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2008 Missing Children Reference Report

By

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Executive Summary

National Missing Children Services (NMCS) is the only national missing children clearing house for information and assistance to police, not-for-profit agencies and parents. It is proud to have been serving Canadians for the past 23 years.

From December 1988 to December 2008, 10, 519 cases were opened and 8, 174 cases closed. Currently, 2, 345 cases are active.

The NMCS tracks and stores information on its cases yearly. The results of this research show that in 2008, NMCS assisted in the investigation of 86 Canadian cases involving 108 children, 273 United States cases involving 386 children, and 115 international cases (excluding the U.S.A.) involving 148 children.

The NMCS researcher also analyzes the missing children entries in the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system. Entries are made by accredited Canadian police agencies. An analysis of the 2008 reports showed that the total number of missing children reports decreased to 56,102 from 60,582 reports entered in 2007. The number of reports in all categories of missing children increased, with the exception of the runaway, stranger abduction and wandered off categories.

The runaway category composes three-quarters of the missing children reports. More females than males run away and most often they run away from their family residence while 22 per cent run from foster homes. Over 80 per cent of runaway children have a history of repeat or chronic running episodes.

The parental abductions reports, both custody and non custody, totalled 300. More male children than females were abducted, the same as 2007. In the majority of the cases, a custody order was *in place*. Forty-two per cent of the children were under the age of 5, 30 per cent between ages of 6 and 11, and 28 per cent between the ages of 12 and 17. About three-quarters were last seen at their family or foster home residence.

Stranger abduction reports remained the same in 2008. More females than males were reported missing. Sixty-eight per cent of the children disappeared from their family residence. Twenty-five per cent were under the age of one, and 20 per cent were 14 and 15 years-old.

In 2008, 56, 102 transactions were entered and 53, 501 transactions were removed from the CPIC system. Sixty-two per cent were removed in the 24 hours following the initial missing report, and 84 per cent were removed within a week. *Note: The 2008 "removed" transactions may include children entered on the system in previous years but who were found in 2008, and then removed.*

The NMCS and its partner agencies offers several services to law enforcement agencies and the families of missing children, including a travel reunification program, photo age progression service, training for law enforcement officials, and updates on the AMBER Alert program.

The NMCS works closely with National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC) to combat Internet-facilitated sexual criminal activity that targets, exploits, victimizes, and abuses children and youth.

The NMCS collaborates on missing children cases with several federal government departments and agencies: the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, Department of Justice Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and its international partners, and the United States National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

It also recognizes and works with several not-for-profit agencies such as Child Find Canada and its provincial offices, the Missing Children Society of Canada, the Missing Children Network Canada, Victims of Violence: Canadian Centre for Missing Children, Operation Go Home and International Social Service Canada.

Introduction

National Missing Children Services Functions

NMCS is the only national missing children clearing house for information and assistance to police, not-for-profit agencies and parents. It was created to assist law enforcement agencies in the investigation, location and return of a missing child to their parent or legal guardian. The service is linked to all Canadian police and related agencies through the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), to United States police agencies through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and to most foreign police agencies through Interpol.

National Missing Children Services has a two-fold mandate: Operations; and Research and Program Development.

Operations

NMCS is an investigative and operational support unit assisting Canadian agencies with their investigations. It coordinates national and international investigations with law enforcement agencies by using its network of contacts. NMCS works co-operatively with municipal, regional, provincial and national law enforcement agencies as well as with other Canadian searching organizations.

In 2002, NMCS announced the appointment of a national AMBER Alert program coordinator. The coordinator provides advice and updates on the program to Canadian law enforcement and searching agencies. NMCS liaises with Transport Canada regarding employee training, as well as providing training to Canadian law enforcement agencies.

NMCS also has partnered with National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre, Royal Canadian Mounted Police National Police Services investigators to determine if there are links to other crimes against children, such as the trafficking of children, Internet luring, and pornography.

Research and Program Development:

The researcher conducts original studies:

- to contribute to policy development;
- to advance investigative processes;
- to assist in the development of investigative response plans; and
- to determine the nature and scope of the missing children problem in Canada.

In 2007, NMCS collected information from left-behind parents whose children were abducted by the other parent or guardian. Canada's not-for-profit agencies supported this research by contacting their clients and requesting their participation. The final research report has been released in English and French and is available on the NMCS web site.

An extensive reference report on Canada's missing children is written and published yearly. The report is launched by a federal government official on May 25th, National Missing Children's Day.

The research officer responds to media and public inquiries for national statistical information, trend analysis, and research study findings related to children and youth. Research data collection and methodological advice and feedback on university graduate and post-graduate papers are provided to national and international students. As well, research and crime trend articles about missing children issues are published in law enforcement magazines.

To fulfil its prevention objectives, NMCS has developed a safety booklet, including information on "What to Do If Your Child Is Missing," "Safety In Cyberspace," and "Keeping Children Safe."

Reports, booklets and research studies are available by contacting the service at 1-877-318-3576 (toll free line) or visiting the website at www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca.

Data collection

This report is divided into two sections. The first section looks at operational files from the Police Information Retrieval System (PIRS), Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS) and Missing Children Registry (MCR) which is an internal monitoring system used by National Missing Children Services (NMCS).

The second section focuses on the National Missing Children and Youth Police Occurrence Reports perspective as generated by the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system.

Analysis I National Missing Children Services

The NMCS tracks and stores information on its cases yearly. The results of this research are as follows:

From December 1988 to December 31, 2008, 10,519 cases were opened and 8, 174 cases closed. Currently, 2,345 cases are active.

In 2008, National Missing Children Services (NMCS) opened 474 assistance files, and closed 432 files. Some of the closed files included cases from previous years.

Requests for assistance are broken down into three categories and analyzed. The three categories are “Canadian Investigative Assistance Case Analysis;” “United States Investigative Case Service Analysis;” and “International Investigative Case Service Analysis.” In 2008, there were also five requests for “other related services”.

1. Canadian Investigative Assistance Case Analysis

In 2008, National Missing Children Services (NMCS) assisted in the investigation of 86 cases involving 108 children. Of the 108 missing children, 61 were female, 47 male and none “unknown” gender. Of *all* the cases handled, *mothers* were the abductors more often than fathers.

Investigation and networking assistance was most often requested for cases originating in Ontario (45 per cent), Quebec (23 per cent), and British Columbia (14 per cent). See Table 1.

Assistance was requested most often in the winter months, with more reports in February and March. To explain this phenomenon, children are often reported missing following a holiday, such as Christmas, Easter, March or summer school break. Also, in the warmer weather youth have a tendency to run away.

Sixty per cent of the NMCS cases, compared to 66 per cent in 2007, were classified as *parental abductions*. Runaway reports increased from 18 per cent in 2007 to 22 per cent in 2008, and *stranger abduction* reports decreased.

Table 1—2008 NMCS Assistance Requests from Canadian Law Enforcement by category, province and territory

TOTAL CASES														
PROFILE	YT	NWT	NVT	BC	AB	SN	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	TOTAL
Parental	0	0	0	8	5	0	3	22	12	0	2	0	0	52
Mom	0	0	0	5	3	0	1	14	9	0	1	0	0	33
Dad	0	0	0	3	2	0	2	8	3	0	1	0	0	19
Both	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Runaway	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	9	7	0	0	0	0	19
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	1	1	1	0	0	11
Unknown	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Stranger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	0	0	0	12	6	0	4	39	20	1	4	0	0	86

TOTAL CHILDREN

PROFILE	YT	NWT	NVT	BC	AB	SN	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	TOTAL
Parental	0	0	0	10	11	0	4	30	17	0	2	0	0	74
Mom	0	0	0	7	5	0	1	22	12	0	1	0	0	48
Dad	0	0	0	3	2	0	3	8	4	0	1	0	0	21
Both	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Runaway	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	11	5	0	0	0	0	19
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	1	1	1	0	0	11
Unknown	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Stranger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	0	0	0	14	12	0	5	49	23	1	4	0	0	108

The number of cases handled by NMCS has steadily decreased - a downward trend that began in 2002 until 2007. This trend may be the result of ongoing training to Canadian law enforcement provided by NMCS operational staff. In 2006, the police computer system was changed to a new system, which could have affected the changes as well. In 2008, the numbers increased slightly.

Table 2 is a comparison of the frequency of requests by year.

Table 2—Frequency of Requests for Assistance by Year and Total Cases

2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
86	65	100	127	130	142	175

2. United States Investigative Case Service Analysis

NMCS works closely with the United States law enforcement community and supports its partner service, which is the United States National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a not-for-profit agency. Since the two countries share a common border, it is important for investigators to be vigilant and co-operative in their investigations in order to prevent illegal border crossings.

In 2008, 273 United States cases involving 386 children were referred to NMCS for investigative assistance; a decrease of 95 requests from 2007.

Female missing children made up 216 of the cases, while male children made up 170. Thirty-eight states requested assistance. Most of these cases originated from California (63), followed by Florida (23), New York (20) and Texas (16). Over the years, these States have consistently contacted NMCS for assistance with cases.

NMCS classified 68 per cent of the United States cases as *parental abduction*; 25 per

cent as *runaway*; three per cent as *stranger abduction*; and three per cent as *unknown*.

In 2008, as compared to 2007, there was a decrease in runaway requests —25 per cent compared to 26 per cent, and unknown requests - three per cent as compared to four per cent.

Of the 186 parental abduction cases handled by NMCS, 61 per cent involved abductions by mothers, a decrease of 2 per cent from 2007, 32 per cent involved abductions by fathers, a decrease of 3 per cent from 2007, and eight per cent implicated both parents, an increase of 4 per cent from 2007. Some other research findings also show that mothers are more often the abductor.

3. International Investigative Case Service Analysis (excluding the U. S.)

International requests for assistance continue to be an important component of our mandate. When a child is missing from another country and there is some indication the child may be in Canada, NMCS opens a file and assists with the investigation in Canada.

In 2008, NMCS assisted with 115 cases, involving 148 children, a decrease of 21 requests from last year.

NMCS assistance was requested for more cases involving missing female children than male. The average age of the missing children was eight years. More children went missing at ages three to nine years-of-age.

In 2008, there were 80 parental abduction assistance requests, a decrease from 2007. Mothers were abductors more often than fathers as related to “requests for assistance”.

Fifty-six countries requested assistance with their investigations, including Germany (9), Mexico (8) and Sweden (8).

Seventy per cent of the international cases were classified by NMCS as *parental abduction*; 10 per cent as *runaway*; three per cent as *stranger abduction*; four per cent as *unknown*; and 11 per cent as *other*.

Analysis II CPIC Data Collection and Analysis

CPIC entries are made by accredited police agencies in Canada when there is a need to utilize this service. In addition to other information, the CPIC system houses the national data base on missing children (See Appendix 1 for a comparison of reports by year, and Appendix 2 for the 2008 CPIC total missing children reports by category, province and gender).

The total number of missing children reports decreased from 60,582 reports in 2007 to 56,102 in 2008. The number of missing children reports in all categories of missing

increased, with the exception of wandered off and runaway categories. An analysis of CPIC 2008 missing children reports by category is as follows:

Runaway reports

- *Runaways* make up the greatest number of missing reports, 72%.
- 57% of the children entered in the *runaway* category were females and 43% were males.
- 53% of the females were ages 14 and 15 years, 31% were between 16 and 17 years, and 2% were under 11 years-old.
- 46% of the males were 14 and 15 years, 36% 16 and 17 years, and 3% were under 11 years-old.
- Over 82% of both males and females had a history of repeat or chronic running episodes. Only 18% had no history of running away.
- 30% were reported as missing from the family residence and 22% from a foster home.
- Ontario (15, 489), British Columbia (6, 274) and Quebec (5, 707) had the most reports. Alberta's entries decreased by almost 50% in 2008.
- Of the runaway reports 59% were removed within 24 hours, 95% were removed in one year. Some of these reports may include missing reports of children running away in previous years and located in previous years.

Parental Abduction

- *Parental abduction* reports increased by 15 reports in 2008 - from 285 to 300.
- 156 males and 144 females were reported missing. This is different from 2007 as more females were reported missing.
- 164 of the reports had a custody order in place, and 136 had no custody order in place.
- 42% of the children were under the age of 5 years, 30% between 6 and 11 years and 28% between 12 and 17 years old.
- Elementary school age children were more likely to be abducted than children over 12 years of age.
- 83% had no history of missing, and 17% had a history.
- 72% went missing from their family residence and 6% from a foster home.
- Ontario (143), Quebec (69), Alberta (29) and British Columbia (25) had the most reports.

Stranger abduction*

There were 56 reports entered in the *stranger abduction* category, which includes abductions by strangers, relatives and close friends. This year the numbers remained the same as last year. An analysis of the information available on these reports showed that there were 19 children reported missing between the ages of one and five years, eight between the ages of six and 12 years, and the remainder were teenagers.

- 33 females and 23 males were reported missing.
- 25% were under the age of one, 20% were 14 and 15 years, and 20% were 16 and 17 years of age.
- 64% had no previous history of missing and 35% had a history.
- 68% went missing from their family residence and 16% from the foster home.
- Ontario (23), British Columbia (13), Manitoba (5) and Saskatchewan (5).

* *Stranger abduction category includes Strangers, relatives and close friends.*

Unknown

- There were 12, 441 *unknown* reports, an increase of 1, 225 reports from last year. This category is used when there is no previous record of the missing child. Also, there is insufficient background information to enable coding the missing incident under any of the other causes. More female than male children were reported missing. Most unknown missing children reports are ages 14 to 17 years.
- Sixty-four per cent of the missing reports were characterized by “repeat, chronic or habitual” missing characteristics.

Accident

- There were 37 *accident* reports, an increase of 4 from last year. The probable cause of the missing incident is an accident where the body has not been recovered.

Wandered off

- There were 560 *wandered off* reports in 2008, a decrease of 16 reports from last year. The wandered off category is used when it is presumed the child has wandered away and not returned when expected. Feedback received from the Canadian law enforcement community has revealed that this category is sometimes used to enter youth who are missing from social service care, such as not having permission to leave their housing.

Other

- There were 2, 419 reports classified as *other*, an increase of 192 reports from last year. This category is used when a child/youth has not returned to a detention home or institution housing young offenders.

Reports of “All” Categories of Missing Children

An analysis of CPIC 2008 missing children reports by combining *all categories* of missing shows:

- 82% of all missing children reports involved children ages 14 to 17 years, with more missing reports entered in CPIC in the 14 and 15 year-old category.
- 78% of all missing children reports had repeat or habitual characteristics of missing. The remaining 23% had no previous history of missing.
- Children under five years of age represented 1.2% of the total number of all missing children reports. More males (350) than females (345) were reported missing under the age of 5 years.
- More females (209) than males (197) were reported missing under the age of 1 year. Also, the reporting of children missing under the age of 1 year decreased by 74 reports in 2008.
- 33% of the children went missing from their family residence while some went missing from a type of arranged care - 5% from child care and 22% from foster care.
- 33% went missing from institutions - school, detention and youth centres and those classified as “other” institutions. Less than 1% of all missing children went missing from a shopping mall, place of work, or while on a vacation.
- Law enforcement agencies cited alcohol or drug dependency as a problem in 18% of missing children reports.
- 53, 501 transactions were removed from the CPIC system in 2008. Sixty-two per cent were removed in the first 24 hours of having been reported missing, and 84% were removed within a week.*

**The 2008 “remove” transactions may include children entered in previous years but who were found in 2008, and then removed.*

Programs, Services and Initiatives

NMCS and its partner agencies offer the following services to law enforcement agencies and families.

1. The Travel Reunification Program

NMCS administers a Travel Reunification Program which provides travel assistance for parents who cannot afford to travel within Canada or abroad to reunite with their child and bring them home. Certain criteria must be met to qualify and the travel is subject to availability.

The Travel Reunification Program is coordinated with a transportation company and no funds are exchanged between the parent and NMCS. All arrangements must be made through NMCS services during its regular business hours, and it should be noted that the process *may* take approximately 48 hours. NMCS does not reimburse parents who have made prior flight arrangements.

In 2008, one Ontario parent or guardian used this program to transport one child safely.

2. The Canadian and International AMBER Alert Program

The America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response (AMBER) Alert program is a voluntary partnership between law enforcement agencies and broadcasters to activate an urgent bulletin when a serious child-abduction case is reported to police.

The plan was originally developed in 1996 following a search for nine year-old Amber Hagerman. While riding her bicycle near her home, Amber was kidnapped and murdered. Following this incident, citizens designed a search plan that involved community resources and the media. By using television, radio and the electronic highway signs, an abductor may be located more quickly.

The following basic criteria must be met before law enforcement can initiate an AMBER Alert:

- The child must be under 18 years of age.
- There must be confirmation that the child has been abducted.
- Police must have sufficient descriptors to make a search for the child possible, such as descriptions of the child, abductor, accomplices, or the suspect's vehicle.
- Most importantly, police must judge that the child is in serious danger or risk of harm, and be convinced the broadcast will help find the child.

From January 2002 to December 2008 there were 34 activations in Canada:

- 18 activations involved a family member;
- 9 involved a stranger; and

- 7 were a person known to the family.

A total of 40 children were involved, 21 females and 19 males. Three of the children were found deceased.

For more information on the AMBER Alert Plan, contact the National AMBER Alert Coordinator at National Missing Children Services, Canadian Police Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-877-318-3576.

3. Photo-Age Progression Service

NMCS provides a photo-age progression service for all Canadian law enforcement agencies and not-for-profit searching agencies. This service renders a likeness of what a child who went missing some time ago might look like today. Certain criteria must be met before the process is activated. For example, the child has to be missing for a minimum of two years. Canadian forensic artists perform the photo-age progression. Also, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children provides an updating service in certain cases. In 2008, one Canadian forensic request was processed.

4. The Air Canada Kids' Horizon—RCMP Child Recovery Award Initiative

The *Child Recovery Award* recognizes the work and efforts of a Canadian individual or Canadian organization in the search for and safe recovery of a missing child or children.

The award includes two hospitality class tickets from Air Canada. Tickets are valid to any Air Canada scheduled destination (blackout periods and restrictions apply). The 2008 recipient of the award was Detective Sandra Stanley, York Regional Police Ontario. She was recently recognized for her outstanding work following an abduction of a two-year-old child. On December 2, 2008, at a ceremony in Newmarket, Ontario, she was presented with the national 2008 award.

5. Law Enforcement Officials Training Service

National Missing Children Services provides a two-day training workshop several times a year for investigators, law-enforcement representatives, and other individuals who are working in the field of missing children.

The goal of the course is to sensitize participants to the missing child investigative process as it relates to criminal and/or civil proceedings. This workshop is designed to provide the participants with additional tools needed to more efficiently and effectively conduct their investigation. An overview is given of the various resources available, such as the federal government, program partners, recognized not-for-profit agencies, government assistance agencies and other resources that can be used to augment investigations. In 2008, two training workshops were conducted, one in Surrey, British Columbia and one in Vaughan, Ontario involving approximately 100 law enforcement personnel.

6. Missing Children Internet-Luring Investigative Assistance

Internet luring has become a major concern as it relates to missing and exploited children and youth. In this scenario, a stranger develops a relationship with the child over the Internet without ever meeting face-to-face. Then, attempts are made to meet the child in secret, placing the child in a position of vulnerability and danger.

From 2000 to 2008, NMCS assisted with the investigation of 33 Internet-luring investigations. NMCS luring cases are now investigated in co-operation with its partner service, National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC), Canadian Police Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

In response to an investigator's request for assistance, a NMCS operational analyst may investigate by:

- checking available databases to gather information;
- soliciting border, immigration, foreign affairs, and justice services expertise;
- advising or acting on the information gathered from the investigation;
- liaising with Interpol and the investigator in the destination country of the child;
- advising the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC), if exploitation is an anticipated component of the case;
- providing advice on avenues to conduct searches; and
- liaising with not-for-profit agencies as required.

The Internet is a powerful learning tool but parents need to *be informed* about Internet advancements, set the rules of use, be alert to any changes in behaviour, and attentive to other noticeable changes, such as the use of inappropriate language or dress for the child's age group. Keeping a child out of harm's way is the key to their safety. For your education, NMCS has produced a *safety tips booklet*, which is posted on its website at www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca. The safety tips booklet is also available by calling 1-877-318-3576.

7. National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC) Service

The National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC) was created in response to the growing and disturbing crime of Internet-facilitated child sexual exploitation. The Center's mandate is to reduce the vulnerability of children to Internet-facilitated sexual exploitation by identifying victimized children; investigating and assisting in the prosecution of sexual offenders; and strengthening the capacity of municipal, territorial, provincial, federal, and international police agencies through training, research, and investigative support. Although the mandate is broad, initiatives in a variety of specialized areas have been identified to meet the needs of law enforcement working in this area.

Subsequent reports will incorporate results as performance measures are currently being established.

In its brief period of operation, the NCECC has established itself as a credible, necessary, and valuable Centre. The NCECC provides a multitude of services to the Canadian law enforcement community, and the level of cooperation in this field is reported as previously unprecedented.

Current services now include, but are not limited to, the following:

- the ability to respond immediately to a child at-risk in Canada or internationally;
- the ability to expeditiously verify, triage, and disseminate national and international complaints;
- assistance via the NCECC Victim Identification Unit specializing in victim identification;
- major case management and covert capacity;
- the ability to manage multi-suspect, multi-jurisdictional cases;
- the continuous development and delivery of leading edge training;
- the co-development and implementation of an operational intelligence solution;
- sharing intelligence among Canadian law enforcement agencies through the Child Exploitation Tracking System (CETS);
- the development and sharing of best practices, training, and technologies;
- the ability to influence and bring forward required legislation;
- the provision of media strategies on major cases;
- provision of up-to-date research on these crimes nationally and internationally; and,
- the forging of partnerships with industry, international law enforcement, and NGOs (non-government organizations)

The NCECC works closely with NMCS to combat Internet-facilitated sexual criminal activity that targets, exploits, victimizes, and abuses children and youth. The NCECC is also a partner in the Virtual Global Task force (VGT), an international law enforcement working group contributing to increasing safety on the Internet. Additionally, the NCECC is an integral part of the Canadian Coalition against Internet Child Exploitation working group that is partnering with Industry Canada in various efforts. For more information, please consult www.ncecc.ca and www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com.

Since the Centre began operation and until 2008, Canadian investigators from all agencies successfully identified 251 Canadian children who were victims of sexual abuse.

8. Not-for-Profit Organization Liaison on Investigative Matters, Reunification Situations and Crime Prevention Initiatives

NMCS liaises with not-for-profit organizations regularly to facilitate co-operation between the agencies and the police community. Several Canadian agencies meet a pre-set criteria for recognition by NMCS and they are listed under the heading “Recognized Organizations” on our website www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca.

Their activities and services vary. They include searching for the missing child, distributing and posting photos, meeting and advising parents, conducting and supporting research studies, conducting crime prevention projects, and working with police to plan and carry out reunions.

9. International Partnerships - The United States National Center for Missing and Exploited Children LOCATOR program

National Missing Children Services works closely with United States law enforcement agencies and the United States National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in searching, recovering and returning missing children. Ongoing liaison between the two countries has proven effective in finding missing children who may have crossed over borders, either on their own or with a parent or stranger.

NCMEC coordinates the efforts of law enforcement, social service agencies, elected officials, judges, prosecutors, educators, the public and private sectors in the United States in an effort to break the cycles that historically perpetuate crimes against children.

NCMEC also offers assistance with poster distribution to NMCS through its LOCATOR program. This is an advanced, web-based computer program offered to law enforcement agencies free of charge. It helps agencies create and distribute professional looking posters across the nation. Currently, the LOCATOR program is used in more than 4,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States, and several in Canada. Canadian law enforcement agencies can also take advantage of the NCMEC services to produce Amber Alert posters at no cost.

NCMEC sponsors yearly training for the Canadian AMBER Alert coordinators at various locations throughout the United States. These meetings provide participants with regular updates on search techniques, help identify pitfalls and assist in making the necessary revisions to improve the program.

To contact this partner agency, call the toll-free hotline 1-800-THE-LOST or 1-800-843-5678, which is available in Canada and the United States 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Information about missing and exploited children can be reported via a CyberTipline at <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

10. Trafficking Of Canadian Children Liaison

NMCS has closely monitored its missing children files for indications of domestic and international trafficking of children. Since 2007, 5 cases were flagged by operational analysts as possible trafficking. The National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre and the RCMP Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre, Immigration and Passport Branch, work closely with NMCS on these cases in an effort to locate and protect victimized children.

11. NMCS Government Department Working Partnerships

The search for and return of a missing child requires co-operation and collaboration among the following agencies: Canada Border Services Agency; Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade; and the Department of Justice Canada.

The main duties of these departments are as follows:

Canada Border Services Agency

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has made it a priority to manage a national program that effectively allows all front line officers the ability to identify, intercept and handle situations involving abducted or runaway children. Efficient training practices and procedures allow Border Services Officers the ability to successfully monitor and maintain a presence on all Canadian land, air and sea ports of entry. Real time targeting information and intelligence is analyzed and disseminated allowing ports of entry to prepare for and remain vigilant when faced with a situation involving missing children. Additionally, a constant flow of intelligence information is exchanged daily between the CBSA, its law enforcement and program partners.

Once a potential case involving either a missing child and/or their suspected abductor is encountered, Regional Intelligence Officers will initiate Border Alerts and notify the ports of entry, providing them with the specific details of the situation and ensuring front line officers receive up to date information as it is collected. All recoveries of children are reported throughout the CBSA and shared with program partners and law enforcement organizations, enabling affected families to be informed and reunited as quickly as possible.

The CBSA program is consistently managed across Canada through a national coordinator, in conjunction with eight regional coordinators who provide functional program support, information and tools to the front line officers. Beyond these efforts, the CBSA proactively promotes awareness by distributing bulletins, reports and newsletters at public events across Canada.

By providing this information and sharing best practices nationally and internationally, parents and children alike are afforded with the knowledge they need to ensure a safer travelling experience.

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Children's Issues Section

Consular Operations Bureau

Canada's consular services operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through a network of more than 260 offices in over 150 countries. The network includes embassies, high commissions, consulates, consulates headed by honorary consuls, and offices. The Children's Issues Section of the Consular Operations Bureau assists with international parental child abduction, child custody and child welfare cases.

When a child is abducted or retained in a foreign country, the Children's Issues Section of the Consular Operations Bureau, through its missions overseas, undertakes diplomatic efforts in the local country to locate the abducted or missing child by liaising with Canadian and foreign authorities and/or other organizations.

The Children's Issues Section offers a broad range of consular services to left-behind parents such as providing information relating to the concerned country, practical advice and a list of lawyers. Efforts are also undertaken to confirm the entry of the abducted child into the foreign country, locating and visiting the abducted child and reported on the child's well-being.

The Children's Issues Section assists with arrangements for the reunification of an abducted child with their left-behind custodial parent.

Since joining the "Our Missing Children" program in 1996, the Children's Issues Section has assisted with 799 International Parental Child Abduction cases from Hague and non-Hague countries, and has been successful in concluding 601 of these cases.

In 2008, the Children's Issues Section of the Consular Operations Bureau of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) received 40 new international child abduction cases. During the same year, DFAIT has concluded 27 of the old and new cases.

The Department of Justice Canada

The Department of Justice Canada (DOJ) has both an operational and a policy role in missing and abducted children's issues.

Part of the Department's operational role relates to the *Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction*, which applies in all provinces and territories of Canada. The Convention aims to secure the prompt return of children removed to or retained in breach of rights of custody in any country that is a contracting state to the Convention. The Convention also promotes the peaceful enjoyment of rights of access.

In Canada, there is a Central Authority in every province and territory whose duties include filing "outgoing" Hague applications regarding children who have been abducted and taken out of Canada, and processing "incoming" applications regarding children

who have been abducted and brought into Canada.

There is also a Federal Central Authority (distinct from the Federal Central Authority for extradition requests), whose duties complement the work of the provincial and territorial Central Authorities. Those duties include liaison and coordination with provinces, territories, foreign authorities, other government departments and non-governmental groups on policy and in some cases, individual cases, as well as public education and promotion of the Convention.

The Department of Justice is also responsible for seeking the extradition of persons sought for prosecution, or the imposition or enforcement of sentence. Requests for extradition are made to a foreign state at the request of the competent Attorney General when the person is sought for prosecution or imposition of sentence, or at the request of the competent correctional authority when the person is sought for the enforcement of sentence. The extradition process does not address the return of the missing or abducted child. Rather, the purpose of seeking extradition is to return the alleged abductor to Canada to face trial or for the imposition or enforcement of sentence.

On the policy side, Family, Children and Youth Section of Justice has responsibilities for Canadian federal family law, including the parenting provisions of the *Divorce Act*.

In addition, the Department's International Private Law Section (IPL) is responsible for negotiating private international law instruments dealing with family law including *the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction* and related issues, such as, trans-frontier access. The IPL Section also advises DOJ on the interpretation of the Hague Convention and leads the consultations within Canada to prepare for Special Commissions to review the practical operation of the Hague Convention.

See the Department of Justice Canada link on the "Our Missing Children" website at <http://www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca> and follow the links to: www.canada.justice.gc.ca.

Research Update

I. Domestic Trafficking of Canadian Children

In 2008, Dr. Marlene Dalley from National Missing Children Services, RCMP conducted a national research study funded by the Government of Canada on the domestic trafficking of Canadian children as the issue relates to runaway, missing and other marginalized children, and sexual exploitation. The final report will be released in 2009.

To date, 175 interviews have been conducted in 20 Canadian cities and a few towns on the issue. For this report, anyone under the age of 18 years is considered a child. Of particular risk of exploitation and harm are runaway, throwaway (not wanted), youth over 16 years living independently, those selling themselves for sex using internet communication, and marginalized ethnic groups.

Children are sexually exploited in many ways, including these sex trade activities: survival and needs-driven; boyfriend-girlfriend (mutual or controlled dependency situations); gang-driven; family member controlled; and Internet communication-driven.

Both boys and girls are sexually exploited, but boy's activities are less visible than girls. Minors are recruited in places like shopping centers, bus and subway stations, youth centers, shelters, libraries, schools, youth *hang outs* and parties staged for youth recruitment.

They are recruited by friends, so called boyfriends, parents, siblings, gang members, older men preying on younger girls, and by other girls in the sex trade or who belong to a gang.

Recruitment methods range from the development of a girlfriend-boyfriend relationship, sometimes referred to as *love bombing*, to situations of violence (beating, burnings, isolation, gang rape). Drug use and drug bondage is very characteristic of these situations and are used by "pimps" as a control mechanism.

Some children are moved from province-to-province to work in the sex trade. Others are moved within cities, especially from *crack* house to *crack* house (mostly linked to drugs).

When recruitment, transportation, isolation and exploitation are considered to be the steps toward trafficking (as stated in reference and trafficking awareness materials) then, these descriptive factors closely relate to what is happening to children who are involved in the sex trade. Therefore, the sexual exploitation of children and youth is closely aligned with the trafficking of children situations and laws.

In conclusion, the trafficking of children and youth is demographically-based, and all children and youth in the sex trade are vulnerable to this type of victimization. At any time in the process, whether they are involved in survival, relationship or the

controlled and organized sex trade, their situation may worsen and become more risky.

To date, there have been some difficulties with the interpretation and application of the trafficking laws. However, with more guidelines, education, awareness, and understanding of the sex trade as it relates to children and youth, positive changes can be made to better protect Canadian children.

II. Parental Abduction

In 2007, a descriptive study on parental abduction was completed by the National Missing Children Services researcher. The study showed the nature of the problem, and its impact in Canadian left-behind parents and their abducted children. The results identified some pitfalls in the system.

The principle research findings were as follows:

- Most couples were separated or divorced at the time of the abduction. They described their relationship as “poor”.
- Over half the left-behind parents had a yearly income of more than \$25,000.
- Left-behind parents reported experienced a financial strain directly related to the search and recovery process.
- The estimated search and recovery cost was about \$30,000.
- Slightly more boys than girls were abducted. The average age of the child was eight years.
- All the parents felt their child suffered emotional harm as a result of the abduction.
- About one third of the children were found in Canada, about the same in the United States, and about one quarter in other countries.
- Half the children were located in less than a year.
- Parents found the search and judicial process complex and frustrating.

Parental abduction is an emotionally charged experience for all involved. To protect the well-being of Canadian families, the missing report must be acted upon quickly and effectively. National Missing Children Services, Canadian Police Center for Missing and Exploited Children can provide investigational support. Police can access this service by calling 1-877-318-3576

This research study is posted in English and French at www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca and available at the Canadian Police College Library, Ottawa, Ontario.

III. Infant abduction From Canadian Hospitals

The abduction of a newborn from the hospital maternity ward is a rare occurrence in Canada. To date, from 1991 to 2008, seven newborns have been abducted from hospitals, 5 by strangers, and 2 by a parent or person known to the family.

In 2007, a newborn was abducted from a northern Ontario hospital. After distracting the mother for a few minutes, a woman posing as a nurse slipped out of the hospital with the newborn. Fortunately, the cleaning staff noticed a woman walking down the hospital corridor with a baby in her arms - a practice contrary to hospital protocol as babies were required by staff to be transported in a bassinet. This irregularity triggered an alarm for a possible abduction.

Nonetheless, the abductor was able to leave the hospital unchallenged and traveled many hours to another Ontario town. An AMBER Alert was activated immediately and a province-wide search began.

Fortunately, the search was successful and the baby was returned to its parents unharmed. A 29-year-old woman was taken into custody and charged with abduction.

Following this incident, hospital officials reviewed their security procedures. This review resulted in an ankle tag requirement for all newborns. Also, several other important changes were implemented to better guarantee the safety of newborns.

The typical hospital abduction may involve a stranger. These persons sometimes pose as an employee, nurse or relative in order to gain access to the baby. A few studies showed that only a few perpetrators pose as hospital staff, but an analysis of Canadian cases showed half of the offenders were impersonators. Worthy of note is the fact that an abductor may use a hospital-like photo ID as part of a scam to gain access to the maternity ward. Since many new mothers want to keep their babies in their room, instead of leaving them in a supervised nursery, it is easier for an abductor to con the infant from its mother's care. The impersonator usually requests the newborn be taken from the mother's care for hospital tests, photos, and the like.

The abductors are usually females who really want a baby of their own. They are often overweight, compulsive, impersonators, married or cohabitating, and live in the community where the abduction takes place. They plan the abduction by visiting the hospital frequently and learning as much as possible about procedure, staff roles and floor plans. The perpetrators range from family members to unrelated childless couples making perverse attempts to procure a baby. Some abductors are pregnant and then have a miscarriage, others are not able to have children at all, while still others fake pregnancy and after nine months are obliged to produce a baby somehow. Nonetheless, in most situations the abductor cares for the baby's needs well.

Officials of the National Missing Children Services, RCMP in Canada and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in the United States recommend that mothers and families **MUST** visually inspect and ask questions of staff who wear photo ID

badges. The nurse should present the badge to the mother and encourage the newborn's mother and family members to carefully scrutinize and memorize the badge details. Also, it is extremely important for personnel to use specific color coding and/or unique dress designs for uniforms, which identifies them as the authority designated to handle and/or transport a newborn.

For information on "Safety Tips for Expectant Parents," please consult the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children web site at www.missingkids.com.

Appendix 1

Canadian Missing Children Reports Summary CPIC Year-end Transaction Reports for 2008

Frequency by Category and by Year Reported Missing

Profile	Kidnap	PA	Run	Unknown	Acc	Wander	Other	Total
2008	56	300	40,289	12,441	37	560	2,419	56,102
2007	56	285	46,189	11,216	33	576	2,227	60,582
2006	46	326	46,728	10,761	24	567	2,009	60,461
2005	30	349	51,280	12,079	45	704	2,061	66,548
2004	31	332	52,280	11,373	27	671	2,552	67,266
2003	39	358	53,459	10,922	21	805	2,205	67,809
2002	35	429	52,390	10,994	38	594	2,052	66,532
2001	48	387	53,434	10,364	49	742	1,990	66,994
2000	42	416	50,633	10,031	35	597	1,958	63,712
1999	52	358	47,585	9,884	38	496	1,947	60,360
1998	42	426	48,388	10,254	28	623	2,326	62,087
1997	60	426	45,527	9,404	37	506	2,138	58,098
1996	45	409	43,717	9,181	34	822	1,914	56,122
1995	68	354	43,709	9,039	35	720	1,824	55,749

Kidnap= kidnapping/stranger abduction, PA=parental abduction, Run=runaways, Acc= accident, Wander =Wandered Off Source: CPIC annual transaction report 2008, M.L.Dalley

Appendix 2

All of Canada Reports of Missing Children for Year 2008

Cases on CPIC, Year-end Reports by Category, Province and Gender

Females														
Profile	YT	NT	NU	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	PE	NS	NL	Totals
Stranger	0	0	0	5	3	2	3	16	2	0	0	2	0	33
Accident	0	0	0	4	1	0	1	6	1	0	0	1	0	14
Wandered	0	0	0	68	25	19	5	121	10	2	0	8	3	261
Parental	0	0	0	20	14	4	8	62	40	3	1	1	2	156
Runaway	3	31	0	3,884	2,712	1,654	2,263	8,879	2,562	436	24	643	68	23,159
Unknown	0	7	0	2,796	383	352	393	2,005	914	54	2	29	16	6,951
Other	0	0	0	418	38	16	25	510	247	6	1	25	5	1,291
Totals	3	38	0	7,195	3,176	2,047	2,692	11,600	3,776	501	28	709	94	31,865

Males														
Profile	YT	NT	NU	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	PE	NS	NL	Totals
Stranger	0	0	0	8	0	3	2	7	1	2	0	0	0	23
Accident	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	15	4	0	0	0	1	23
Wandered	1	0	0	59	27	13	7	167	18	2	1	4	0	299
Parental	0	1	0	5	15	2	9	80	29	2	0	1	0	144
Runaway	2	13	0	2,390	2,386	792	1,106	6,610	3,145	242	21	383	40	17,130
Unknown	0	5	0	2,032	297	247	238	1,621	955	42	1	30	22	5,490
Other	0	0	0	355	42	8	12	426	268	4	0	9	4	1,128
Totals	3	19	1	4,850	2,767	1,066	1,374	8,926	4,420	294	23	427	67	24,237

Totals														
Profile	YT	NT	NU	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	PE	NS	NL	Totals
Stranger	0	0	0	13	3	5	5	23	3	2	0	2	0	56
Accident	0	0	1	5	1	1	1	21	5	0	0	1	1	37
Wandered	1	0	0	127	52	32	12	288	28	4	1	12	3	560
Parental	0	1	0	25	29	6	17	143	69	5	1	2	2	300
Runaway	5	44	0	6,274	5,098	2,446	3,369	15,489	5,707	678	45	1,026	108	40,289
Unknown	0	12	0	4,828	680	599	631	3,626	1,869	96	3	59	38	12,441
Other	0	0	0	773	80	24	37	936	515	10	1	34	9	2,419
Totals	6	57	1	12,045	5,943	3,113	4,072	20,526	8,196	795	51	1,136	161	56,102