

Colorado Bureau of Investigation



1998 Annual Report

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www.state.co.us/gov_dir/cdps/cbi.htm



Message from the Director

For the first time the Missing Children's Annual Report is accessible on the internet. This enables us to give a better understanding of the severity of the missing children problem in Colorado. Last year in Colorado alone there were 19,055 children reported as missing.

Since our children are our future it is our responsibility to provide them with an environment in which they can enjoy their childhood yet are equipped with the knowledge of what to do or where to turn if a dangerous situation occurs.

This report helps provide a better understanding of Colorado's missing children phenomena. Statistics confirm there is cause for concern, but do not begin to quantify the impact on those who have experienced the preventable loss of a child, nor do they identify the number of people affected by each incident.

Our thanks to the Colorado General Assembly for its support of the Missing Children Project and to law enforcement leaders who have worked so diligently to find and assist so many young people. The Colorado Bureau of Investigation pledges its continuing support to make Colorado a safer place for children.

Carl W. Whiteside
Director, Colorado Bureau of Investigation

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Introduction

Each year, thousands of children are reported missing in the United States. Although many return safely, those who are not continue to be exposed to harmful and dangerous situations. In response to the growing national concern for missing and exploited children, the Federal Children's Assistance Act was passed in 1982. It directed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to become actively involved in missing children cases. Federal efforts were further strengthened by the creation of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in 1984.

During this time, child abduction cases were becoming more highly publicized in Colorado and public concern was mounting. In 1985, the legislature created the Colorado Missing Children Project. The Project serves as a central repository for information on missing children in order to better define the problem. It collects, compiles, exchanges, and disseminates information to help find missing children. Towards this end, the Project is responsible for obtaining dental records of children who have been missing thirty or more days, comparing new student records with reports of missing children, and reviewing each missing child report submitted by every law enforcement agency in Colorado.

The NCMEC and the United States Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention instituted a program establishing state level clearinghouses for missing children. Seven state projects, including Colorado's, were selected to participate in this pilot program. Because of its great success, there are now forty nine States with legislation authorizing missing children clearinghouses.

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Definitions

CCIC - Colorado Crime Information Center.

Kidnapped - A person who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance is not voluntary and who has been abducted by a stranger or non-family member.

Lost - A person who is presumed to have wandered away and has become lost and unable to return to a known location.

Missing Child - A child whose whereabouts are unknown, whose domicile at the time he was first reported missing was Colorado, and whose age at the time he was reported missing was seventeen years or younger.

NCIC - National Crime Information Center.

NCMEC - The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Non-Custodial Abduction - The taking of a child by the non-custodial parent or family member, with the intent to deprive the legal parent or guardian possession of that child.

Runaway - An unemancipated juvenile who has left the home environment without a parent's or legal guardian's permission. (Classified as non-suspicious for statistical purposes.)

Suspicious - A person who is missing with insufficient information to enable placing the record in any other probable category.

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Responsibilities of the Missing Children Project

LISTS

The Project compiles and distributes lists of missing children from reports submitted by local law enforcement agencies. The reports are released to school districts and to any other entity or person the Project determines may be instrumental in the identification and recovery of missing children.

STATISTICS

Consistent with statute, the Project maintains and distributes statistics on missing children which include:

- The number of missing children reported.
- The number of missing children cases resolved.
- The approximate physical location at which each child was last seen.
- The time of day each child was last seen.
- The age, gender, and physical description of each child reported missing.
- The activity the child was engaged in at the time last seen.
- The number of reported sightings of missing children.
- The Project documents the circumstances of recovery of missing children. These include a breakdown by age, race, and sex in cases resolved by: recovery by a law enforcement agency, recovery by an agency other than law enforcement, voluntarily returned, deceased, and circumstances unknown. These were summarized for the first time in the 1991 Annual Report to give a clearer picture of what is being done to resolve missing children cases in Colorado.

MONITORING

The Project reviews each missing child report to the Colorado Crime Information Center (CCIC) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) for validity, completeness and accuracy and insures the originating agency makes any necessary corrections or additions.

When a child has been missing for thirty days, the Project must attempt to obtain the child's dental records and attach them to the NCIC missing person report.

The Project sends lists of children missing from Colorado to each Colorado school district for comparison with their enrollment records to identify missing children in their schools. If a district chooses, it may submit enrollment lists to the Project for comparison with NCIC records to locate children missing from all states. When a match is verified, the Project notifies the appropriate authorities to facilitate the return of the missing child.

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Activities as a State Clearinghouse

Develop and present specialized training programs to criminal justice and youth service professionals.

Provide information regarding cases originating in Colorado to the NCMEC for inclusion in the national directory of missing and abducted children.

Provide and ensure follow-up on all missing children cases originating in other states but linked to Colorado in some way.

Provide information to out-of-state agencies concerning applicable Colorado State laws, relevant agency interrelationships, and recovery procedures.

Help reunite missing children with their lawful parent or guardian by establishing cooperative mechanisms with other state clearinghouses.

Act as a clearinghouse for photographs of missing children and cooperate with those who wish to publicize these photographs.

Assist in the preparation of missing children bulletins and their distribution to law enforcement agencies and school districts.

Counsel citizens and business groups on how they may respond to the plight of missing children.

Attempt to locate abductors by completing nationwide automated record and file searches and interacting with other organizations, agencies, or groups that may be instrumental in locating missing children.

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Services Provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Sponsor special programs for victim children and their parents or guardians. Such programs include the ADVO's "America's Looking for Its Missing Children" program which distributes over 16 billion photographs of missing children each year to over 53 million households. This program provides a much broader distribution of missing children bulletins than any single state Clearinghouse and has been directly responsible for reuniting 468 children with their families.

Project ALERT (America's Law Enforcement Retiree Team) was implemented to utilize the expertise and experience of retired law enforcement officers for the benefit of law enforcement agencies needing assistance with all categories of missing and exploited children cases. The assistance provided by these highly specialized volunteers includes, but is not limited to: case assistance, consultation, speaking engagements, and general administrative support to police agencies. All ALERT volunteers must have had extensive experience in the investigation of similar cases and must complete a one week training program developed by the NCMEC after which they are considered for certification. Currently the ALERT program consists of 69 certified volunteers nationwide. Upon request, a volunteer will be provided and any travel expenses paid by the NCMEC. The requesting agency is asked only to provide essential provisions (desk, telephone, etc.) and on-site transportation.

The NCMEC provides technical services to all law enforcement agencies in the search for missing children. The most instrumental has been computerized age enhancement. Through a donation, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has been able to set up a Video Imaging Laboratory. With this equipment, the NCMEC is able to distribute age enhanced pictures of missing children to law enforcement agencies and the general public more quickly, generating an earlier response, and improving the odds of finding the child. These services have also been extended to include face reconstruction of unidentified deceased persons, identification of children from confiscated child pornography, and the training of forensic artists using comparable equipment. Previously, artists had been able to create aged likenesses by hand using the pictures on file. However, it could take up to 80 hours to create a picture manually and is very expensive. With the electronic photography equipment, age-enhanced pictures can be produced in less than 5 hours.

In 1992, a grant from the Justice Department enabled the NCMEC to establish a national computerized information network utilizing various programs to distribute data on missing children. One program is a CompuServe forum which allows the clearinghouses to exchange information on missing children cases and participate in on-line discussions. Much of this information is now available to the general public through CompuServe in a forum called "*Go Missing*". Citizens can view posters, download publications and post messages. CompuServe's Internet Division has expanded global efforts by creating a web page that can bring images of missing children to millions of Internet users at:

www.missingkids.org

Mapinfo's Desktop Mapping Software allows the NCMEC to plot cases and sightings of missing children, establish profiles, link related cases, and pinpoint patterns. This information is compiled from both the missing children reports received from the Clearinghouses and from hot-line calls.

Training and technical assistance are provided to criminal justice and youth service professionals in both missing children issues and youth exploitation. Training and consultation are also provided to health care professionals in the prevention of infant abductions and the recovery of missing infants.

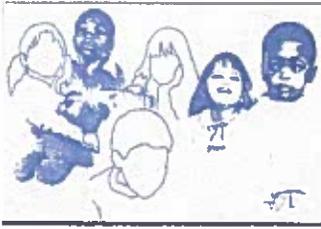
Transportation and lodging are provided for custodial parents who cannot afford such expenses to recover their missing child(ren). Through a voluntary effort on the part of hotel managers and coordinated by the

NCMEC, Quality International will provide up to three nights lodging to a custodial parent and their child(ren). The "Let's Find Them" program designed by Greyhound/Trailways, provides transportation for a custodial parent to recover their missing child(ren). American Airlines also provides transportation but only in emergency situations when a child has been abducted by a stranger, or is believed to be endangered. Parents who wish to use these services must do so through the NCMEC.

After identifying pending legislation relating to missing and exploited children the NCMEC not only follows it through the legislative process, but keeps all clearinghouses apprised of its status. Handbooks for use by parents, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and federal, State, or local officials who deal with missing and exploited children are published and distributed in either hard copy or through the CompuServe Forum, "Go Missing". The handbooks available are: *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*; *Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis*; *Children Traumatized in Sex Rings*; *Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation*; *Investigator's Guide to Missing Child Cases*; *Nonprofit Service Provider's Handbook*; *Parental Kidnapping*; *Selected State Legislation*; and *Youth At Risk*. The following brochures are also available and come in various languages: *Child Protection*; *For Camp Counselors*; *For Hospital Professionals*; *KIDS AND COMPANY: Together for Safety*; *My 8 Rules for Safety*; and a series called "Just in Case" which includes: *You Are Considering Highroad*; *You Are Considering Family Separation*; *You Are Dealing With the Loss of a Child*; *You Need a Babysitter*; *Your Child is a Runaway*; *Your Child is Missing*; *Your Child is Testifying in Court*; *Your Child is the Victim of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation*.

A twenty-four hour international hot-line to report information and request assistance concerning missing and exploited children is managed by the NCMEC and made available in the United States, Canada and Mexico to help ensure case follow up by the proper authorities. Also administered by the NCMEC is the National Child Pornography Tipline and the Alzheimer's Association Safe Return Hot-line.

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Special Resources

VALE GRANT

The Colorado General Assembly enacted House Bill 1264 in 1985 to establish the Assistance to Victims and Witnesses to Crime and Aid to Law Enforcement Act. The Act mandates a surcharge on fines imposed for felonies, misdemeanors and class 1 and 2 traffic offenses. A percentage of the monies collected is dispersed to the local Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (VALE) boards to be awarded to agencies for projects and services. The Project has been fortunate to receive funding from the State VALE Board since 1990 which has enabled the Project staff to be increased by one full-time employee.

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Contributing Support

TRANSPORTATION

Greyhound/Trailways offers a program for runaways who wish to return home. A law enforcement officer or officer of the court must escort the child to a local bus station and confirm a runaway report exists for the child and that a parent or guardian has been contacted. The bus company will then provide a one-way ticket for the child's return home.

NON-PROFIT ASSISTANCE

The Vector Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to investigate, locate, and recover missing children in Colorado. The organization also educates children on how to stay safe and to raise public awareness of the problem of missing children.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores nationwide have taken leadership roles in the search for our missing children. After an attempted abduction in 1994 more than 2,000 Wal-Mart stores nationwide implemented a new security policy named in tribute to Adam Walsh. When a CODE-ADAM is announced, store personnel stop job responsibilities to look for the lost child, this includes monitoring all of the store exits to ensure that the child does not leave the store.

Community involvement is very important in the recovery of missing children; public awareness and education can also lead to the prevention of this problem. Understanding this necessity the retail chain launched a photo display program which about 2,000 stores nationwide participate in. Wal-Mart offers exposure of missing children pictures, which has resulted in 3 documented cases of children being returned home within the first few months of the programs existence.

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Facts of Interest 1998

The total number of children reported missing in 1998 is almost equal to the population of Canon City, Colorado.

An average of 52 children are reported missing every 24 hours in Colorado.

In 1998 97% of the children reported missing in Colorado were classified as non-suspicious cases or runaways.

Approximately 11% of the children reported missing were females under the age of 14.

Approximately 8% of the children reported missing were males under the age of 14.

Approximately 49% of the children reported missing were females 14 years of age and over.

Approximately 32% of the children reported missing were males 14 years of age and over.

In comparison to all other days of the week, more children were reported missing on Friday.

In comparison to all other months, more children were reported missing in September.

In comparison to all other months more cases were resolved during the month of September.

The number of stranger abductions reported in 1998 (39) decreased by 3 cases from 1997.

The number of non-custodial family abductions reported in 1998 decreased by 4 cases from 1997.

Information in this report was provided to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) by local law enforcement agencies using the CCIC automated information system. Each report filed with the local agency is entered into the CCIC computer as a separate case. The numbers reflect cases as opposed to actual missing children; i.e., some children may have been reported missing, recovered and subsequently missing once more. Also, because this data is based only on reports, the Project has no way of identifying those children who have not been reported to local authorities by parents, legal guardians, or subsequently by law enforcement to the CBI.

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Special Thanks !!

A special thanks to the following who made a contribution to the Missing Children Project in 1998.

State VALE

Colorado Crime Prevention Association

Kim Christianson

About Time Awards

Bank of Louisville

The Colorado Rockies Baseball Club

FAO Schwartz

Butterfly Pavilion

Ascent Entertainment

Park Meadows Mall

The Denver Broncos Football Club

SouthShore Water Park

Arapahoe Community College Internship Program

"The Catfish" Band

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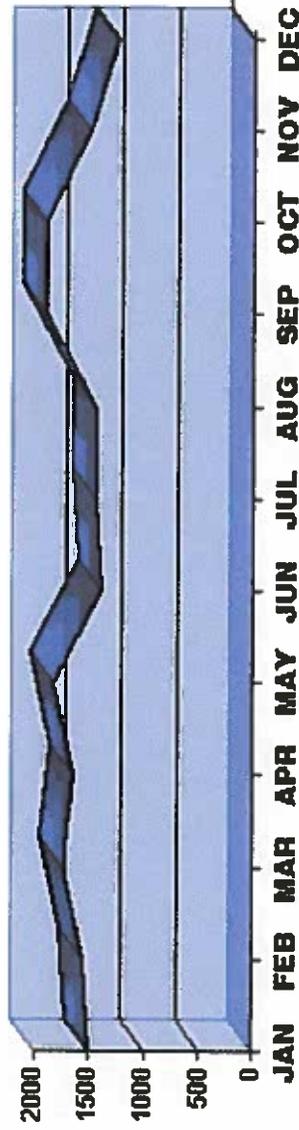
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Missing Children Reports Received and Reviewed

An average of 1,588 missing children reports were taken by Colorado law enforcement agencies each month. The most significant increase between months occurred in September, with an increase of 466 reports.



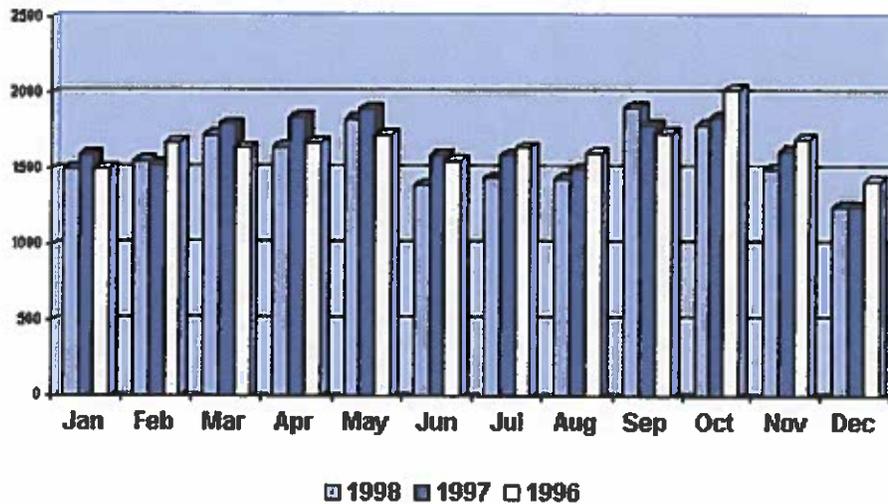
Month	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Number of Reports	1509	1558	1732	1652	1834	1399	1448	1444	1910	1901	1511	1257	19,055

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Missing Children Entries

There was an increase of 337 missing children records from 1995 to 1996 and a slight decrease of 33 records from 1996 to 1997. For the first time since 1990 there was a significant decrease in missing children records from 1997 to 1998 of 862 records.



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Circumstances of Missing Children

Statistics indicate that of all the reports received, 96.7 percent were considered non-suspicious. This classification typically signifies children who have either run away from their residence or have been taken by a family member but are not considered to be a victim of a non-custodial abduction. Only .2 percent were categorized as children who were lost. Stranger abductions increased by 3 reports for a total of .2 percent, and .4 percent were non-custodial family abductions. A suspicious circumstance is a situation in which it is not believed that the child left by his/her own accord, but there is no evidence to prove there was an abduction. Of the reported cases, 2.5 percent were classified as suspicious.

AGE	NON-SUSPICIOUS	LOST	KIDNAPPED	FAMILY ABDUCTION	SUSPICIOUS	TOTALS
ONE	65	0	2	11	15	93
TWO	5	1	6	7	4	23
THREE	15	0	1	10	2	28
FOUR	12	1	0	2	2	17
FIVE	15	1	0	5	0	21
SIX	12	0	0	4	2	18
SEVEN	13	2	0	9	4	28
EIGHT	24	0	0	0	9	33
NINE	43	0	0	3	9	55
TEN	68	1	0	2	7	78
ELEVEN	226	1	2	2	4	235
TWELVE	819	3	4	3	28	857
THIRTEEN	2034	3	3	1	46	2087
FOURTEEN	3745	7	7	4	78	3841
FIFTEEN	4608	10	6	5	100	4729
SIXTEEN	4380	7	6	1	92	4486
SEVENTEEN	2346	7	2	1	70	2426
TOTAL	18430	44	39	70	472	19055

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Activity Report

Most children, 79 percent, were reported to have been last seen inside their residence. A residence can be a family home, non-profit residential group home, foster home or residential treatment facility.

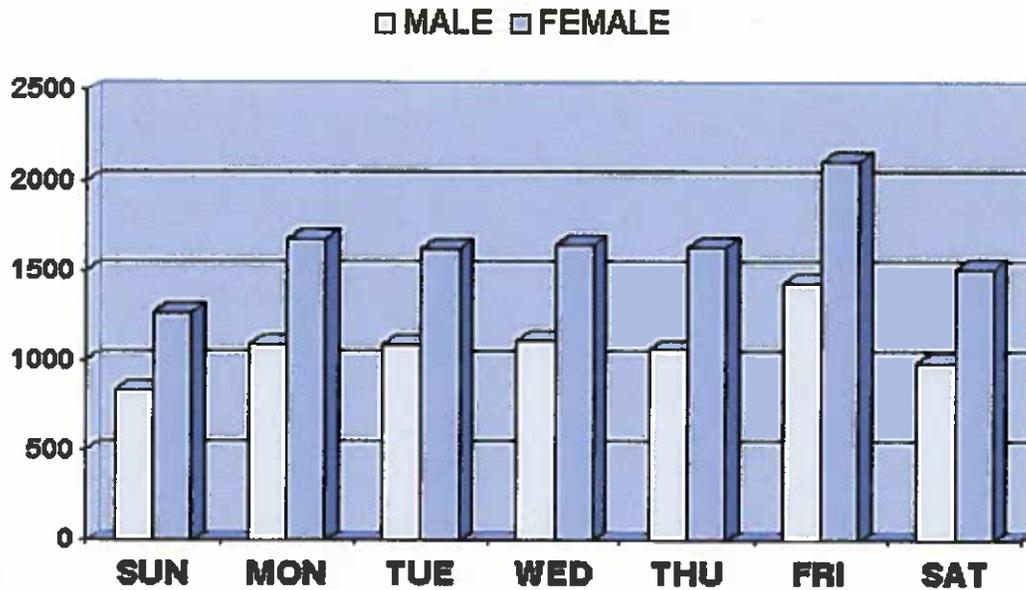
ACTIVITY	MALES	FEMALES
AT RESIDENCE INSIDE	5975	9042
AT RESIDENCE OUTSIDE	187	261
AT FRIEND/RELATIVE INSIDE	79	183
AT FRIEND/RELATIVE OUTSIDE	46	72
PUBLIC PLACE INSIDE	98	93
PUBLIC PLACE OUTSIDE	193	304
INSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING	86	188
OUTSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING	127	229
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	46	74
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES	125	204
TRAVELING TO/FROM ON FOOT	114	152
TRAVELING TO/FROM IN VEHICLE	70	97
TRAVELING BY BICYCLE	7	0
IN CUSTODY OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION	175	158
LOCAL AREA TRIP	6	5
VACATION	20	12
UNKNOWN	256	371
TOTAL	7,610	11,445

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Day Count of Missing Children

Friday is the day that children are most often reported to have been last seen with 18.5 percent: 1,429 males and 2,105 females. Sunday is the day that children are least often reported missing with only 11 percent: 830 males and 1,270 females. The largest disparity between the number of reports of males and females occurs on Friday with 676 more females than males being reported missing.



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Age, Race and Sex of Missing Children

More white females between the ages of thirteen and sixteen were reported missing than any other age, gender and race, with 44 percent. Subsequently, white males between the ages of thirteen and sixteen constitute 27 percent of the reported missing children.

	WHITE	BLACK	NATIVE AMERICAN	ASIAN	UNKNOWN	TOTALS
ONE YEAR OLD						
Males	36	7	0	0	2	45
Females	35	10	0	2	0	47
TWO YEARS OLD						
Males	4	3	0	0	0	7
Females	14	2	0	0	0	16
THREE YEARS OLD						
Males	13	2	1	0	0	16
Females	9	1	0	0	2	12
FOUR YEARS OLD						
Males	10	0	0	1	0	11
Females	8	2	0	0	0	10
FIVE YEARS OLD						
Males	11	2	0	0	0	13
Females	3	2	0	0	0	5
SIX YEARS OLD						
Males	8	1	0	1	0	10
Females	7	1	0	0	0	8
SEVEN YEARS OLD						
Males	11	3	0	0	0	14
Females	12	1	0	0	1	14
EIGHT YEARS OLD						
Males	14	2	0	0	0	16
Females	14	2	1	0	0	17
NINE YEARS OLD						
Males	43	1	0	1	0	45
Females	8	2	0	0	0	10

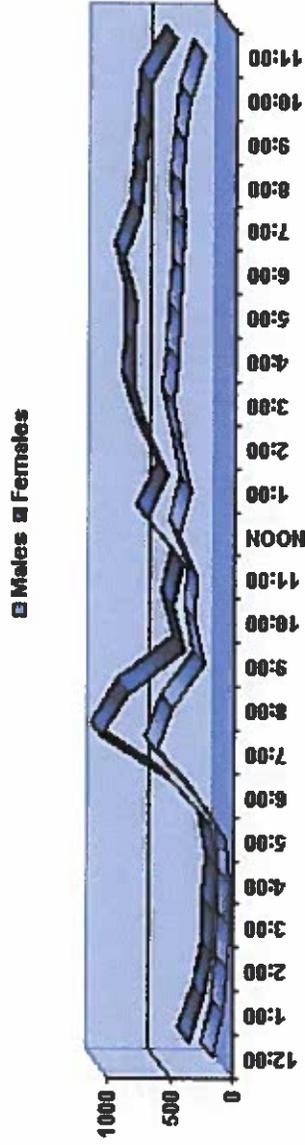
TEN YEARS OLD						
Males	52	7	0	0	0	59
Females	18	0	1	0	0	19
ELEVEN YEARS OLD						
Males	101	20	0	2	1	124
Females	94	15	0	0	2	111
TWELVE YEARS OLD						
Males	311	45	1	1	1	359
Females	447	41	2	3	5	498
THIRTEEN YEARS OLD						
Males	616	79	6	13	8	722
Females	1219	107	8	18	13	1365
FOURTEEN YEARS OLD						
Males	1186	96	9	26	16	1333
Females	2299	136	13	36	24	2508
FIFTEEN YEARS OLD						
Males	1593	132	10	23	28	1786
Females	2638	212	25	49	19	2941
SIXTEEN YEARS OLD						
Males	1712	159	18	28	22	1939
Females	2288	178	13	45	22	2546
SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD						
Males	994	81	4	26	6	1111
Females	1165	87	10	38	16	1316
TOTALS	16993	1439	122	313	188	19,055

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Time Last Seen Count

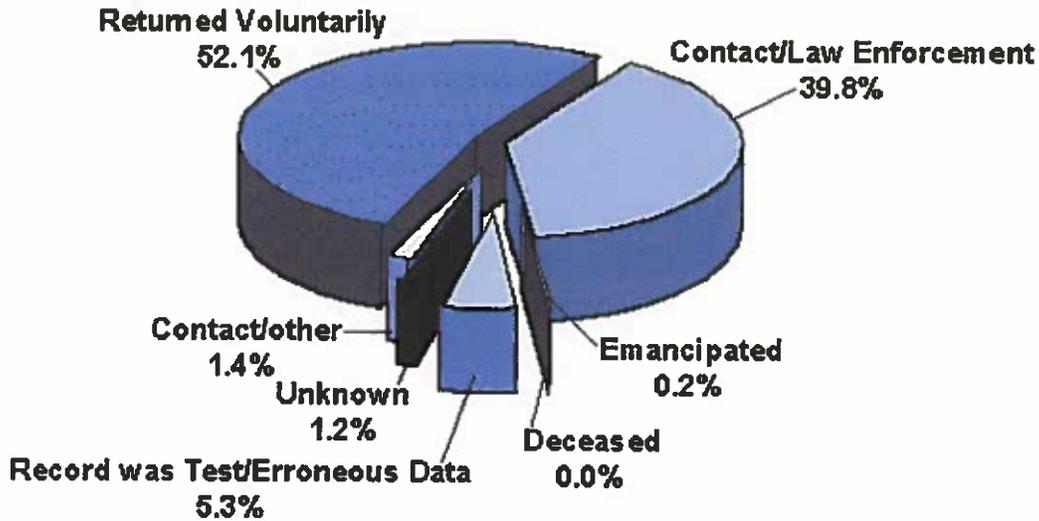
Reports indicate 7:00 a.m. to be the most prevalent time of the day children were last seen with 1,597 reports, accounting for 8 percent of all reports. 6:00 p.m. is the time of day when the most significant difference between genders exists with 376 more females missing than males.





Circumstance of Recovery

Of the cases closed in 1998, 52 percent were resolved when either the child returned or was returned voluntarily. Law enforcement contact was responsible for closing another 40 percent or 7,364 cases.



	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTALS
RETURNED VOLUNTARILY													
Females	484	521	534	497	520	431	393	462	540	525	452	457	5816
Males	298	303	340	317	367	300	269	313	397	343	311	260	3818
CONTACT WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT													
Females	345	367	403	380	405	302	369	316	436	421	356	275	4375
Males	250	229	266	297	267	238	235	216	258	300	235	198	2989
CONTACTED BY OTHER THAN LAW ENFORCEMENT													
Females	11	13	10	8	16	10	7	24	11	22	8	21	161
Males	15	7	10	3	11	9	4	9	4	10	0	11	93
UNKNOWN													
Females	6	15	17	6	8	8	3	10	11	15	10	15	124
Males	4	2	10	3	7	12	9	12	11	12	4	6	92
RECORD WAS TEST OR HAD ERRONEOUS DATA													
Females	45	40	54	41	50	38	51	38	58	47	46	42	550
Male	39	29	34	47	44	34	31	28	45	36	36	25	428
DECEASED													
Females	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Males	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	6

EMANCIPATED													
Females	2	1	1	0	1	2	2	4	0	1	0	7	21
Males	0	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	1	2	0	2	20
TOTALS	1500	1528	1682	1603	1698	1385	1377	1435	1772	1734	1458	1321	18,493

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