

PARENTS! BEWARE, AND BE AWARE!

In case your child goes missing . . . Fill out the form (one per child) and keep in a safe place.

Checklist: What You Should Do When Your Child (or Anyone) Is First Missing

The first 48 hours following the disappearance of a child are the most critical in terms of finding and returning that child safely home -- but they also can be the most troublesome and chaotic. Use this checklist to help you increase the chances of recovering your child. All of the actions steps described here are covered in greater detail later in the guide to help you gain a better understanding of what you are doing and why. The following list is not intended to be followed step-by-step. It is intended as a guide in making suggestions to assist parents in recovering their child.

The First 24 Hours

- Immediately report your child as missing to your local law enforcement agency. Ask investigators to enter your child into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing persons File. There is no waiting period for entry into NCIC for children under 18. Different rules may apply for adults.

Sonoma Police Department

Emergency: 9-1-1

24-hr dispatch number: 707-996-3601

Business phone number: 707-996-3602

Sonoma County Sheriffs Department

Emergency: 9-1-1

24-hr dispatch number: 707-565-2121

Business phone number: 707 565-2650

Call the Polly Klaas foundation immediately after contacting the Police Department or the Sheriff's Office.

Polly Klaas Foundation:

1-800-587-4357 persons available 24-hrs a day.

Business Office: 707-769-1334

Web Site: www.pollyKlaas.org

- Limit access to your home until law enforcement arrives and has collected possible evidence. Do not touch or remove anything from your child's room or from your home. Remember that clothing, sheets, personal items, computers, and even trash may hold clues to the whereabouts of your child.
- Ask for the name and telephone number of the law enforcement investigator assigned to your case. Ask for the case number.
- Give law enforcement investigators all the facts and circumstances related to the disappearance of your child, including what efforts have already been made to search for your child.
- Write a detailed description of the clothing worn by your child and the personal items he or she had at the time of the disappearance. Include in your description any personal identification marks, such as birthmarks, scars, tattoos, or mannerisms that may help in finding your child. If possible, find a picture of your child that shows these identification marks and give it to law enforcement.
- Make a list of friends, acquaintances, and anyone else who might have information or clues about your child's whereabouts. Include telephone numbers and addresses, if possible. Tell your law enforcement investigator about anyone who moved in or out of the neighborhood within the past year, anyone whose interest in or involvement with the family changed in recent months, and anyone who appeared to be overly interested in your child.
- Find recent photographs of your child in both black and white and color. Make copies of these pictures for your law enforcement agency, the media, your State missing children's clearinghouse, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), and other nonprofit organizations. The Polly Klaas foundation will contact other agencies that can and will help find your missing child. The foundation knows who to call and when to call them. The Polly Klaas foundation is local and has many years experience in helping to find missing children.
- Ask your law enforcement agency to organize a search for your child. Ask them about using tracking or trailing dogs (preferably bloodhounds) in the search effort. Law enforcement knows when to search and the Polly Klaas foundation will help with that as well. An organized search is not always

necessary. However it does not hurt to ask when and if one will be conducted.

- Ask your law enforcement agency for help in contacting the media. And for help adding call forwarding to all of your phones. If you do not have a cell phone try getting a pager so you can be reached 24- hours a day.
- Designate one person to answer your telephone. Keep a notebook or pad of paper by the telephone so this person can jot down names, telephone numbers, dates and times of calls, and other information relating to each call.
- Keep a notebook or pad of paper with you at all times to write down your thoughts or questions and record important information, such as names, dates, or telephone numbers. Report any and all relevant information to the law enforcement agencies and the Polly Klaas foundation. This will assist them in locating your child.
- Take good care of yourself and your family, because your child needs you to be strong. As hard as it may be, force yourself to get rest, eat nourishing food, and talk to someone about your tumultuous feelings.
- Expand your list of friends, acquaintances, extended family members, yard workers, delivery persons, and anyone who may have seen your child during or following the abduction.
- Look at personal calendars, community events calendars, and newspapers to see if there are any clues as to what was in the vicinity and might be of interest to your child. Law enforcement looks at this as well. Children are curious and may have been attracted by an event or a family function that you were not aware of.
- Expect that you will be asked to take a polygraph test, which is standard procedure.
- Report all extortion attempts to law enforcement.
- Make a list of things that volunteers can do for you and your family.