The detective will leave the room and ask an adult to have the children give a detailed description of the officers' appearance, (height, weight, color of hair, etc.) They are taught to use mom, dad, aunts and uncles as reference points. ("He was taller than my Uncle Bill but shorter than my Dad.")

In addition to handouts, the unit utilizes different videos, coloring books and stickers, depending on the age of the group that is addressed.

This information is posted on the Akron Police Department website under Community Relations. The unit handles hundreds of requests per year and is offered at no cost to the community.

2. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

If the children are actively participating, they are actively learning. We also receive feedback from the parents about the impact the program had on the children. The continuing dialogue between parent and child about what they learned together is the most important aspect of the program.

3. Contact Person:

Lt. Charles Brown
Phone: 330-375-2390
Detective James Conley
Phone: 330-375-2390
Akron Police Department, Community Relations Bureau.

**AKRON, OHIO
Mayor Don Plusquellic**

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program:

The Public Information Officer (P.I.O.) position was created to promote better relationships between the media, community and police department. In addition, the program serves as an educational component for timely issues that affect our citizens.

2. When was the program created and why?

The program was created approximately one year ago. Akron Police Chief Matulavich recognized the need for the police departments' position to be heard in a timely, positive and accurate fashion. This has enabled one officer (assisted by others when necessary) to facilitate gathering and disseminating information from various units without hampering the investigators' efforts.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

During this first year, the Mayor's office as well as the Chief's office, have received positive feedback from the print, radio and television media about the increased cooperation and timely information. We are also receiving increased coverage about positive law enforcement efforts.

4. What other city agencies are involved in the program?

The City of Akron recently formed a Communications Committee that has information officers from various city services including; Fire, Health, Customer Services, Mayor's Office, Web Design and Public Works. This will hopefully provide a unified effort, especially in case of a crisis.

Community involvement is critical when dealing with missing and/or abducted children. This unified Communications Committee, along with the Akron Police Department Public Information Officer, will work together to send the information via radio, television, newspaper stories and possibly mailings in the city service billing envelopes.

5. What are the major lessons learned from the program?

The media can be an ally when it comes to promoting programs such as the AMBER ALERT and Community Relations speaking engagements. The media is the major component to the process of the AMBER ALERT.

Relationships that have been developed by a PIO with the various media can impact the department's image in the community and serve as an effective vehicle to quickly disseminate vital information.

6. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program such as yours?

It helps to have a PIO that has worked in various areas of the department and is familiar with how each sub-division (such as patrol, investigative, training, etc.) conducts its operations.

We also use a "media line" that is updated throughout a 24-hour period as major incidents are reported. The media line is a separately dedicated phone line for the sole purpose of informing the media on newsworthy items.

7. Contact person:

Lt. Sylvia Trundle
Akron Police Department Public Information Officer
(voicemail/pager) 330-710-2490

AKRON, OHIO
Mayor Don Plusquellic

AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOL E-MAIL ALERT

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program:

The Akron Police Department uses the city Intranet for distributing information on suspicious activity committed by anyone near our local schools.

When a report is called in to our dispatch center, the dispatcher will transfer the call to our Child Enticement Officer. The Child Enticement Officer will take all of the information and transcribe it to e-mail. The e-mail is then forwarded to our Community Relations Bureau. A detective will then forward the e-mail to the affected school or surrounding schools. If the information warrants, the e-mail can be sent to all of our schools within the Akron Public School system. While the schools are being alerted to the suspicious person or activity, a police cruiser is sent to the scene to take a report and to speak directly with any victims or witnesses.

The purpose of the e-mail is to send information to the school principal in a timely, accurate manner. The principal can become actively involved as a protector and witness for the intended child victims. Also, the principal will have written documentation that he/she may refer to in the event of continued suspicious (enticement) behavior.

2. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

We have received positive feedback from the school administrators about the program. The detectives and officers appreciate the immediate set of extra "eyes and ears" when it comes to the usually elusive predator-type suspect.

3. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program such as yours?

The school administrators must take an active role in forming the policy. Obviously, the e-mail alert does not work if there is no Intranet or Internet service within the city. Also, it requires additional contacts other than the principal to be certain the information was received. (The police department could follow-up with a phone call to insure it was received and acted upon.)

4. Contact person:

Lt. Charles Brown
Community Relations Commander
Phone: 330-375-2390

AKRON, OHIO
Mayor Don Plusquellic

MISSING PERSONS AND CHILD ENTICEMENTS

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program:

The Akron Police Department Investigative Sub-division has a Juvenile/Auto Theft/Missing Persons Unit. A detective from Missing Persons is assigned as the Child Enticement officer. This person is responsible for keeping a file on all reported child enticement incidents. The detective is responsible for interviewing victims, investigating the reports, and disseminating information department-wide when applicable.

2. When was this unit created and why?

This is a recent initiative created by a supervisor within the Juvenile Unit who recognized the need for creating a database with enticement information. This particular crime (child enticement, openly committing sexual acts in front of children, etc.) is one that is usually committed multiple times by a small group of the same people before getting caught. The database is designed to query by modus operandi, vehicle used, etc.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

It is too early in the process to measure the effectiveness. We are hopeful that the filed information will be of use with future investigations.

4. Contact person:

Sgt. Brian Harding
Juvenile/Auto Theft/Missing Persons
Phone: 330-375-2530

ALBANY, NY
Mayor Gerald D. Jennings

"STEP AWAY FOR SAFETY"

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Albany Police Department, in conjunction with the Albany City School District offers a New York State Police developed child abduction prevention program entitled "Step Away for Safety" to school age children. There are two versions of the program, one designed for students in grades K-3, the second for grades 4-8.

Among our practices currently in use to resolve cases involving missing or abducted children is the immediate notification of two detectives dedicated to the investigation of these cases upon being notified of an incident. Based on criteria developed with the assistance of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an immediate response is developed and implemented.

We have established a policy and procedure for the activation of the Amber Alert System but have not had the occasion to use it up to this point. We have also filed an application for and anticipate involvement in the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children **LOCATER** System. **LOCATER** is an advanced computer system with software that creates posters of missing children for local, statewide or nationwide distribution. The system uses e-mail, fax, and print functions to notify law enforcement, media, and the public of missing child cases. The Albany Police Department will be a regional center for this system and will provide the service to other law enforcement agencies throughout the area.

We are now in the developmental stages of a system that will enable us to virtually close the city down and restrict the exiting of any vehicles by establishing law enforcement presence at each point of egress. This system could be utilized in the event of a developing child abduction case and should be operational within the next month.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The "Step Away for Safety" program was established about five years ago in an effort to educate our youth and reduce the potential for abductions. Our Amber Alert Program has been adopted during the past year and the other program will soon be implemented.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

We cannot measure the effectiveness of the prevention program and have not yet used the others.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

This program is city funded, no outside funding.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

Our programs do not involve other city agencies. The New York State Police was involved in the creation of the "Step Away for Safety" Program.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

We have found the prevention program to be well received and easily understood by our target audience and we have experienced no problems implementing the program. Our other initiatives have not yet been tested.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Nothing specific.

8. Contact person

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Albany Police Department
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Fax: (518) 447-7801
E-mail: faliberti@albany-ny.org

For the "Step Away for Safety" Program:
Det/Lieut. James Marcello
Children and Family Services Unit
165 Henry Johnson Boulevard
Albany, NY, 12210
Telephone: (518) 447-8070
Fax: (518) 447-7801
E-mail: jmarcello@albany-ny.org

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL
Mayor Arlene J. Mulder

TRAK, TECHNOLOGY TO RECOVER ABDUCTED KIDS

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

TRAK, Technology to Recover Abducted Kids, is a computer software system designed to help law enforcement agencies locate and recover abducted children. This system allows the police officer to quickly and efficiently create high-resolution photo bulletins and share them electronically with other law enforcement jurisdictions, the media and the community. The first two to four hours after a child is abducted are crucial. When the decision is made to communicate information, the TRAK system plays a central role. The TRAK system operates on a powerful workstation and uses high quality imaging peripherals. The TRAK systems enables officers to create, print and transmit flyers within minutes. The four steps to create a TRAK flyer are as follows:

- A. Scan any photo, image, or even portion of an image into the system and it will be instantly enhanced;
- B. Type in descriptive text outlining important information about the victim and/or perpetrator, and the circumstances of the incident;

- C. Print clear, informative flyers for local dissemination; and
- D. Transmit to other TRAK system users (over 1,100 agencies in 31 states) and to fax machines simultaneously within a matter of minutes.

The TRAK system is used in conjunction with the AMBER alert system to locate missing/abducted persons. The AMBER alert system is text based for the most part, and the TRAK system provides the ability to include high-quality photo images along with the text.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The TRAK system was created by SocialTech, Inc. in 1995 in response to the Polly Klaas abduction and murder in Petaluma, CA. The Arlington Heights Police Department obtained and implemented the system in 2001. The Arlington Heights Police Department adopted the TRAK system as a tool to help locate missing/abducted persons. The system allows the Arlington Heights Police Department to put high-quality photo images of the victim into the hands of everyone able to help in any way in the first minutes, when the chance of recovery is greatest.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The TRAK system has been an invaluable resource to the Arlington Heights Police Department. The system has provided us with the ability to generate and quickly disseminate flyers of missing persons to neighboring police agencies and institutions. The TRAK system has been instrumental in locating numerous missing persons since 2001. Since the system was implemented in 2001, the Arlington Heights Police Department has not had any abducted persons, so the system has not yet been used in that capacity.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The TRAK system used by the Arlington Heights Police Department was donated by the United Way of Chicago and McDonalds, Inc. The current cost of the system is \$5,000, with \$3,000 of the cost being underwritten by SocialTech, Inc. The charge for transmitting each flyer is as follows: 7.5 cents per flyer for TRAK to TRAK transmissions, and 3.7 cents per flyer for TRAK to fax transmissions.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

In addition to most of the neighboring law enforcement agencies, there are currently nine area hospitals, thirty-five schools and twenty area banks programmed into the TRAK system as targets. These hospitals, schools and banks receive the flyers via a fax machine. The Arlington Heights Fire

Department, the Arlington Heights Department of Public Works and the Arlington Heights Park District also have fax machines that are designated as targets for the TRAK system. When there is information to be communicated quickly, all of these institutions can receive flyers within minutes. The system is easily programmed to send flyers to anyone with a fax machine.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Having the ability to include high-quality photographs of the missing/abducted person and/or the abductor has greatly increased the recovery rate in these types of cases across the country. Steve Lowe, Director of Law Enforcement Relations for SocialTech, Inc., advised the AMBER alert system is a great tool, but is limited because it only disseminates text information. Lowe advised that the State of California uses the TRAK system to include photographs with all of their AMBER alerts. Lowe was quoted as saying, "By adding TRAK, we now have AMBER on steroids."

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

There are many programs available to assist in locating missing/abducted persons. We have been very happy with the TRAK system for it's ease of use and the numerous other law enforcement applications that are programmed into the system. We have found the TRAK system to be a great tool in our agency's effort to locate missing/abducted persons. Any mayor interested in learning more about the TRAK system should contact the company directly. To contact the SocialTech Corporate Offices call (800) 724-8725 or visit the website at www.trak.org.

8. Contact person.

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BEDFORD HEIGHTS, OH
Mayor Debora A. Mallin

**S.E.A.R.C.H. INITIATIVE (SECURING ELEMENTARY AND ADULTS; RETURNING
COMMUNITY HOME)**

1. **Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.**

S.E.A.R.C.H. Initiative (**Securing Elementary and Adults; Returning Community Home**) is among the newest outreaches of the City of Bedford Heights Community Policing Efforts. With a proactive focus on abduction education, this program services both juvenile and adult strands in age appropriate initiative/curriculum delivery as follows:

Elementary Youth Strand:

- **LOCATER** program of IntelliCast Target Notification automatically delivers a telephone message (like 9-1-1 in reverse) to most efficiently disseminate relevant information to safely and quickly deliver missing children. The service can also deliver AMBER Alerts. The National Law Enforcement telecommunication System (NLED) is significant in networking thousands of law enforcement agencies located throughout the country to assist in coordination of a national search for a missing child.
- **Stranger Danger** is an awareness program taught in conjunction with the fourth grade D.A.R.E. program. Personal awareness and some self-protection tips are introduced to provide youths insight for self-protection. D.A.R.E. Officer Dennis Jezior visits preschools, libraries, scout groups and additional classrooms with this presentation upon request.
- **Junior Police Academy** is formatted like the Senior Citizens program includes self-defense instruction to the Junior High School class participants.
- **School Resource Officer (SRO)** is an experienced police officer especially assigned to be a mentor/advisor in the daily school setting. Intervention in a stalking ring was completed most effectively because of the special placement of this officer.
- **Safe School** is a community hotline enabling community to call in anonymous leads of a preventive and reporting nature. Leads are appreciated and reviewed for validity/impact that otherwise may not have been reported by the community.
- **Safety Days**, annually held in the spring and the fall, provide several demonstrative experiences via Bedford Heights community police such as 9-1-1 simulator.
- **Kid Care I.D. Kits** provide personal documents of fingerprints and photo in this informational flyer booklet format, free to residents.
- **Senior Strand LOCATER program** can also find seniors who temporarily or regressively are mentally disabled or displaced.
- **Senior Citizens Police Academy** is a ten week curriculum specifies some of the lessons presented instructing best self defense movements for seniors
- **Social Worker** assistance is available to help special needs and characteristics of aging senior and disabled population

- **Personal Home Security** is enhanced through special training like self-defense class police department offers as well as technical equipment such as Lifeline.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

Dedicated to our vision statement of "Safety, Service and Community" the city proactively wishes to provide the residents both the awareness of how to best protect themselves from abduction and appropriate responses to potential dangers. In 2001 our agency investigated 60 missing/runaways who might have fallen in harms way if this had not been addressed. Over the past five years the Bedford Heights Police Department has energetically expanded its community policing outreaches in hopes that our residents do not experience abduction as reported in other communities or county news releases.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Program effectiveness is gauged by:

1. Community's eager response to information/resource sharing;
2. Little/no abductions in the community at this time;and,
3. Successful timely return of any abducted person if situations should occur. We believe this offering has benefited the community in that enthusiastic response to education/implementation has resulted in no community abductions in 2001 and 2002.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Funding for components of this program is a repository of the following funding sources:

City of Bedford Heights General Fund and Department Budgets

- D.A.R.E. Program
- Kid Care I.D. Kits
- Social Worker Contract (50%)
- Senior Citizens Police Academy Program
- Junior Police Academy (Junior High youth)
- Lifeline (through local hospital arrangements)

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

- IntelliCast Notification (Intrado, Inc.)
- LOCATER equipment/program

Cuyahoga County

- Mobile Crisis Team
- **Golden Age Centers of Greater Cleveland**
- Social Worker/joint contract

Bedford City Schools

- Safe School Helpline (joint grant with State of Ohio)

U.S. Department of Justice

- D.A.R.E. Program
- School Resource Officer; 2002

At time of this entry, the City of Bedford Heights is continuing to pursue:

- Implementation of a Bedford Heights (city) Cable TV channel for continual city updates;
- Additional Reverse 911 opportunity;
- Laptops in each police cruiser (purchased but not yet delivered).

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

A. Youth

The City of Bedford Heights hosts a strong partnership with the school districts, both public and parochial, utilizing this setting to teach "Stranger Danger" sessions in all fourth grade classes as well as age appropriate visitations with scout groups, church youth groups and other elective elementary classrooms.

The middle school recently was a School Resource Officer (SRO) to serve as a mentor and advisor to this junior high population. In the first few months of his placement he was able to advise and assist some students on stalking issues.

The School Safety Committee is the cumulative commitment of school administrators and counselors, representatives of all four (school district) community's police departments and Metroparks Rangers, as well as probation officers assigned to district youth. Monthly dialogue allows information sharing to prevent youth aggressions and crowd control as well as case by case interventions.

Interdepartmental cooperation helped implementation of our Junior Police Academy and Senior Citizens Police Academy via the Mayor's initiative with the Police Department, Fire Department and Department of Community Life. Ten

weekly classes prepared by a host of safety officers of various expertise provided life skills (such as self defense sessions) as was age appropriate.

Cuyahoga County Mobile Crisis Team as well as standard Mutual Aid assist city safety efforts during and post emergencies.

B. Seniors

Golden Age Centers of Cleveland has joined the City of Bedford Heights in sponsorship of a Geriatric Social Worker who is available twenty hours a week exclusively for our city (senior/disabled) needs as well as a collective option with other communities on the remaining 20 hours as needed. Neighborhood visitations allow the social worker opportunity to form rapport, awareness and assessment of seniors needs so that clients with Alzheimers or other ailments will be protected in their home environment.

Lifeline devices are provided free of cost to specific qualifying senior residents primarily to communicate needs at times of health crisis. Additional assistance/security can be immediately summoned in any instance when someone might break in their home, putting them at risk for burglary.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs, and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Creation of such programs are vital for all communities but only effective when communicated proactively for full public awareness and utilization. Aggressive initiation/community education of municipal S.E.A.R.C.H. programs and resources best precedes utilization for full effectiveness.

Benefit is experienced in the community from the security residents demonstrate knowing such a program is in place to assist their loved ones as well as to rescue workers who develop a clearer vision of the plan.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

At a time of budgeting constraints even small initiatives appropriately correlated can bring significant improvements to enhance community service. Programs such as S.E.A.R.C.H. need to be in place before you need them to insure that intervention is proactive in nature. The security of all in the neighborhood from youth to senior adults is inclusively important. Studying successful models can expedite service adaptation/provision as best applies to local specific needs. Media partnership assists in awareness efforts.

8. Contact person

Mayor Debora A. Mallin
City of Bedford Heights

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BELLINGHAM, WA
Mayor Mark Asmundson

BELLINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT AMBER ALERT PLAN

1. Briefly describe your policing program designed in child abduction prevention and/or resolution.

In February of 2002 I was asked by the Bellingham Police Chief, Randy Carroll, to establish an AMBER Alert Plan for the Bellingham Police Department. At the time I had heard very little about the program, so I began gathering information. It became clear to me that it would be more beneficial to have a program that covered a wide geographic area rather than just a city. [NOTE: That spring and summer (2002) many AMBER Alerts throughout the country educated the public and law enforcement in what an AMBER Alert was. When I started forming our local plan in February there were few who had heard of it.]

I made contact with every law enforcement agency in a five county region and invited them to a discussion of the AMBER Plan. I also invited Broadcasters and Emergency Management personnel. Topics of the meeting included the interest of agencies in joining together in the AMBER Plan and what geographic area to cover. There was an overall positive response to participating in the AMBER Alert Plan. The Broadcasters and Emergency Management people suggested we keep the local plan to a three county area that was already joined in an emergency alert area. The three county plan was approved and an organization meeting was set.

The meeting was held with all law enforcement agencies; local, state, and federal in the three county area invited. NORTH PUGET SOUND Abducted Minor Broadcast Emergency Response ALERT PLAN was selected as a name for the effort, and I was chosen as chair.

I divided the newly formed organization into two committees: One committee made up of law enforcement personnel, the other made up of broadcasters and emergency management people. The tasks assigned for each committee were used to formulate a law enforcement regiment of the plan and a broadcasters response to the plan. Several committee meetings and general meetings were held with a finished product produced in October of 2002. That same month the plan was presented to the state approving authority and was approved.

As part of the plan one 911 center was selected from the three counties to be the sole contact point for agencies wishing to make an AMBER Alert. The center was equipped with the proper software and mechanics to activate the three county Emergency Alert System. An activation authority was established within

each law enforcement agency. As part of that authority all authorized activation were required personnel to take a one-hour training class in the proper use of the AMBER Alert. When all facets of the plan were in place the department held a press conference.

2. When was the program created and why?

The finished product was completed in October of 2002. It was established at the request of the Bellingham Police Chief.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Luckily we have not had to activate the plan.

4. How is the program financed?

The money came from the operating budget of the lead 911 center. There was no outside funding available.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program?

All city law enforcement agencies in the 3 county area are part of the plan. They all were part of the planning and received the training and authority to activate our plan if necessary. The community was also made aware of the program.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Include representatives from law enforcement (local, state, federal), broadcasters and emergency management from the very beginning. Divide the workload into two committees. Provide training to the agencies involved in the proper use of the plan.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Have someone who has successfully implemented a program assist them.

8. Contact person.

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THE NORTHERN OHIO AMBER ALERT PROGRAM

1. Briefly describe your policing program designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Northern Ohio Amber Alert Program is a cooperative effort between law enforcement and the media to quickly disseminate information about an abducted child. The AMBER ALERT PROGRAM makes use of the established emergency broadcast system to immediately inform the community of a missing child who may be in danger. The Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System (CECOMS) receives all AMBER ALERT messages from local law enforcement agencies and disseminates them to local media outlets.

An AMBER ALERT can only be implemented by a law enforcement agency. In our department, an AMBER ALERT requires the approval of a District Commander or above. The criteria required to call an AMBER Alert are very stringent. They are listed below.

1. The child is under eighteen (18) years of age;
2. There is credible information that suggests that the child was forcibly or intentionally removed or lured away from their location and remains missing;
3. The law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death; and,
4. There is enough descriptive information about the child, and/or alleged abductor, and /or alleged abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.

The above criteria are designed to ensure that system will not be used in situations where the child is not in danger or where there are no specific leads for the community to respond to. It is believed that this will make the alert more affective if and when it is needed. Inappropriate alerts will have a "cry wolf" affect and citizens will not as respond aggressively as needed.

Once a member of the Command Staff verifies that all four of the above criteria are met, the alert information must be organized for public distribution. The Police Communication Control Section assists field personnel with this process. Once all the information is gathered and a phone bank is established, CCS contacts CECOMS and requests the AMBER ALERT. CECOMS is contacted by means of a phone call and a three-page fax.

The AMBER ALERT is a call for the community's eyes and ears. All radio stations, TV stations and weather stations broadcast the police department plea for assistance. The alert will contain such information as suspect description, vehicle information, victim description and clothing, and last known direction of travel. Citizens will be asked to call their police department with any information that may help in the recovery of the child.

A phone bank is established to receive, assess and immediately act on any and all information provided by the public.

2. When was the program created and why?

The Northern Ohio Amber Alert Program was implemented in response to recent highly publicized abductions throughout the country. The first few hours after a child is forcibly abducted hold the most promise for recovering the child alive. Our program was modeled after several plans already established throughout the United States. In the summer of 2002, a planning committee composed of a local TV channel, the Ohio Attorney General's Office, area police and sheriff departments and the Cuyahoga County Division of Emergency Services began meeting to decide what our local AMBER ALERT program would look like.

On October 23, 2002, the AMBER ALERT Planning Committee held a train-the-trainer session for local law enforcement agencies explaining the program and distributing the necessary forms and training materials. On October 24, 2002, the very next day, a neighboring community experienced the abduction of a child. Through the use of the AMBER ALERT Program, the child was returned safely.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program's effectiveness is determined through an after-action critique performed by the local law enforcement agency on a case-by-case basis after the issuance of an AMBER ALERT. The local law enforcement agency forwards a written report of this critique to the Northern Ohio Amber Alert Review Board. The Board reviews the critique and issues any new procedures or modifications that may become necessary.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

All member agencies of the Northern Ohio AMBER ALERT Program fully subsidized all resources donated to the project.

5. What other City agencies are involved in the program?

Mayor's Press Office.

6. How is the community involved in the program?

Speed is essential when trying to rescue an abducted child. If an AMBER ALERT is activated, the community is engaged to look for both the child and the alleged abductors. Experience has shown that a significant number of child abductions have been resolved because of extensive radio and television coverage.

7. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Broad public support is required to establish a program such as this. Giving all parties input from the ground level can generate support. We found that using a planning committee made up of media, government agencies, and local police and sheriff departments gave each partner a sense of ownership. All partners were acknowledged when the program was implemented.

8. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

It is very important to adhere to the AMBER ALERT criteria for issuing an alert. If the system is overused or used inappropriately, the public will lose faith in it and not respond when requested. Some local media representatives may question why an AMBER ALERT was not issued in a particular incident. Police managers must not be influenced by this scrutiny and must continue to adhere to the criteria as specified in their program.

Another potential problem is the agency capacity to handle the influx of calls without interfering with regular 9-1-1 calls. It is impossible to predict the exact number of calls that an AMBER ALERT will generate, but each agency must think through the logistics of establishing and staffing a phone bank. Our plan in place at this time requires each District Commander to identify one or two phone lines in the District station that can be used for an AMBER ALERT. The District Commander will staff the phone bank with available district personnel, either sworn or civilian. We have developed a structured interview sheet to assist call takers in collecting information for detectives to assess.

In the future we plan to establish a centralized phone bank located in the Communications Control Section by adding another call que. This will allow us to staff the phones with trained telecommunicators. It will also ensure that all calls are recorded and allow for immediate dispatch if necessary.

The AMBER ALERT Program is similar to an emergency operation plan or an evacuation plan. It is one of those procedures that are seldom used, but when it is needed, it is critical that all parties know exactly what to do. Because of this, it is important to regularly re-train and occasionally drill personnel on AMBER ALERT procedures.

9. Contact person:

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COLUMBUS, OH
Mayor George Wade

MID-OHIO STRANGER ABDUCTION “AMBER” ALERT PROGRAM

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Columbus Police worked with other Mid-Ohio law enforcement agencies, local radio station Sunny 95 and members of the public to create a first ever voluntary public-private partnership between Mid-Ohio law enforcement agencies and the Mid-Ohio news media to enhance the protection of our children. Modeled after a similar alert program in effect in the Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas area, SAA, as it is called is another tool in the arsenal for helping the public and the police rescue stranger abducted children. Although fortunately a rare occurrence, the SAA/Amber program works like this:

Where a child under age 18 is determined by an participating police agency to have been abducted by a stranger and especially where there is a description of the perpetrator, vehicle description and a vehicle license # is available, etc., participating news media are alerted by fax and a follow-up phone call of such an event.

Participating news media are requested to broadcast this information as often as possible every hour for up to two hours after receipt of the written notification of the verified alert.

News media are advised of any recovery and given the reporting police agency's contact person's name and their phone # for additional information.

SAA/Amber Alert is not designed to handle missing adults, custodial child takings, runaway children or children reported missing more than 24 hours after their disappearance. SAA does not control or take any part in any investigation or in deciding what stranger abducted children are referred to the clearinghouse for broadcast to the media (all referrals must come from a participating police agency trained in the SAA protocol). SAA does not prevent the victim's family, investigating police agency or others from contacting the news media about any actual or attempted child abduction.

SAA/Amber Alert is strictly a voluntary program by the participating law enforcement agency and the participating news media.

This program is acknowledged by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children website as a regional Amber plan, one of the 88 programs nationwide.

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2. When was the program created and why?

Program planning started in the summer 2001 and was formally introduced to the public in October 2001. A driving force in creating the program was the interest and initiative of a private individual Mr. Michael Rankin, at the time Senior Counsel to American Electric Power Company.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Since participation is voluntary, the number of participating law enforcement agencies and news media sources determines effectiveness. Further, the protocols established by the Mid-Ohio Amber plan have been copied and used as the basis for other regional plans in Ohio. Another measure is the training requested by local and statewide media and law enforcement personnel. Last is the increase in media and public awareness as evidenced by follow-up news stories on the program in addition to related stories on child safety issues.

4. How is the program financed?

To date program support has been through use of current staffing and resources, pro bono legal work, and a small private grant. The Division of Police is the only direct City of Columbus participant in the program.

Support is received from several other private and governmental sources. The Franklin County Sheriff's Office serves as the clearing center to disseminate to the broadest possible alert notices. The Ohio Attorney General's office provides expertise and staff support. The regional office of the Ohio Department of Transportation supports the program with protocols for activating overhead highway signs. The Franklin County Emergency Management Agency is coordinating the use of the Emergency Alert System for Amber alerts. The Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police was critical in gaining the initial support and participation of its members. The local FBI office has assigned an agent to participate in this initiative. As a result of program interest Columbus Public Schools security personnel received training on abductions and the SAA/Amber plan.

Community members are included as active participants and serve on the program board of directors. Community support includes the continued volunteer participation of Mr. Mike Rankin Esq. currently affiliated with the law firm of McNees Wallace & Nurick, LLC, Mr., John L. Einstein, IV, Esq. Hahn Loeser &

Parks LLP and Mr. Jerry Saunders, President & CEO, APDS Inc Columbus, Ohio.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours.

There are substantial information resources available for starting this type of program. An important element is developing broad partnerships especially between the media, community and law enforcement. Once program systems are in place, regular training and practice for law enforcement is essential since stranger abductions occur with such rarity. Lastly, look for opportunities for continuous improvement, especially for communicating with media outlets and within law enforcement. Ultimately coordination and cooperation is the key.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Look for opportunities to anticipate and develop new programs in advance of critical need. Don't discount ideas or suggestions from interested community leaders.

8. Contact persons:

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DEARBORN, MI
Mayor Michael A. Guido

TITAN – TEACHING INTEGRITY TOLERANCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program/s.

The Dearborn Police Department has focused on two areas in regards to child/adult abduction. The first is education and the second is implementation of a predetermined action plan. In regards to education the department has focused on two areas, primarily training and education through the departments Investigative Division, and secondly the use and reinforcement of education through the use of community policing officers. The Investigative Division's Youth Services Bureau developed an expanded school resource officer program called TITAN – Teaching Integrity Tolerance And Non-Violence. The TITAN Units mission is to provide a flexible variety of quality juvenile related services to the community and the school district. Part of the educational services provided to students and parents is focused on child abduction prevention including a children's identification kit. A higher focus is on the younger students who are taught a program on "stranger danger". The Investigative Division has a Domestic Violence Advocate Program consisting of a legally trained advocate and a county prosecutor who specializes in domestic violence cases. Education and support is given to victims of domestic violence crimes, which includes cases of child abduction of a domestic nature (parental kidnapping). Education and prevention of solicitation and abduction induced through technology via "chat rooms" by child predators is becoming a focus of TITAN and the newly establish Internet Crime Unit. Finally, Community Policing officers always focus on the education to the community of the dangers that they, the citizens, may unfortunately encounter. In regards to response, the department has devised an action plan based on Amber Alert. We have joined with Amber Alert of Michigan, a non-profit organization dedicated to being a liaison between law enforcement and the media.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

An Amber Alert action plan was recently implemented by the Dearborn Police Department based upon similar Amber Alert response plans developed by many other State, County and Municipal Police and Sheriff Agencies. Departmental General Orders address the need for an immediate response to quickly assess and if required activate an Amber Alert. The Department is currently developing a media team, which would assist in any major incidents such as child abduction. The TITAN Program was developed in 2002 by former DARE trained officers to devise flexible quality juvenile-related services geared towards our community and its problems.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The City of Dearborn and its police department has been fortunate not to experience an abduction incident that would cause an Amber Alert type of response and resolution. The effectiveness of the TITAN program is currently being measured in its first year of service to the community. Officers in the unit have been developing statistical data based upon several criteria such as incident nature, types of student contact and resolution. The data is focused mainly on the schools that the officers are assigned to. The use of student surveys has given officers useful insight into cause and effect and possible areas that need attention and education for effectiveness. Officers have utilized children's identification kits that are given out at different school and community functions. Officers fingerprint the child and give the kit to the family to fill in essential information and a current photograph of the child. This has been a great public relations tool and would be of great assistance in an incident that fortunately has not occurred in our jurisdiction.

4. How is the program financed?

The TITAN unit has been able to secure funding through several initiatives. First, the City of Dearborn's General Fund provides support for the TITAN program. In addition to that, the unit has a main fundraiser, which is an annual golf outing with corporate sponsors. Other monies are gathered through donations from community members and organizations that sponsor other events besides the golf outing, such as Bikers for Kids. Efforts have been made in the past and presently to receive monies from HUD block grants according to their guidelines to finance the TITAN program.

5. What and how are other city agencies are involved in the program/s? How is the community involved?

The city, in addition to the most obvious police and fire, has many different departments to support such an operation. The City of Dearborn Communications personnel would be vital in the dispatching of police and support units to the area. If child abduction were to occur all city vehicles, which are equipped with radios, would be made aware of the incident and utilized as "eyes and ears." The city has a Public Information Department that could support the police department's media personnel. The members of the Dearborn community have always been ready to rise up to and assist in any crisis. Police Reserves are available to be called in at anytime when needed. The schools work closely with the police department, exchanging information and aiding in the awareness and education of their students and parents.

6. What lessons were learned from the program/s that would be helpful to others?

We have taken a proactive approach in establishing policies and educating the community, which would be the first lesson. The potential problem of such an incident has been identified and response plans are in place. Education of the public for prevention and awareness has since been the focus. The statistically

most likely target or victim being children has focused efforts on them and their parents to leverage the education in preventative measures. The utilization of specially trained officers in the school system, our TITAN unit, has proven to be the most effective platform for furthering these specific objectives.

7. What specific advice do you have for those wishing to replicate your program?

With regard to Amber Alert and child abduction, it is of primary importance to immediately establish a policy with a plan of action that liaisons with the media to get the needed response and coverage out to the public ASAP for assistance in locating the child and the parties involved in the incident. Departments that have officers in a school resource program should be utilized in the planning and implementation of programs directed to the most likely target groups -- school age children. Their specialized training and liaison with the local school system gives them valuable insights into how to successfully focus on the department's efforts.

8. Contact.

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EL PASO, TX
Mayor Raymond C. Caballero

THE "MARIA ALERT"

1. Briefly describe your policing program (s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The El Paso Police Department currently has two types of alerts targeting the safe return of our children. Initially, the "Maria Alert" was a program adopted by several law enforcement agencies in our area. The program focused on children 13 years of age and younger. The age of 13 was chosen to avoid having to deal with chronic runaway children who make up a large percentage of missing children over the age of 13. Recently, the local "Maria Alert" was changed to the Amber Alert and the age was changed to 17 years of age and younger to comply with state Amber Alert requirements. The main difference between the local Amber Alert and the statewide alert is that local authorities can control and activate the local system without having to meet the following strict requirements prior to activating the statewide Amber Alert. The statewide Amber Alert requires that the answer to each of the following questions be YES:

- 1) Is the child 17 years of age or younger?
- 2) Does the law enforcement agency believe that the child has been abducted, that is, unwillingly taken from their environment without permission from the child's parent or legal guardian?
- 3) Is there reason to believe that the victim is in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death?
- 4) Is it confirmed that an investigation has taken place that verifies the abduction and has eliminated alternative explanations for the missing child?
- 5) Is there sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the child, suspect, or vehicle used in the abduction?

A memorandum of understanding was put in place to have municipal, state and federal law enforcement agencies share resources, manpower and equipment, in order to expedite and extend the coverage of search for our children. The media plays a critical role and is an equal partner in this search effort. The El Paso Police Department also participates in community activities to have children fingerprinted for identification purposes. Officers involved in community policing efforts conduct public service announcements and provide advertisements to the public to inform them of where and when children can be fingerprinted.

The El Paso Police Department also received the Abduction Central Alert (ACA) Remote Host program from the Child Alert Foundation as a donation. The program is designed to give law enforcement a new tool to help notify the community when a child is abducted. Information regarding the abducted/missing child can be entered with quick and easy data entry screens with further information made available through the use of function keys and screen pop-ups. Posters of the abducted/missing child can be made possible via the F9 function key. A contact list is provided for the ACA Host and separated into various categories that help identify the alert order when activated. The capability to review the status of an abduction is also available and will also update the CAF websites placed on the Internet.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The "Maria Alert" was designed and formally introduced in the spring of 2001. The need for an organized, expedient and extensive search plan was recognized in our area. Another reason why the program was created and how the program received its name was due to a child abduction, which occurred in Fabens, Texas. A little girl named Maria Zavala was abducted by a couple who had been allowed to reside with the Zavala family. The little girl was abducted and taken into Mexico. Years later, the child was recognized by law enforcement and returned to the family. The Maria Alert program was changed to Amber Alert to reduce the chances of confusion with the state initiated Amber Alert.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program has been effective every time it has been employed, with the exception of a few false alarms where children had intentionally left their premises. Monthly meetings are also held with committee members to review and critique the program. The first Maria Alert was conducted in the summer of 2001. An abduction at the Bridge of the Americas in El Paso resulted in a 2-year-old child being abducted by an alien smuggler. The child was taken into the city's sewer system. A massive search in El Paso and in Juarez forced the smuggler to take the child to a hotel and the child was subsequently returned to Mexican law enforcement agents. Media in El Paso and Cd. Juarez played a key role in disseminating the search for the child.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Maria Alert is financed by each participating agency. There is no funding to cover overtime, staffing or equipment usage. This can be a substantial burden, given that special equipment and specially trained personnel may be required for extended hours. In the Bridge of the Americas abduction, Combined Search and Rescue (COMSAR), Fire Department and Sheriff Department trained personnel were used to search the city's sewer lines for the suspect and the child. The police and Border Patrol helicopters were used. Undercover officers cruised the streets. Patrol officers also manned several manhole covers where the suspect and child could exit. The Maria Alert program in El Paso presently receives no funding from any other agencies or federal programs.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

Other agencies involved in the local Amber Alert include: the FBI, the Child Advocacy Center of El Paso, United States Customs Service, INS, the El Paso County Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney's Office, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Mexico Liaisons for all agencies, the Texas Department of Transportation and the El Paso Police Department. Media include El Paso television and radio stations, as well as the El Paso Times. Public service announcements are made through the media and information is also provided to the public through the El Paso Police Department's local television program.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Of major interest for other departments in our country is to recognize that even though an Amber Alert may exist in their area, their local efforts for a child search may be strengthened through the collaboration with law enforcement agencies, the public and the media. Agencies need to understand that the Amber Alert should not be overused. This could result in reduction of its effectiveness and too many false alarms could ruin relationships between agencies and the media. Agencies should design their

Amber Alert program so that only one person has command and control and makes the decision to either ACTIVATE or DEACTIVATE the plan.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Participating agencies must be prepared to combine forces and work as a team from the onset of a major alert. It is paramount that training be given to all personnel prior to implementing a plan such as this. It is also important to note that while the El Paso area has a plan such as the local Amber Alert, it also has the Texas Amber Alert in place. The Texas Amber Alert extends other possibilities that target endangered and abducted children up to the age of 17. It is imperative that the Mayor, Police Chief and other heads of agencies and organizations are included in designing a local Amber Alert program.

8. Contact persons.

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FRESNO, CA
Mayor Alan Autry

STUDENTS TRAVELING AND ARRIVING SAFELY (S.T.A.R.S.)

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

"Students Traveling and Arriving Safely", or S.T.A.R.S., is based on a simple premise, " the more people actively looking out for children as they walk to and from school, the better." The stars of the endeavor are the school children and the people giving their time and effort to make sure the children can come and go from school safely.

Stars uses the following strategies toward the goal of off-campus student safety:

Parent Patrols– Volunteer parents walk or drive around the streets near schools looking for suspicious activity or students in distress. Those who walk wear distinctive vests and those who drive display magnetic signs on their car doors identifying them as part of parent patrols. These volunteers do not take enforcement action or place themselves in danger. They notify police and school officials as needed

Safe Houses– The Fresno Fire Department's "A Friend is Waiting" program features neighborhood residents and businesses designated as "safe houses" for any child who is frightened or in distress. The residents or businesses provide a place of refuge until police arrive. A distinctive decal in their front window identifies the location as a "safe house." Every fire station is designated as a safe house.

City eyes– City of Fresno employees (sanitation workers, bus drivers and public works employees), all of whom routinely drive in neighborhoods while children are walking to and from school, receive training on recognizing and reporting suspicious activity via their radios. Bus drivers receive descriptions of suspects and suspect vehicles involved in crimes against school children via radio from officers assigned to the bus system. Additionally, the local U.S. Postmaster has enlisted support of the 500 letter carriers to participate in this safety effort through increased awareness of the safety of children walking to and from school.

School district personnel– Staff, teachers or student safety assistants monitor the perimeter of the campus during times when students are arriving and leaving school.

Students– Students are trained to walk with parents or other students when possible, be alert for suspicious vehicles and people, take safe routes instead of short cuts, and report suspicious activity to school officials or police. They are also encouraged to look out for the well being of fellow students.

Citizens on Patrol– The police department's volunteer Citizens on Patrol drive through school neighborhoods in marked police vehicles and report suspicious activity via their police radios.

Police Officers– Patrol Officers, P.A.L. Officers and school liaison officers pay special attention to the streets near schools at the beginning and end of the school day. Police and Community Service Officers also make safety presentations to parent patrols and students.

2. When was the program created and why?

The program was created during the 1998/1999 school year and was an effort to utilize already existing resources combined with low cost new resources to better protect the children of our community.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program has no official measurement mechanism. We rely on the input of the community to help keep the program up to date.

4. How is the program funded?

The program receives no funding. It is a conglomeration of existing city resources and the community. Equipment is bought by the school sites or parents that want to be involved.

5. Who (agencies and community) is involved in the program?

City of Fresno Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, Sanitation Department, Fresno Area Rapid Transit, Fresno Unified School District, U.S. Postal Service and numerous parents and students.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for implementation?

The S.T.A.R.S. program relies on community awareness to be effective. Media support is crucial in making the program work.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating the program?

You need the cooperation of your City Department heads as well as the school districts to be successful. In addition you need to ensure the program becomes a part of the everyday operating procedure of your city. Increasing the awareness of the community is the key to the success of the S.T.A.R.S. program anywhere.

8. Contact person.

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GREENWICH, CT
Mayor Richard V. Bergstresser

GREENWICH POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

The Greenwich Police Department developed a Missing Child Policy and Procedures Manual in April of 2002. This policy includes a section on the abduction of children and provides for the implementation of the State of Connecticut Amber Alert Plan when necessary.

2. When was the program created and why?

The program was developed in the spring of 2002 in response to a greater awareness of child abductions throughout the United States and the need to provide a response plan should abduction occur in this municipality.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program's effectiveness will be measured by its ability to alert the media and the public to an incident of an abducted child.

4. How is the program financed?

The program is funded by our existing department budget.

5. What other city agencies are involved?

No other city/agency is directly involved in the program

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

The need to have phone system, press agencies and state agencies involved prior to an occurrence.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Address the issue now, before an occurrence, in order to provide the best service to the community.

8. Contact person:

Robert Williams
Youth Officer
Greenwich Police Department
11 Bruce Place
Greenwich, CT 06830
Phone: (203) 622-8031

**HOLLYWOOD, FL
Mayor Mara Giuliani**

THE HOLLYWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Hollywood Police Department utilizes standard operating procedures in the investigation of missing or abducted adults/children. These standard operating

procedures outline the responsibility of the first responding officer, supervisors and detectives.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

Due to the ever-changing technology and methodology of investigating these cases, the department updated its Standard Operating Procedure's to incorporate the criteria necessary to activate the Florida Amber Plan and the role of outside agencies such as the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

3. How do you measure the programs effectiveness?

We measure the effectiveness of the program by the return of the missing juvenile/adult to their family or in the case of a dependency hearing, to the State of Florida. Statistics are kept on a monthly basis as to case closures for future case assignments.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the Department of Justice?

Not applicable.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

When investigating cases involving parents absconding with children, leads are developed as to where the parent may have fled. The investigator would then contact the local law enforcement agency to request their assistance in the investigation. If a neighborhood watch group has been established in the area of the missing or abducted person, it is then activated with pertinent information being disseminated to the community.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

It has been our experience that when law enforcement agencies, the media and the community work together, the results have usually been successful. Additionally, the use of technology such as "Reverse 911" would have been advantageous in alerting the public.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Mayors should support the police department to ensure that adequate resources are available to conduct initial and follow-up investigation.

8. Contact person.

Sergeant Chuck Roberts
Hollywood Police Department
Special Victims Unit
3250 Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, Florida 33021
Telephone: 954-967-4411
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E-mail: croberts@hollywoodfl.org

HONOLULU, HI
Mayor William J. Phelan

THE MINOR ABDUCTED IN LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY (MAILE) ALERT PLAN

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

In December 2002, the Honolulu Police Department activated the MAILE Alert Plan. The plan is named in honor of six-year-old Maile Gilbert, who was abducted and murdered in 1985. MAILE is acronym for **Minor Abducted In Life-Threatening Emergency** and is pronounced "my lee." This plan is designed to initiate an alert that provides information on an endangered missing/abducted child. The information is broadcast through radio and television and uses the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to immediately notify the general public.

The MAILE Alert Plan is a partnership of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), emergency management agencies, and local broadcasters to notify the public when a child has been abducted.

As with severe weather warnings, the MAILE Alert Plan utilizes the Emergency Alert System to immediately deliver vital information to broadcasters and the public about an abducted child and the abductor.

The network can be quickly activated by the Honolulu Police Department. HPD will make the decision to activate this plan once certain criteria are met. HPD's homicide lieutenant will make the decision regarding the activation of this plan. One call will result in a notice being sent from the police department's Communications Division via the Emergency Alert System to all radio and television stations. The State Department of Transportation will also be notified to flash messages on state highway signs to warn motorists to watch for the abductor's vehicle.

The public is asked to call a hotline number if they have information that may be helpful in the investigation. The numbers are as follows:

MAILE Alert Oahu Hotline: 540-TIPS (540-8477)

Nationwide: 1-866-HPD LOST (1-866-473-5678)

2. **When was the program created?**

This program was established in December 2002. Implementing this program took approximately one year of planning and coordinating. In the fall of 2001, a police officer from our Missing Persons Detail attended a Crimes Against Children Seminar in Dallas, Texas. At this seminar, he met Mr. Mike Simonds, Chief Deputy Sheriff of Tarrant County. Mr. Simonds was the lead Detective in the 1996 abduction and murder of nine- year- old Amber Hagerman in Arlington, Texas. Her death was tragic and had such profound impact on the community that an innovative plan was developed.

Working with local radio broadcasters, Mr. Simonds played a key role in helping to establish an emergency alert plan to help recover abducted children. They named it the AMBER plan. Throughout the United States, **America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response**, or versions of it, has been established. There are 87 versions established throughout the country, and there are currently 38 states that have established a statewide AMBER alert plan. Since the inception in 1997, the AMBER plan is credited with saving the lives of 45 children nationally.

The Honolulu Police Department subsequently decided to create a version of the AMBER Plan, the MAILE Alert Plan. To help our citizens to identify with this plan, it was named after a six-year-old Maile Gilbert. In 1985, she was abducted from a party in Kailua, Oahu. The suspect was located by the police several hours later and confessed to the brutal murder of Maile Gilbert. He later led detectives to Kaena Point where they found her body. He is currently serving life in prison.

MAILE will always be remembered as the little girl from Kailua who inspired our community, our island and our state to create a plan to help save the lives of other abducted children.

MAILE is the acronym for **Minor Abducted In Life Emergency** and is a program with the following objectives:

1. The MAILE Alert Plan is designed to locate and recover the endangered missing child and the abductor expeditiously before the child is seriously harmed;
2. This plan is designed to persuade the abductor to release the child; and,
3. This plan is designed to deter potential abductions.

3. How do you measure the programs success?

It is very difficult to measure the program's effectiveness without having an actual child abduction that activates the system. We are planning to have a mock scenario introduced with a planned practice activation of the MAILE Alert Plan.

4. How is the program financed?

The program is free.

5. What other agencies are involved?

The Oahu Civil Defense Agency and local television and radio broadcasters are involved. In addition to city and county agencies, there are various state agencies involved, such as the State Department of Civil Defense, Department of the Attorney General, and the Department of Transportation.

The Department of the Attorney General's Missing Child Center of Hawaii (MCCH) is involved as a state contact for the MAILE Alert Program with other states' alert programs and the National Amber Alert Network. The MCCH promotes awareness of the program and any alerts by enlisting the services of local community boards such as the Hawaii Hotel Security Association (HHSA), the Urban Honolulu Network, and any other groups that would be instrumental in the prevention and recovery of an abducted child.

6. What major lessons learned?

The Honolulu Police Department has established a "set criteria" which needs to be met in order for the program to be activated. It is important to understand that if a case does not qualify, an alert will not be activated. A plan that continues to be activated in an environment of "better safe than sorry" can erode the confidence of the public and law enforcement. There may be a "cry wolf" effect if the system is activated too many times.

ACTIVATION CRITERIA

The MAILE Alert Plan is restricted to child abduction cases in which HPD believes that the child is in danger of serious bodily injury or death. This plan is not intended for runaways or custodial interference cases unless the investigation determines that the child's life is in danger.

The alert will be activated when the following criteria have been met;

The child is 10 years of age or younger. (Cases involving children who are 11 through 17 years of age will be considered on a case-by-case basis.)

There is sufficient information to indicate that the child may have been abducted and is in immediate danger of serious bodily injury or death.

There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, abductor, and/or the abductor's vehicle to believe that the child may have been abducted and is in immediate danger of serious bodily injury or death.

There is sufficient descriptive information about the child child, abductor, and /or the abductor's vehicle to believe that an immediate broadcast alert will help to locate the child and possibly the abductor.

7. What specific advice do you have for others?

It is important that all the agencies involved in the planning and development of an alert system are united and are willing to work together.

8. Contact person

Philip V. Camero
Police Officer
Missing Persons Detail
Honolulu Police Department.
801 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 529-3394
Fax: (808) 529-3013
E-mail: pcamero@co.honolulu.hi.us

HOUSTON, TX
Mayor Lee P. Brown

HOUSTON REGIONAL AMBER PLAN

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Houston Regional Amber Plan (HRAP) is designed to help find missing children believed to be abducted. HRAP was developed as a cooperative effort by the Houston Police Department, The Houston Local Emergency Communication Committee, the Harris County Office of Emergency Management and Newsradio KTRH-AM 740 (the local primary Emergency Alert System station for the 13-county Houston region.)

The criteria for issuing an Amber Alert are:

- The missing child must be 17 years of age or younger and the law enforcement agency believes the child has been abducted (unwillingly taken from their environment without permission from the child's parent or legal guardian);

- The agency believes the missing child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death;
- A law enforcement investigation had taken place that verified the abduction or eliminated alternative explanations; and,
- Sufficient information is available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the child, suspect, and/or the suspect's vehicle.

A participating law enforcement agency initiates an Amber Alert by logging on to the secure Amber Plan website (www.Amber-Plan.net) or sending a fax to Newsradio KTRH-AM 740. News editors at KTRH will re-write the information from the website or fax request into a broadcast ready Amber Alert message. Depending on the immediacy of the event, KTRH may activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to request that other electronic media outlets re-broadcast the Amber Alert. In addition to activating EAS, KTRH will also use e-mail and broadcast fax technology to distribute the Amber Alert to other participating media outlets, law enforcement agencies, and Amber Plan business partners.

Participating media outlets may interrupt their normal programming or supplement their own news bulletins and newscast with the Amber Alert information. Television and cable stations may display the Amber Alert logo and insert the message into a character-generated crawl across the TV screen.

Amber Plan business partners (such as bus, taxi, delivery services, and corporate sponsors) will notify their employees traveling in the region to be on the lookout for the suspect's vehicle.

The Houston Police Department will also use the Technology to Recover Kids (TRAK) computer system to further spread the Amber Alert. The TRAK system uses fax and modem to quickly distribute alerts simultaneously to hundreds of law enforcement agencies, media outlets, and business partners. If available, the missing child's photo may be scanned into the TRAK system and added to the alert message. The photo may also be uploaded to the Amber Plan website for distribution via e-mail and posting on the home page.

This media blitz is intended to encourage the public to call the initiating agency at the phone number provided on the alert, if they have information regarding the missing child, wanted suspect or vehicle. It is also hoped that the suspect will be discouraged from continuing his/her criminal act, and release the child unharmed.

Amber Alerts will be updated regularly as new information is developed. A cancellation message will be issued when the child is found.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The Houston Regional Amber Plan was implemented on December 7, 2000. The first Amber Alert was issued by HRAP eight (8) days later on, December 15, 2000. The plan was created to raise public awareness to specific abduction events and to solicit its involvement so that missing children will be returned to safety.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Since implementation, there have been sixteen (16) alerts issued on seventeen (17) abduction victims. All but two (2) have been recovered safely. One adult who was abducted with her child was murdered. Her child was recovered unharmed. A thirteen-year-old girl taken March 10, 2002 is still missing.

In one case, the Amber Alert is directly credited for the recovery of a child taken by a sexual predator just an hour earlier. In a few other cases, it is believed that the Amber Alert played a part in the early release of the victim.

4. How is the program financed?

The Houston Regional Amber Plan receives funding from a variety of sources. Each law enforcement agency and media outlet bears the cost of its participation. The Harris County Office of Emergency Management provided much of the funding to develop the website. Gabriel's Gifts, a non-profit organization, provides from its staff the Executive Director for the plan. HRAP continues to seek sponsors and business partners.

8. Contact Person

Steve Arrington, Lieutenant
HPD Homicide Division
1200 Travis, 6th Floor
Houston, TX 77002
Phone: 713-308-3600
FAX: 713-308-3607

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN
Mayor Bart Peterson**

THE INDIANAPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program designed in child and adult abduction prevention and / or resolution.

The Amber Alert Plan provides a protocol for the most serious child abduction cases. However, the criteria for an Amber Alert is:

- The individual has to be less than 18 years of age;
- The individual is in danger of serious bodily injury or death; and,
- There is enough specific information for a broadcast, which would provide the public with detailed suspect information.

Due to these constraints, its application is limited. The Indianapolis Police Department identified the need for a measured and organized response to a missing person.

The Missing Person Response is an organized response to missing children under 12 and adults with diminished capacity to ensure the five major components of an investigation (Response, Validation, Search,

Victimology and Interview) are executed in a coordinated, thorough, and structured manner. Many abduction investigations begin as missing person investigations and the primary response is critical to a successful outcome. The pillars of the program are the identification and training of personnel who will be the first responders/ investigators of a missing person incident and the management of the investigation.

The Indianapolis Police Department has identified its Missing Persons Unit as the primary responders/ investigators to missing person incidents. The department's response program includes a homicide supervisor and the Indianapolis Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue Unit as partners in the initial response. The Missing Person Investigators receive their initial specialized training through the DOJ/ OJJDP (Department of Justice / Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) "Responding to Missing and Abducted Children" training program. The Missing Person Investigators also receive supplemental training in investigation techniques and skills from internal sources.

The homicide supervisor provides additional investigative overview should, in the worst case scenario, the missing person investigation turn into a homicide investigation. The Indianapolis Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue Unit provides manpower and expertise in urban search techniques, as well as a fully equipped mobile command post. The police department has provided additional training to the unit's members to enhance their interview skills to maximize the information they can obtain in the neighborhood search and canvass.

The second pillar of the program is the utilization of the incident command model to manage the investigation. The Incident Command System, or ICS, is a model organizational plan, which allows the department to efficiently and effectively manage an incident. The ICS facilitates the command, control and coordination of the resources and activities of the department and allow for the integration of the resources of other various agencies and organizations if necessary. (1)

The ICS is a nationally recognized and widely used system which functions as the foundation for an effective, all-risk, emergency planning and response system. Federal law requires the use of the ICS response to HAZMAT incidents. The ICS utilizes a standardized modular command structure to accomplish the protection of life, incident stabilization, and protection of property, while also being conscious of any environmental concerns encountered while responding to an incident. The ICS also utilizes common terminology, integrated communications, unified command structure, consolidated action plans, manageable span of control, designated facilities, and comprehensive resource management. (1)

The modular command structure used in ICS can expand or shrink depending on the magnitude or complexity of an incident. The ICS organizational structure includes five functional areas. The first of these areas is COMMAND, which is comprised of the Incident Commander, and may also include Safety Officers, Liaison Personnel, Legal Advisor, Incident

Recorder and Information Officers. The remaining four components of the ICS organizational structure are the Operations Section, Planning Section, Logistics Section, and Finance/Administration Section. These five major components are the foundation upon which the ICS organization develops. In small-scale incidents, each of these components may be managed by the Incident Commander. Large-scale incidents usually require that each component, or section, be set up separately. Each of these sections may be further divided up into branches which may be divided into groups and then units if necessary.

2. When was the program created and why?

The program is the result of twenty-five years of departmental experience in missing person /abduction cases and the input of many dedicated law enforcement and fire department personnel. Each abduction/missing person investigation has provided measures of success and lessons learned.

3. How do you measure the programs effectiveness?

The program's effectiveness is measured by the outcome of cases. A successful recovery of a missing / abducted person and a successful prosecution of a perpetrator, where applicable, is one criteria for a successful outcome. The second criteria is how the investigation was conducted. It is important after a major event such as a callout for a missing person, that a debriefing occur. At this debriefing, one needs to cover what was done right, and what needs to be improved. This constant improvement cycle provides a benchmark to measure your success. The community's perception of the professionalism of the department's response is also a critical measure of effectiveness.

4. How is the program financed?

The majority of the expenses are funded from the city budget. Training is provided by the Department of Justice / Office Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention and some equipment was provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The Indianapolis Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue Unit responds upon request of the primary detective and provides a mobile command post and trained firefighters to assist in the search for the missing person. Along with the search for the missing person, the firefighters conduct a neighborhood canvass. The firefighters have been provided basic training in interview techniques by police personnel to enhance their ability to gather and report information obtained in the neighborhood canvass.

The police department has developed a positive relationship with the local media and is usually able to have the missing person information

broadcast immediately. The community then becomes the eyes and ears of the investigation and provides critical information to assist with the investigation.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs, and others trying to implement a program or programs similar to yours?

The major lessons learned over years in the development of our Missing Persons Investigations Unit are in these areas: training / preparation, relationships and equipment. The proficiency of an agency's response is dependent on field supervisors and patrol units being familiar with the policies and procedures regarding missing persons and child abduction incidents. This training starts in the recruit academy, and is reinforced by in-service training. It is imperative that the first responding units secure the scene, gather initial information and request a Missing Person Detective in a timely manner. The responding Missing Persons Detective must have the training necessary to assess the situation and initiate the proper response. The Missing Persons Detective must be given the authority to establish the level of response he/she feel is necessary from a local search and canvass to initiate a state-wide Amber Alert. Time is of the essence in these investigations.

The relationships with an agency's partners in the response to missing/abducted person investigations must be developed and reinforced prior to a major incident occurring to ensure the smooth flow of resources and information under operational conditions. Contact numbers and people need to be updated and reviewed on at least a semi-annual basis. Tabletop exercises should be conducted at least annually to identify any omissions in the plan and to ensure responding personnel are aware of their respective roles.

The agency must identify and provide the necessary equipment and resources for a well organized response to a missing / abducted person incident. Computer resources are currently available through a grant from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Telephone bank and personnel resources should be identified to handle community responses to media reports. Mobile command post resources should be identified to provide support for field operations.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

The following are points of specific advise to successfully implement a missing person response program:

The agency must develop written policies and procedures assigning responsibilities in missing person / abducted children investigations.

The agency's command staff must support and embrace the program if it is to succeed. In addition, the agency must provide the necessary resources, personnel, equipment and training to prepare the organization for a professional response.

8. Contact person.

Captain W. Cris Dahlke
Indianapolis Police Department
Juvenile Branch Commander
2451 N. Keystone Ave.
Indianapolis, In. 46218
Phone: 317-327-6610
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**IRVINE, CA
Mayor Larry Agran**

C.A.R.E. ALERT PROGRAM (CHILD ABDUCTION REGIONAL EMERGENCY)

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

The Irvine Police Department and several other Orange County agencies participate in the C.A.R.E. Alert program (Child Abduction Regional Emergency), sponsored by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The program was designed to quickly disseminate critical information to the public and the media to aid in locating abducted children and apprehending the offenders.

In the event of a child abduction, the Irvine Police Department will:

- Prepare and disseminate a press release that includes any information that will assist in locating the victim or the suspect. The press release will also inform the public that pictures of the victim can be viewed and/or downloaded for publication from the city's website and from the EDIS website (See below);
- Activate the Emergency Operations Center;
- Provide a "hotline" telephone number for public use for leads, tips, etc.;
- Immediately assign experienced investigators to the case; call for mutual aid if necessary;
- Utilize additional resources as necessary, such as helicopters, bloodhounds and pre-designated police department volunteers;
- Initiate a county-wide emergency broadcast that will be heard by every patrol unit in Orange County;
- Post any digital images related to the case (pictures of the victim or suspect, etc.) to California's EDIS website (Emergency Digital Information Service). This website, sponsored by the Governor's Office, is accessible to anyone with an internet connection. The images will also be posted to the city's website; and,
- Generate a regional or nationwide teletype to law enforcement agencies.

The Irvine Police Department will also notify the Orange County Sheriff's Department, who will:

- Activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS);
- Contact the California Highway Patrol to activate the Changeable Message Boards (if there is a vehicle description);
- Disseminate critical information to media wire services;
- Transmit an EDIS text message via a CLETS (California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System); and,
- Notify "Beyond Missing," a web-based notification system that will automatically notify law enforcement agencies within in pre-defined radius via e-mail or fax.

2. When was the program created and why?

The C.A.R.E. Alert program was initially implemented as a pilot program. In December of 1999, the Orange County Chiefs and Sheriff's Association approved the initial procedure and approved additions and changes in August 2002.

The program was created after identifying the need to disseminate information to the public and media expeditiously and on a widespread basis.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Since the implementation of the CARE alert program, Irvine has not had an abduction. In fact, Irvine has not experienced an abduction in several years, so it is difficult to speak to "major lessons learned." Perhaps the fact that our city (52 sq. miles) has not experienced an abduction is arguably a measure of the program's effectiveness.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Our city does not receive any outside funding for the program. However, the program's sponsor, the Orange County Sheriff's Department, may receive outside funding.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The Irvine Police Department is also committed to the prevention of such crime. Our Crime Prevention Specialists provide informational presentations to the community as requested. Child abduction prevention is a component of all Child Safety, Personal Safety, Internet Safety and Teen Safety presentations offered through this office. In 2002, Crime Prevention Specialists offered 25 of these type of presentations, reaching nearly 2000 community members and their children. These presentations are offered at schools, parks, child day care centers, religious facilities and other locations spanning our city.

In addition to this community effort, our VIPP (Volunteers in Policing Patrol) has recently been launched. These volunteer community members perform a number of non-hazardous functions in the field on a daily basis, including safety checks of our city's parks, schools and shopping centers. These volunteers have

been trained to identify suspicious behavior and report it to our police dispatchers.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

The Sheriff's Department recently dealt with the high profile Samantha Reunion abduction. A C.A.R.E. Alert was issued in that case. The Sheriff's department, would be able to provide valuable insight, based on first-hand application.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Any program designed to address child abduction would be most successful if it contained the following elements:

- Regional Application - Having multiple agencies participate in the program will allow for pooling of resources, ensure timely dissemination of vital information, and increase the effectiveness of the investigation should mutual aid be required.
- Written Policy / Training - The policy detailing how to respond in such an emergency should be well-documented and straightforward. Police officers, first line supervisors, and police managers should all become familiar with any policy that is implemented. Since abductions do not occur everyday, any policy should be close at hand, and contain specific steps to be taken in the event of an abduction.
- Utilize Existing Technology to the Fullest - Information about the abduction should be disseminated using every avenue possible. Your plan should ensure the message reaches every media outlet possible, including television, radio, newspapers, e-mail and pager news services, etc. In addition, pictures of the victim should be posted to your city's internet in a manner that allows the media the ability to download these photos for use in their publications and/or broadcasts.
- Community Participation / Awareness - Any successful child abduction program should include prevention. Increasing the awareness of your community's parents and children may prevent an abduction. Neighborhood Watch programs and other volunteer programs can greatly assist law enforcement officers in identifying suspicious persons.

8. Contact Persons:

Sergeant Mike Hamel: 949-724-7166
Crime Prevention Specialist: 949-724-7042

KANSAS CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.**

The Kansas City Police Department is a member of the Metro Squad Board, which is a cooperative alliance between a number of police chiefs and sheriffs on both sides of the Missouri/Kansas state line. Once a Supervisor on the scene determines the proper requirements for an Amber Alert have been met, the Media Relations Office is notified. Media Relations the contacts three Metro Squad Board member agencies and informs them of the situation. If two of the three agencies contacted agree with the conclusion that an Amber Alert is warranted, then an Amber Alert is initiated. A "No" by any of the Board members notified means no alert is called. The Media Relations office makes contact with approximately 74 other entities including radio and television stations to inform them of the alert which in turn immediately notify the public. A Command Post is established and officers from all available units are called upon to work the case.

- 2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?**

October 1999.

- 3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?**

The speed by which the public is notified is proof that the alert works.

- 4. How is the program financed?**

The program is a voluntary cooperative effort between the Metro Squad board and the public.

- 5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?**

An area church, World Revival Church, has initiated a program called "KCAAlert.com". When they are notified of an Amber Alert they send the alert out via computer to some 10,000 who have signed up. This notification takes just minutes to complete.

- 6. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.**

The program is voluntary cooperative effort between the Metro Squad board and the public.

7. **What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?**

An area church, World Revival Church, has initiated a program called "KCAAlert.com". When they are notified of an Amber Alert they send the alert out via computer to some 10,000 who have signed up. This notification takes just minutes to complete.

8. **What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?**

Do not overuse it! This point cannot be overemphasized.

9. **What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?**

Make sure your people are properly trained in the steps they must take before calling for an Amber Alert. For example, our department has two criteria that must be met before calling an Amber Alert. First, the child must be 15 years of age or younger, or with a proven mental or physical disability. Second, the police must believe the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.

10. **Contact Information:**

Kansas City, MO Police Department
Media Relations Office
Telephone: (816) 234-5170

LAKE CHARLES, LA
Mayor Randy Roach

SAVE OUR KIDS ALERT PROGRAM

1. **Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.**

The Save Our Kids Alert Program enhances the National Amber Alert System by providing the public vital life saving information in an expedient manner via the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Emergency Alert (NOAA) system in coordination with the local Office of Emergency Preparedness. The Save Our Kids Alert program drastically increases the chances of recovery of a missing child with thousands of additional eyes on the lookout. Every

citizen who hears the alert will be provided with valuable information in order to assist the local, state and federal authorities bring children to safety.

The program is implemented once a police agency confirms child abduction. A description of the victim, suspect and vehicle is transmitted to the Lake Charles National Weather Service office and local E-911 dispatch center. The public is notified through cooperating broadcast media, while emergency service providers receive rapid notification through the local Mutual Aid Network. The local broadcast media consists of radio stations, NBC and FOX affiliates, KPLC-TV and KVHP-TV, respectively, which broadcast in the City of Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana. In addition to the media broadcasts, local ambulance service providers have pledged to make helicopters available to assist in the search and recovery efforts as part of this program.

Tests show the public can be informed within 15 minutes utilizing this innovative notification system. The National Weather Service initiates its Emergency Alert System, as used for weather hazards, providing the information to radio and television outlets. The system activates the personal NOAA weather radios. Also, this program incorporates a public education component that provides awareness information for parents, DNA sample children's kits for parents to retain, and a future plan for citizen safety patrols on the city's lakefront boardwalk.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The Save Our Kids Alert program was created in April 2002 because of national attention and the need for such a program on our area. In 2001, Southwest Louisiana experienced the death of a 12-year-old girl after she was abducted. Her murderer was arrested and is awaiting trial. In March 2002, the body of yet another 12-year-old girl was recovered the day after she was abducted. Her killer committed suicide. The same month in 2002, Lake Charles Police arrested a 43-year-old man after he attempted to abduct a 12-year-old girl. The Save Our Kids program is essential to locating abducted children as soon as possible. The program was initiated with the help of Lake Charles National Weather Service Meteorologist in Charge, Steve Rinard. The Chief of Police and Mr. Rinard worked with local service providers in the area to implement this program in April 2002.

3. How is the program's effectiveness measured?

The Save Our Kids Alert Program is measured by the speed with which information can be relayed to the general public through broadcast media. In a recent test of the system conducted shortly after inception, local media confirmed receipt of the information within 14 minutes of the alert being sent from police headquarters. The most important measure of success of the program was when a young child was located in one of the city's outlying areas using the Save Our Kids Alert program.

4. How is the program financed?

There are no costs involved in the implementation and operation of the system.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The program involves all area law enforcement agencies, local media outlets, National Weather Service, ambulance companies and community based advocacy groups. This program was announced and introduced at a news conference involving the Mayor, Lake Charles Chief of Police, Local Sheriff and the National Weather Service. Information was provided to other agencies in the region on how to initiate the alert system and requirements for its use. The Mayor and Chief of Police reviewed the program with the Lake Charles Leadership Council, which provided input on the public outreach component.

The Save Our Kids program was lauded in the Lake Charles American Press newspaper editorial on April 22, 2002. The newspaper found that the "program is commendable on several fronts. It is a collaborative effort between law enforcement agencies, as well as the National Weather Service and ambulance companies, that will make maximum use of the resources of all involved."

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

The Save Our Kids program provided the city an opportunity to respond in a positive manner to several troubling events in our area. By including awareness programs, parents will be armed with information to help prevent abductions. Possible offenders were put on notice that the community will respond in a coordinated manner. The program provides assurances to parents and the community that the local government is and will be responsive to their concerns.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Involving community groups and leaders increased the awareness of the problem locally and brought together additional resources for parent awareness efforts. Tests of the system were important to gain support of local media to show them exactly how the program would work and their role in getting the information to the public.

8. Contact Person

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Esther D. Vincent, Director
Office of Community Services

LA MESA, CA
Mayor Arthur Madrid

LA MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program (s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

While the City of La Mesa has not developed specific programs directed toward child and/or adult abductions, we have taken advantage of grant and partnership opportunities to enhance our ability to prevent and respond to these incidents.

The City's police department was recently approved for funding under a National Center for Missing and Exploited Children grant to receive computer equipment and software for the "Locater" program. This will link the police department with other law enforcement agencies, the news media and public to aid in the rapid dissemination of information, both text and photo, concerning missing children. Further information on this program may be obtained at www.locaterposters.org or by calling the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, at (877) 446-2632, ext. 6389.

For the past several years the city's police department has partnered with the Center for Community Solutions in a proactive prevention program, aimed at reducing the rate of domestic violence recidivism. Officers responding to domestic violence calls request permission from the involved parties to forward their names and contact information to the Center for Community Solutions. Once this information is received at the Center, their staff initiate contact with the parties and provide counseling. This program has reduced the number of repeat domestic violence offenses and, by inference, reduced the escalation of domestic violence related acts, including parental abduction of children. Further information on this program is available from Captain Alan Lanning, La Mesa Police Department, (619) 667-1432.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

Our domestic violence program with Center for Community Solutions was developed in 2000 after one of our officers learned of a similar program being run by the San Diego Sheriff's Department in the City of San Marcos. The purpose of the program is to expand the number of domestic violence victims and offenders in counseling through proactive contact. Our grant application for the Locater program was submitted earlier this year. We saw the grant program as

an opportunity to take advantage of new technology in addressing abduction issues.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The Center for Community Solutions tracks case information on the referrals they receive. We find a lower rate of recidivism for the people involved in this program. La Mesa's locater program is not yet operational.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Police Department absorbs the cost of the domestic violence program, which is primarily staff time. The Locater program is a USDOJ grant program.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

None at this time.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

It is important to look for solutions outside the traditional structure or approach. It is important to network and learn from peers and colleagues. It is important to take advantage of new program and funding opportunities.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Insure that employees are informed and trained at the outset to insure acceptance and the best chance of success.

8. Contact persons

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NEW HAVEN CONNECTICUT'S DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES'
COMMUNITY POLICING PROGRAM

1. Briefly describe your policing program designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution?

The City of New Haven Connecticut's Department of Police Services' community policing program integrates intelligent policing, community partnerships and innovative technology in its approach to problem solving. Upon report of an abduction, the department's response is immediate. Information is broadcast immediately to patrol officers. The department's approach to preventing and resolving child or adult abductions involves three primary aspects: Flash Alert Notification, Nationwide AMBER Alert plan and the Child Development - Community Policing partnership.

Through the Flash Alert Notification initiative, the department's Neighborhood Services Unit creates linkages between the 275 neighborhood block watches that exist with the 21 square miles of New Haven. Through the "link-a-block" approach, crime-related or neighborhood alert messages may be quickly spread throughout neighborhoods, thereby engaging the citizenry in a crime prevention and resolution model. Over 3,000 email addresses are included in the FAN network, as well as website and telephonic connections for information sharing. When suspicious or criminal activity occurs that requires public knowledge or assistance, the police will activate the FAN to the notify the neighborhoods. The department also posts information on its website related to missing persons.

Additionally, the department participates in the national AMBER alert plan, a voluntary partnership between law enforcement agencies and broadcasters to activate urgent bulletins in serious child abduction cases. The goal of the AMBER alerts is to instantly galvanize entire communities in assisting in the search, rescue and safe return of abducted children. The FAN system and AMBER alerts work in conjunction to quickly disseminate information that may lead to resolution of these cases.

All of these strategies are built upon the foundation of the department's community policing program. Since the 1990's the department has actively partnered with the community resulting in dramatic reductions in crime rates throughout the city. Through the implementation of this approach, officers are assigned to neighborhoods allowing relationships to develop and improving the officer's knowledge of community resources and problems. One important partner in the community policing model has been the Yale University Child Study Center. Through this partnership, officers and clinicians work together to respond to children and their families who experience trauma. The 24-hour a day resource of the Child Development -Community Policing project assists families and communities respond to tragedies and provides a resource for addressing child abduction cases.

2. When was the program or program(s) created and why?

The FAN project evolved out of a desire to take advantage of technology to create community linkages that otherwise are time and resource intensive. It was a response to the residents of the city's desire for up-to-date information regarding crime and crime statistics in their neighborhoods. In essence, a high-tech neighborhood crime watch was created via email. Use of email and other internet resources allows messages to be transmitted instantly to thousands of people throughout the city. The CD-CP developed out of concern by both police personnel and clinicians about the impact of exposure to violent crime on children. Both officers and clinicians responded out of a need to deliver a developmentally appropriate response to children and their families in the most difficult times.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

While there is not a high incidence of child abduction in the City of New Haven, the program has been designed to be effective for a broad range of information sharing and community engagement that aids effective crime prevention and response. The FAN project has proven useful in the apprehension of burglary and robbery suspects, as neighbors have responded to alerts, communicated the information to others and assisted the police in the tracking of suspects.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The department's community policing efforts are supported by the City of New Haven, as well as, COPS Office funding through the Department of Justice.

5. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program such as yours?

This program is built upon the department's solid base of community policing. The neighborhood block watches, FAN project and CDCP all work because the police and the community have committed to working together in partnership to address issues ranging from violent crime to quality of life issues.

6. Contact person.

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NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR

NORTH LITTLE ROCK POLICE DEPARTMENT SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

As a preemptive program the North Little Rock Police Department Special Investigations Unit monitors Internet chat rooms frequented by juveniles. Assuming a fictitious persona of a child the investigator joins a chat room and waits for individuals to make contact via Instant Message. When a suspect contacts the undercover officer and requests a meeting for sex the investigator agrees to meet at a predetermined location where surveillance can be conducted. These conversations can be as short as a few hours before the request for a meeting is made or carry on over several months. The suspects frequently mention sex during the first conversation. The suspect is arrested upon arrival at the prearranged location, usually a vacant apartment in a local apartment complex.

As a preventive program the investigators of the Special Investigation Unit teach a one hour Internet safety program to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The program includes what information to give out over the Internet on both personal web pages and/or internet chat rooms. It also gives a list of what to do and who to contact if the child believes they have been victimized. A two hour "How to Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet Program" is given to parents. This includes basic information on what personal information can be found on seemingly innocent web pages developed by children, ways in which parents can monitor their child's internet activity, and steps that they can take to keep their child safe while still allowing access to all the positive elements of the World Wide Web.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

In October 2000, the Special Investigations Unit of the North Little Rock Police Department began a proactive approach to combating the Internet Predator by posing as juveniles in Internet chat rooms popular with preteens and teenagers.

In March 2001, the Special Investigations Unit began the How to Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet programs due to the realization that parents have far less computer knowledge than children in today's society. The Internet Safety program was created to teach children the manner in which predators try to locate victims and to teach the children how to keep themselves safe while still using the Internet.

3. How do you measure the programs effectiveness?

The unit has arrested 14 Internet predators since the beginning of the program.

The response to the Internet safety classes has been positive and large. The requests for both programs come from all over the state of Arkansas and exceeds the unit's available hours to teach the programs.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The program is funded entirely by the police department.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

There are no other city agencies involved in the program.

The community is involved in the teaching aspect by continuing to request the classes, giving feedback and participating in the classes. Request for classes are received entirely by word of mouth. No direct advertising has ever been done. The local news outlets have covered both our arrests, seizures of computer equipment and classes presented to the community.

Abstinence by Choice has included our Internet Safety Class in their programs curriculum and has also assisted with scheduling and providing presentation equipment such as screens, projectors and microphones.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs, and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Major lessons learned are: A computer forensic unit must be available, either in house or a nearby agency. Training in seizing computers and computer evidence must be given to all the investigators involved. Start on a small scale and build the program slowly. Be prepared to be inundated by requests for the Internet Safety Programs and allow your department to say no to some of the requests unless the department has the manpower to devote an officer full time to teaching Internet safety.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Have a stand alone undercover computer with software that is not traceable to the police department.

Set up an account with an Internet Service Provider that is not traceable to the police department.

Have a high-speed Internet connection.

Assign investigators to the unit who have previous computer knowledge.

Send the investigators to training in how to conduct undercover computer investigations.

Never initiate contact with a suspect, always wait for the suspect to make contact with the undercover investigator.

The location for meeting the suspect should be a controlled area in which the suspect would have no legitimate reason for arriving other than the prearranged meeting.

Have patience. These investigations can take an extended period of time.

Gathering the necessary equipment can be done one piece at a time and you can expand the operation at any time. Much of the equipment used during the first year of our program was seized from criminal investigations.

8. Contact Person

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ORLANDO, FL
Mayor Buddy Dyer

A CHILD IS MISSING

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

A Child Is Missing (ACIM), a Florida-based public/private partnership, assists law enforcement as a first responder in the first critical hours of disappearance. The program now operates throughout Florida, Alaska, Rhode Island and Ohio, along with Boulder, Colorado and portions of Oklahoma and northern Kentucky.

As financial support becomes available, ACIM's goal is to serve law enforcement at no charge in all 50 states.

This ACIM program should not be confused with the Amber Alert. The Amber Alert designed to combat stranger abductions. ACIM assists law enforcement in finding missing children, Alzheimer's patients, disabled persons who are lost, or have wandered off, abducted or run away.

ACIM's comprehensive neighborhood calling system -- makes up to 1,000 calls in less than 5 minutes - is activated only by law enforcement, and works like this: An officer relays the missing person information to ACIM, which records a personalized message with case details for calling out on a bank of 91 T-1 lines.

Call recipients are asked to check their premises and report relevant information to police.

Where law allows, ACIM's Sexual Predator program alerts neighborhood of the presence of a predator living in their neighborhood. This is also offered for law enforcement use.

2. When was the program created and why?

A Child Is Missing, Inc., founded in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and serving law enforcement throughout Florida since 1997, was founded because there was no community-based system for locating missing children, the elderly (often with

Alzheimer's) and the mentally challenged during the first crucial hours of disappearance.

Nationwide, FBI statistics indicate approximately 725,000 children are reported missing each year. Few of these cases become high profile, yet the need for law enforcement to act quickly and effectively with all tools possible at their disposal remains paramount. ACIM, with support, can become one of those tools in your community.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Since 1997, ACIM has received more than 4,900 calls for assistance from law enforcement and has placed over 2.9 million alert calls to businesses and residents. In the past 18 months, ACIM's neighborhood alert call program has been credited by law enforcement with 40 safe recoveries (to date 3/31/03). Testimonials from law enforcement agencies and elected officials can be accessed via ACIM's website at www.achildissing.org

4. How is the program financed?

Given at no charge to law enforcement, ACIM programs are funded through legislative appropriations, sponsorships, police forfeiture fund donations, community donations, private donations, and fund-raising efforts from golf tournaments to yard sales. ACIM is a non-profit 501 C 3 agency.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved. How is the community involved?

Community support is paramount for ACIM, which gives its Missing and Sexual Predator Notification programs to law enforcement, and would not be able to sustain operations were it not for legislative appropriations, sponsorships and support from law enforcement organizations and community activists.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

There are programs and equipment that your city can purchase, however there will be added maintenance and staffing costs making it cost-prohibitive for many individual community or law enforcement agencies to attempt duplicating what ACIM has offered to police free of charge since 1997. Most cities that have purchased such units revert back to using A Child Is Missing due to cost and faster delivery of emergency messages. Experienced trainers for law enforcement are important to the success of the program. A proven success since 1997.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours.

The numbers speak for themselves. ACIM's annual report and a financial breakout sheet detailing prospective costs for individual police agencies to

replicate program services underscore why mayors across America will want to consider seeking *and* supporting ACIM to assist their law enforcement agencies in protecting their constituents.

8. Please contact

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Sherry Friedlander, founder (sherryf@achildissinging.org)
Claudia Corrigan, director of expansion/development (claudiac@achildissinging.org)
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PISCATAWAY, NJ
Mayor Brain C. Whaler

STRANGER ALERT PROGRAM

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention.

The Stranger Alert Program and is run by the Piscataway Police Department's Community Policing Section. The purpose of the program is to alert the parents of school children of reported incidences of suspicious persons who might be attempting to allure, abduct or perform a perverse act in front of them. By notifying the parents we enlist their help in the apprehension of these people. Typically, a suspicious person or an attempted abduction would be filed with the police department. It would be reviewed by the Juvenile Section and the supervisor there would in turn notify the Board of Education. Then a letter entitled Stranger Alert would be issued from the board of education to the parents, either an individual school or all of the township schools, depending on the situation. The letter would contain information about the incident and descriptions of the suspects. There is a phone number set up for anyone to contact with information.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

The program was created in November of 2002 after an increase of reports concerning the above described incidences.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

By comparing the number of reports to the number of successful identifications and apprehensions. As of this date, we have identified three out of four reports.

4. How is the program financed?

No extra funds are needed for this program.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The Township Board of Education and the school administration create and distribute the information to the parents. The community/parents who receive the information are asked to be more vigilant to a specific threat, as well as identify that threat.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

It is important that everyone involved with the Stranger Alert process, especially parents, understand that Stranger Alerts are meant for ADULT EYES ONLY. Experience has taught us that children will too often perceive any adult as a suspect if they meet even one of the criteria, i.e. male.

Obviously, Stranger Alerts should not be excessive; that could alarm people unnecessarily. Prudent use of this program is an additional safeguard for our children.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

We recommend maintaining a good working relationship with your town's board of education, and have a school resource officer to make the program work more efficiently.

8. Contact person.

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QUINCY, MA
Mayor William J. Phelan

QUINCY POLICE DEPARTMENT CHILD SAFETY PROGRAMS

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

The Quincy Police Department has been conducting Child Safety Programs since 1975. The following programs are the main programs presented in the City of Quincy:

- A. Stranger Danger - A program designed for K through 5 students. This program is presented to every K through 5 student in Quincy. Stranger Danger is a one- hour presentation by a police officer.
- B. CHIPS safety program - A program presented by the Massachusetts Masonic Organization with the assistance of the Quincy Police Department and the Quincy Police Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association. CHIPS Program - Students are fingerprinted, video taped, and a dental impression is taken along with a DNA swab. This program is currently being conducted in every school in the City, K through 12.
- C. Child Safety Days - A series of child safety programs conducted in various parts of the City during the summer. Children are treated to hot dogs and a Stranger Danger presentation by a police officer. Each child is finger printed and a Polaroid picture is taken.

2. When was the program created?

Stranger Danger Program was implemented around 1975 by the Police Department. CHIPS Program was implemented in Quincy in 2001. It is an ongoing program. Child Safety Days were implemented in 1985.

3. How do you measure the programs success?

The program's success is measured by the number of residents that call the Police Department to have their children fingerprinted and photographed.

4. How is the program financed?

Stranger Danger Program is funded by the City of Quincy. CHIPS Program is funded by the Massachusetts Masonic Organization and the Quincy Police Department. Child Safety Days are funded and hosted by local businesses.

5. What other agencies are involved?

The Quincy Public School Department and the Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association are both involved in these programs

The Quincy School Department assists by providing space and children for these programs. The Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association member volunteer their time to fingerprint and photograph youngsters.

6. What major lessons learned?

Plan in advance to make sure that you have enough help and equipment. On a particular Child Safety Day, held at a local Wal-Mart, more than 400 youngsters showed up. We were only expecting around 100. We did get the job done but it took a lot longer than expected.

7. What specific advice do you have for others?

Get the private sector involved. They have the resources available.

8. Contact person

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QUINCY, MA
Mayor William J. Phelan

QUINCY POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY POLICING UNIT

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

The Quincy Police department has structured its efforts in this area through our community police unit consisting of a captain, a lieutenant, two sergeants, and ten patrol officers. The community police officers are assigned to specific beats in designated areas of the city. They immerse themselves into existing programs catering to the educational, recreational and safety needs of the children. They target prevention of child abduction mainly, however the community police officers are also very familiar with the adult (specifically the elder), populations within their respective areas.

We do not have a catchy name for this program. Based on the premise of "beat integrity", the community police officers are expected to become familiar with the child and teen populations within their respective beats. Officers achieve this by participating in school programs, community outreach initiatives and collaborations with school personnel regarding "at risk" kids. The ultimate goal regarding the prevention of attempted or actual abductions is community presence, knowledge of the neighborhood children and the sharing of that knowledge when necessary.

2. When was the program created?

The Quincy Police Department's community police unit was founded in 1998. This was done as an effort to effectively deal with a rising crime rate and declining resources. The concept of only reacting to calls for service does not effectively deal with crime, so we undertook an initiative that would target the root

cause of criminal activity. Consequently, neighborhoods exposed to a particular police officer over a long period of time enjoy a measure of trust between the police and citizens previously unknown. This “exposure leading to trust” is a crucial element in the prevention of abductions within these beats.

3. How do you measure the programs success?

The effectiveness of community policing in Quincy is measured by the absence of crime.

4. How is the program financed?

Community policing in Quincy was originally funded with a grant through the COPS Office of Department of Justice. Since 2001 however, the city has absorbed the cost of maintaining the unit through the policed department’s budget.

5. What other agencies are involved?

Our community police unit works especially close with the Quincy Public school system. Officers are part of the school landscape involved in activities such as reading to classrooms of children, accompanying students on field trips, mentoring selected students, being present at school awards ceremonies and dances, and instructing relative classes. Officers are in direct contact with school personnel through the Nextel phone system. We also work with social service agencies involved in family situations. (All domestic calls within an officer’s beat are followed up by that officer in an attempt to familiarize the parties involved with the necessary resources available.)

Officers regularly attend meetings with public housing personnel to keep abreast of any situations that may require their intervention. Again, the concepts of familiarity and knowledge are paramount in our efforts to prevent abductions with the communication of information being the key in the event of an actual abduction.

6. What major lessons learned?

The presence and familiarity of an officer in a specific area can deter criminal activity.

We can never have enough information about the victim of an abduction. Physical description, personal traits and habits, known hangouts and associates, motor vehicles, custody situations, family information, court involvement, etc... all lend themselves to assisting the police in piecing together a picture of the victim and possible perpetrators.

7. What specific advice do you have for others?

Do not underestimate the value of having a police officer involved in a neighborhood setting. The ability of citizens to speak directly to a law

enforcement official with a high level of trust is an important element to undermining criminal activity in that neighborhood. These officers must be able to communicate with other public agencies concerned with the welfare of that beat in order to achieve the goal of improving the quality of life there.

Make a commitment to implement and maintain the community police philosophy into the fabric of the police department by properly training the entire department in the proper utilization and value of the unit.

Take the funding for that unit out of the hands of those who wield the budget axe and give it to those who are ultimately responsible to the citizens ... the elected officials!

8. Contact person

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RICHMOND, CA
Mayor Irma L. Anderson

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

In an effort to expand the reach and scope of the Amber Alert Notification System, the Richmond Police Department is planning to deploy the IntelliCast system.

The Intellicast system allows the department to maintain a list of department personnel and any communications equipment assigned to them, i.e., pagers, cellular phones, laptop computers, etc., and provides immediate notification to them in the event of abduction. This type of secure, targeted, immediate communications system provides law enforcement officials with the flexibility to include law enforcement sensitive information to assist in the recovery effort in the case of abduction.

The system promotes accountability, and includes the option of an officer or official having to confirm receipt of the message.

2. When was the program or program(s) created and why?

The program is still in development as we work with the developer of the IntelliCast system, Intrado.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The program's effectiveness is measured by the speed in which notification is made, the number of successful notifications in terms of response percentage, and ultimately; the number of successful resolutions to cases of abduction where the victim is located.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Currently, the program is being developed as a case study as part of an internal testing laboratory within the police department, dedicated to the exploration of new and emergent technologies and applicability to law enforcement.

5. What other city agencies are involved with the program? How are these agencies involved with the program? How is the community involved in the program?

Currently, there are no cities other than Richmond involved in the project; however, we do contemplate the possibility of introducing the technology to the five local municipalities to whom we provide regional dispatching functions.

With respect to community involvement, we are considering augmenting the police department website to allow members of the community to register a cell phone, pager, or email account with the department for notification in the event of abduction.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful to mayors, chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

That technology can and should be used in an increasingly "connected" world to immediately disseminate information in a targeted, controlled fashion. With automated notification systems, we can reach beyond the roadways served by Amber Alert, or the chance that the alert will be seen in conventional media. We can build upon the Amber Alert by insuring that a targeted individual with a cell phone, telephone, pager, email account, voice mail or fax will receive information with unprecedented speed and inherent accountability.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

They should seriously consider how broad notification should be both within and outside of their organization if an automated notification system is employed.

7. Contact person.

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RICHMOND, VA
Mayor Rudolph C. McCollum, Jr.

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

We have in place the Amber Plan – America’s Missing Broadcast Emergency Response – It is a voluntary partnership between law-enforcement agencies and broadcasters to send out an emergency alert to the public when a child has been abducted and it is believed that the child’s life is in grave danger. We have no plan in place for the abduction of adults at this time.

2. When was the program or program(s) created and why?

The Richmond Amber Alert Plan was created in 2002 in partnership with surrounding law enforcement agencies within the Richmond Region. The plan relies on the public to help locate abducted children before it’s too late.

3. How do you measure the program’s effectiveness?

As of this date we have not had to implement the plan. The program’s popularity has swept across the U.S. To date the Amber Plan has been credited with recovering 22 children.

4. How is the program financed? Please indicate if you have funding from the COPS Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Police Department provides the manpower and equipment and radio stations volunteer airtime at no cost.

- 5. What other city agencies are involved with the program? How are these agencies involved with the program? How is the community involved in the program?**

Our plan calls for volunteers from Social Services (CPS) and our citizen's police academy to man the telephone bank. They will receive information that is called into the police department once the plan is activated.

- 6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful to mayors, chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?**

Cooperation among all participating jurisdictions is key to the implementation.

- 7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?**

Contact the national Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) to request general information about the Amber Plan that you can share with your law-enforcement agency and other local officials to garner interest.

- 8. Contact person.**

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**RIVERSIDE, CA
Mayor Ronald O. Loveridge**

THE RIVERSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.**

Law enforcement must properly evaluate each reported child abduction or Kidnapping and respond with the necessary resources from within the department and other outside agencies in order to locate the victim and reunite them with their family members or responsible party in the safest and most efficient manner possible. To accomplish this successfully, the Riverside Police

Department utilizes both the Incident Command System and the public dissemination of information through the AMBER Alert Network.

The Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) was created in order to respond to critical incidents such as tactical situations involving hostage taking, armed/barricaded suspects and planned events involving large crowds. With its expandability, the ICS can be utilized in responding to both kidnapping and child abductions.

The ICS establishes a crisis-driven, self-evolving, temporary organization that places agencies and essential units necessary to resolve a tactical problem or critical incident under a single authority. In the event of an abducted adult or child, the ICS would include components designated to address the tasks that are uniquely associated with missing adult or child cases.

In the event of a kidnapping or child abduction, the ICS includes positions such as Incident Commander, Deputy Incident Commander, Operations Officer-In-Charge and several different task forces that would be responsible for duties such as follow-up investigation, area search, evidence collection, logistics and public information officer.

AMBER Alert Network

Public and Law Enforcement information dissemination

Public alert systems are designed to ensure the immediate dissemination of vital information regarding the victim and or suspect(s) in the event of a verified child abduction. There are alert systems available, which specifically address the public, law enforcement or a combination of both. The scope of the different types of alerts may vary greatly. Utilizing a graduated series of alerts may be deemed most appropriate when the totality of the circumstances has not been ascertained or do not yet rise to the level of a full "AMBER alert" activation. The decision to request a public alert in any one of the following forms will always be made by the Incident Commander. It is recommended the type of alert and content of the message be established by the investigative case agent prior to dissemination.

The nature of the child abduction and its circumstances will be unique in each incident. The nature and circumstances of the child abduction should be considered when forming the content of the message and determining which type of public alert is to be utilized.

In an effort to minimize delays in the reporting of missing children, California has implemented the California Child Safety AMBER Network. The AMBER Network incorporates the use of existing alert systems. An AMBER Alert involves all of the following mechanisms for alerting both the public and law enforcement. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has established the following criteria for enacting the highest level of Public Alert in the form of an "AMBER Alert." The

investigating agency must request the CHP to initiate several aspects of the AMBER Alert. The CHP can decline to initiate the AMBER Alert network if the child abduction does not meet the following criteria;

1. Confirmation that an abduction has occurred (witness verification, alternative explanations for a child's absence eliminated, etc.);
2. The victim is 17 years of age or younger, or has a proven mental or physical disability; and,
3. The victim is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death. There is information available that, if disseminated to the public, could assist in the safe recovery of the victim.

2. When was the program created and why?

On August 20, 2002, the City of Riverside's Police Department was tasked with responding to the abduction of an 11-year-old girl, Nichole Timmons. The abductor was a white male adult acquaintance of the Timmons family, Glenn Park. Park, armed with a metal pipe, broke into the Timmons family residence in the middle of the night and took Nichole from her bed. Park fled with Nichole, driving across the state line to the small town of Hawthorne, Nevada, near the Walker River Indian Reservation.

The Riverside Police Department responded to this crisis by activating the Incident Command System and utilizing components of California's AMBER Alert Network. The situation was successfully resolved with the activation of a situation based Incident Command System and the ability to disseminate critical information over a wide spectrum of media and public information outlets. Through a series of tips from citizens and the distribution of critical information by law enforcement sources, the abducted child was located and rescued by a Tribal Police Officer in Nevada, over 600 miles away from Riverside, while the suspect was attempting to elude capture.

3. How do you measure the programs effectiveness?

The Timmons case was a successful operation that validated the effectiveness of both the Riverside Police Department's Incident Command Systems and the State of California's AMBER Alert system. The response to the Timmons case involved identifying the primary goal as the safe return of the abducted child, establishing a clear situation based chain-of-command, developing operational sections such as uniformed officers for an initial area search, detectives to conduct follow-up investigation and develop leads and the ability to disseminate information to the public that eventually led to the location of the abducted child.

4. How is the program financed?

The Riverside Police Department's Incident Command System is financed through the City of Riverside. Staff with the rank of Lieutenant and above receive periodic training and updates related to the operation of the ICS.

Governor Gray Davis implemented a statewide child abduction notification system on July 30, 2002. The California Child Safety AMBER Network is partially modeled after the original Amber Alert Program developed in 1996 in Arlington, Texas. California's plan utilizes several additional resources to aid in the dissemination of child abduction information throughout the state.

To further enhance the effectiveness of California's plan, Governor Davis enacted legislation mandating the use of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in conjunction with child abduction incidents. Assembly Bill (AB) 415, which became law on September 13, 2002, requires law enforcement agencies to request activation of the EAS in the appropriate local area when specified criteria have been met.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

In the Timmons case, the City of Riverside received assistance from Riverside County Sheriff's Department bloodhound tracking canine for a search of the immediate area surrounding the crime scene. During the reunification process, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office of Victim Witness Services provided funds for travel and accommodations expenses for the victim's family.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) assisted with implementing several aspects of the AMBER Alert network. The CHP activated Changeable Messages Signs near freeways that alerted motorists to be on the look out for the suspect's vehicle. The CHP worked with staff from the State's Emergency Alert System, which broadcast critical information over the radio and local television stations.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) responded to the crime scene. They made available nationally recognized experts in the field of "profiling" and responding to hostage takers.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and other trying to implement a program similar to yours?

The best time to prepare for incidents such as an adult or child abduction is before one occurs. It is recommended that communities encourage their police departments to establish a system similar to the Incident Command System.

Preparations should include the identification of a communications center or phone bank separate from the Police-Fire 911 communications/dispatch center. This operations communications center should be staffed by investigators prepared to document tips and forward the information to field investigators assigned to the actual search for the abducted adult or child.

Law Enforcement agencies should familiarize themselves with resources such as California's AMBER Network. This can be done by contacting the California Highway Patrol Emergency Notification and Tactical Alert Center at (916) 657-8287.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Mayors should evaluate the abilities of their respective policing agencies and determine their ability to respond to an emerging crisis such as kidnapping or child abduction. Mayors should insist their states develop an AMBER Alert Network that is capable of the immediate public dissemination of information.

8. Contact person

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SAN JUAN, PR
Mayor Jorge A. Santini

CITY OF SAN JUAN AMBER ALERT PROGRAM

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The City of San Juan AMBER Alert Program was created to facilitate information and resources in the investigation of child abduction cases, and to promptly alert the public and involve the communities to assist in the search and the safe return of the child. The City of San Juan Police and Public Safety Department is the local agency responsible for the implementation and management of the program.

We conducted seminars at every police precinct, training all our police officers, including those assigned to community policing, about the program.

To activate the AMBER Alert, the following requirements must be met:

- The kidnapping occurred at the City of San Juan and its vicinities;
- The San Juan Municipal Police confirms a child has been abducted.
- The child is 14 yrs old or less;
- There is reason to believe that the life of the child is in danger, or has mental or physical disabilities; and,
- There is enough descriptive information about the victim, the abductor, or the vehicle involved.

The AMBER Alert project manager is alerted by the San Juan Municipal Police Command Center that an abduction may have taken place. The project manager sends an officer to the site to secure the scene and to start a preliminary investigation and to gather information about the alleged abduction, identify witnesses, etc.

If an abduction is confirmed and the requirements for activation are met, the project manager alerts members of the state and federal agencies with jurisdiction to investigate abductions and crimes against children.

The information about the abduction is put together by the project manager for public distribution, including a description of the suspect, pictures of the missing child, the suspected vehicle, and any other valuable information that may help recover the child.

We will create a poster and flyers with the picture and relevant information about the missing child for their distribution in surrounding communities through our Alliance Against Crime Program members. This way, the members of the communities become our eyes and ears during the search.

The designated primary radio station will interrupt programming to broadcast the alert, and will distribute the information to other radio and TV stations with state-wide coverage. The details will be broadcast every fifteen minutes for the first two hours following the abduction and then every thirty minutes until the child is found. All information and updates given to the broadcasters will be provided and validated only by the project manager, to ensure the accuracy of the information.

2. When was the program (or programs) created and why?

On September of 2002, the Municipal Legislature approved a resolution to mandate the Commissioner of Police and Public Safety to develop and implement the City of San Juan AMBER Alert Program.

As a result of the nationwide increase of child abductions and crimes against children and the need to act fast to ensure their safe return, we saw the need create this program to ensure that every available resource is used in the search for missing children. We consider this program a valuable service to the communities of San Juan in an effort to save a child's life.

When a child is abducted, every second counts. That is why our goal is to disseminate the information as fast as possible to as many people as possible to encourage members of the community to look for the missing child or suspect and alert law enforcement agencies. The extensive media coverage may also encourage the abductor to safely release the child.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The alert has never been activated. We believe the implementation of the program has served as a deterrent for potential abductors.

4. How is the program financed?

Local municipal funding.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The local FBI office and the Puerto Rico State Police Department Kidnapping Investigation Squad are involved since they have the legal jurisdiction to investigate these cases. We selected a local radio station with island-wide coverage to be the primary station to broadcast the alert, with other local media broadcasting voluntarily.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for majors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

The media is a vital element in the implementation of the program, and they are very cooperative and willing to give us the tools we need to make the program work. Due to legal and geographical jurisdiction, there must be an effective coordination between local, federal and state law-enforcement agencies.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

I urge mayors to adopt an AMBER Alert Program in their cities. It has been proven to be an effective tool in the search and safe recovery of abducted children in every jurisdiction where it has been implemented, and also acts as a deterrent for this type of crime.

8. Contact person:

Adalberto Mercado
Commissioner
Police and Public Safety Department
PO Box 70179

SCHAUMBURG, IL
Village President Al Larson

SCHAUMBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

The Community Relations Bureau sponsors Kid Care ID and fingerprinting in the community. The Bureau also provides fingerprint kits along with Child DNA kits to parents and community groups. It provides education through lecture and literature to the community on how to keep r children safe. We sponsor guest lecturers (J.J. Bittenbinder) to schools, PTA's and community groups to further these educational programs. Through programs such as Officer Friendly, Stranger Danger, DARE and Safety Town we educate our youth in an interactive educational approach.

Investigative bureaus have trained detectives in child abduction and abuse. We also utilize "Amber Alerts" for missing children.

2. When was the program created and why?

The Officer Friendly program which includes "Stranger Danger" has been presented for over 10 years. Our fingerprinting program has just been expanded with the addition of DNA kits. We recognized that to serve the community we must address the crime of child abduction and abuse in our community. We cannot ignore the fact these crimes do occur and we have an obligation to educate parents and children to reduce the risk potential.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

The feedback that is received from the presentations to our community tells us that these programs are having a positive impact. We are frequently asked to make these presentations and to supply fingerprint and DNA kits. These presentations are among our most popular programs.

4. How is the program financed?

These programs are financed through the police department approved budget. We receive fingerprint cards from a variety of partners including Allstate, Ford Motor Company and the Schaumburg-Hoffman Rotary Club.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program. How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

The park district assists us in public education on our program. They also cosponsor Safety Town, which educates children on this topic.

The community is involved through volunteering their time to assist us in presenting these programs to our community.

6. What are major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and other trying to implement a program similar to yours?

You cannot do these programs alone. You must enlist assistance from the community and community groups. Since funding may be difficult, budgeting for the purchase of fingerprinting and DNA kits is recommended.

Don't wait for an incident to occur in your community to implement these programs. The community expects us to take the lead in these issues and we should be prepared to accept this responsibility.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Look at what is being done around your agency and make contacts with those who have existing programs.

Partner with the National Crime Prevention Association and local crime prevention associations to exchange ideas and programs.

Once you have a program, look for ways to make improvements and additions.

8. Contact Person.

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VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf

THE VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe the structure of your program.

The Virginia Beach Police Department currently has several programs in effect to help prevent/resolve child abduction. The Crime Prevention Unit provides education to the public. Specifically, it provides Youth Safety Presentations to civic organizations such as Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, day care centers, schools and recreation center day camps.

These presentations are targeted toward children ages 4 and above, with an emphasis toward child safety and awareness of strangers. The Crime Prevention Unit also provides DNA kits to the parents, to aid in the identification and recovery of an abducted/missing child.

The Detective Bureau's Missing Person Unit provides training to citizens advisory groups, and to citizen's police academies, in an effort to increase awareness of abducted/missing children.

The Missing Persons Unit also utilizes the Lost Child Alert Technology Resource (LOCATER) system. This computer system, and the applicable LOCATER software, enables the Virginia Beach Police Department to instantly create posters with images and descriptive information about the missing child. The system is then utilized to rapidly disseminate these posters to other law-enforcement agencies. They can also be sent quickly, via e-mail, to the media if necessary.

The second Precinct, located at the oceanfront, uses the facial recognition software program, which also helps to identify missing/abducted persons.

The Virginia Beach Police Department is also an active participant in the Amber Alert Program. This program, which is still being developed, involves numerous law enforcement agencies and media from the southeastern part of Virginia. This program is being spearheaded by the Newport News Police Department.

2. When was the program (or programs) created any why?

The LOCATER and Facial Recognition programs were implemented in 2002.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Although we maintain statistics on the numbers of missing and recovered children, we consider any of the programs used to facilitate the safe return of any child as effective tools.

An example: Shortly after receiving the LOCATER system, detectives utilized the system to successfully locate two children who had been abducted and taken to Nevada by their father.

4. How is the program financed?

The LOCATER system is funded through a grant with the National Center for missing and exploited children.

The Facial Recognition program is funded with a state grant through the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

5. Contact Person.

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WEST ORANGE, NJ
Mayor John F. Mckeon

WEST ORANGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Briefly describe your policing program(s) designed in child and adult abduction prevention and/or resolution.

Any and all reported child or adult abductions that are encountered by members of the West Orange Police Department are handled as a top priority. The identification reporting, investigation, and treatment of child abuse victims are key to a successful conclusion. Cases involving child abuse are investigated by the Juvenile Aid Bureau. Members of the Juvenile Aid Bureau have received countless hours of training related to child abuse, neglect and child abduction. The Juvenile Aid Bureau works closely with the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and the Essex County Prosecutors Office, whenever child abuse or abduction matters arise.

On September 27, 2002, the West Orange Police Department hosted a Missing and Exploited Children seminar presented by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Fox Valley Technical College and the New Jersey State Police. Representatives from 87 different New Jersey police agencies, and local school officials attended the training, which was a great success. The presentation focused on the appropriate investigations of child abuse, neglect and abductions. Additionally, the New Jersey State Police lectured about the procedures regarding the Amber Alert Program in New Jersey.

As a result of the overwhelming success of the Missing and Exploited Children seminar, the Juvenile Aid Bureau Commander, Lieutenant Dominick Cali, and Juvenile Aid Bureau Supervisor, Sergeant Richard E. Levens, were invited by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children to attend a one week training in San Juan, Puerto Rico. This very technical, advanced training seminar specifically focused on the appropriate police response to child abuse and abductions. Sergeant Levens has trained the entire Juvenile Aid Bureau staff on these responses.

The West Orange Police Department has very successful D.A.R.E. and School Resource Officer (SRO) Programs. The D.A.R.E. Program includes but is not limited to detailed instruction to grammar school students regarding "Stranger Danger". This instruction is designed to teach young children ways to protect themselves from child abduction. The SRO Program that is designed for middle and high school students also includes a lesson plan regarding child abuse and neglect.

The West Orange Police Department also works in conjunction with the West Orange Board of Education to operate a Kid Care Program. This is a program sponsored by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children that stores information into a database in the event a child is abducted. With this program, grammar school students in the West Orange school system are fingerprinted and photographed by members of the Department. The children are also provided with an identification kit, which is kept by their parents/guardians.

2. When was the program created and why?

The Missing & Exploited Children seminar was held in September of 2002 and later modeled by the Ocean County Prosecutors Office in December of 2002. This seminar was conducted at the request of Mayor John F. McKeon, due to the overwhelming amount of child abductions around the country at this time. The West Orange Police Department has always aggressively and appropriately investigated these types of incidents.

3. How do you measure the program's effectiveness?

Since 1993, the West Orange Police Department has (only) investigated 109 child abuse matters, 88 child neglect matters, and 29 kidnapping events. Although it is realized that one of these events is too many, these numbers are drastically low considering that they are the statistics for the past ten years. Therefore, we would consider this program effective.

4. How is this program financed?

The Missing and Exploited Children seminar was financed through the West Orange Police Department training budget, and overwhelming donations and contributions from the West Orange business community. Any expenditures that child abuse investigations may incur are financed by the Police Department's operating budget. The SRO Program is financed by a federal grant, and the D.A.R.E. Program by the West Orange Municipal Alliance.

5. What other city agencies are involved in the program? How are these agencies involved in the program? How is the community involved in the program?

- DYFS;
- West Orange Domestic Violence Response Team;
- New Jersey State Police;
- Essex County Prosecutors Office;
- Main Street Family Counseling Center;
- Municipal Alliance; and the,
- Juvenile Conference Committee.

6. What are the major lessons learned from the program that would be helpful for mayors, police chiefs and others trying to implement a program similar to yours?

Any child abduction, adult abduction, child abuse or child neglect should be a top priority of any community and police agency who investigate these matters. An aggressive approach should always be taken when any information is received that these events are occurring.

7. What specific advice do you have for mayors interested in replicating a program or programs such as yours?

Consult with your police chief/director.

8. Contact

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