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Global Missing Children's Network

Building a global community to help find missing children

www.globalmissingkids.org

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Everyday, all around the world, children go missing.

The Issue

Every day, all around the world, children go missing. They may be runaways or missing for unknown reasons, victims of family or non-family abductions, or they may simply be lost or missing with a “benign” explanation. While the majority of children who are reported missing return on their own after a short period of time, the longer a child is missing, the more vulnerable he or she becomes. The threat of exposure to high-risk activities such as substance misuse/abuse, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, prostitution, and even the risk of death, increases significantly the longer a child is missing.

The issue of missing and abducted children is complex and multi-faceted. It also is a global issue lacking a global response: currently, there is no harmonized, international strategy aimed at adequately addressing missing children and child abduction. National strategies, when they do exist, vary from country to country. While international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, provide a universal definition of how “child” is defined, there is no similar global consensus on how to define “missing child” or on how to investigate cases involving missing/abducted children. This, in turn, makes it difficult to know the full extent of the problem and to determine how best to protect children from going missing/being abducted.

The Response

Through our Global Missing Children’s Network (GMCN), the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) hopes to change the way the international community responds when a child goes missing or is abducted. Currently, the GMCN is made up of 29 countries across 5 continents. GMCN members are law enforcement (police) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on missing children issues, including prevention, investigation and recovery.

By joining the GMCN, members become a part of a global solution to the issues of missing and abducted children. The GMCN has one goal: to unite and mobilize the global community to help find missing children. To do this, the GMCN coordinates and builds global awareness of the issues; shares best practices, tips and data to support prevention efforts; and builds a community of people working together to change the way the world responds when a child goes missing. As a GMCN member, you will work with other members to help raise awareness among local, regional and global communities on the issue of missing children.



Advantages of Membership

As a GMCN member you will work with other members to help raise awareness among local, regional and global communities on the issue of missing children. Through the GMCN website, GMCN member efforts, programs, and projects are publicized to help encourage a global response to the issue.

GMCN members also have access to the following:

- Multi-lingual missing children platform GMCNginer™ featuring photographs of and information about missing children
- Country-specific, customizable, issue-specific website
- Technology that allows geo-targeted online distribution of missing children posters
- Facial recognition software to generate leads of the possible whereabouts of missing child and their companion
- Data, statistics, research trends, and best practices on missing children
- A network of international child protection experts and professionals
- Assistance with implementing laws and policies
- Regular online issue specific webinars
- Training programs



Membership Requirements

To become a GMCN member, you must either be **law enforcement agency or an NGO** dedicated to working in-country on missing children issues. If you are an NGO interested in becoming a GMCN member, you must be able to show how your organization is collaborating with law enforcement or other key stakeholders in the field of child protection. This can be demonstrated through a written agreement or letter of support/reference.

As a member, you are not obligated to use the database technology available through the GMCN. However, if you choose to use the GMCN technology, you need to have the following technological resources available:

- Computer with an operation system no older than 2010
- 2 GB hard drive with 256 MB of memory
- Scanner and printer
- High speed Internet access

To learn more about the GMCN and how to become a GMCN member, please contact Caroline Humer, Director, Global Missing Children’s Center by email at chumer@ICMEC.org or by calling +1 703 838 8377.