

# Colorado Bureau of Investigation

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## Introduction

**E**ach 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.

**D**uring 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.

**T**he 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.



## 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.



# 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.



## 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.



## Contributing Support

### **NCMEC**

The [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) serves as a focal point in providing assistance to parents, children, law enforcement, schools, and the community in recovering missing children and raising public awareness about ways to help prevent child abduction, molestation, and sexual exploitation. NCMEC has worked on more than 73,000 cases of missing and exploited children, helped recover more than 48,000 children, and raised its recovery rate from 60 percent in the 1980s to 91 percent today, thereby gaining national and international recognition as "the" resource for missing and exploited children.

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 Missing Children Task Force](#) a division of 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.



## Facts of Interest - 2008

An average of 39 children are reported missing every 24 hours in Colorado.

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 April.

Most children are reported to have been missing from inside their residence. This may include a family home, non-profit residential group home, foster home or residential treatment facility.

Most reported missing children are between 15 and 16 years old. There are more females reported missing than males.

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 Unit 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.



## Missing Children Reports Received and Reviewed 2008

MONTH	NUMBER OF REPORTS
JANUARY	1,108
FEBRUARY	1,175
MARCH	1,185
APRIL	1,294
MAY	1,247
JUNE	1,128
JULY	1,114
AUGUST	1,040
SEPTEMBER	1,263
OCTOBER	1,252
NOVEMBER	1,125
DECEMBER	1,002
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,933</b>

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## Missing Children Entries

YEAR	MISSING CHILDREN REPORTS	INCREASE OR DECREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
2008	13,933	-398
2007	14,331	+1
2006	14,330	-96
2005	14,426	-864
2004	15,290	+ 140
2003	15,150	-60
2002	15,210	-99
2001	15,309	-1,372
2000	16,681	-261
1999	16,942	- 1,551
1998	18,493	- 1,424
1997	19,917	- 33
1996	19,950	+ 337
1995	19,613	- 30
1994	19,643	+ 1,576
1993	18,067	+ 810
1992	17,257	+ 1,513
1991	15,744	- 433
1990	16,177	



## Circumstances of Missing Children - 2008

Statistics indicate the believed circumstance at the time the child was reported missing.

**Non-Suspicious:** No unusual circumstances

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

**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.

**Family:** 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.

**Suspicious Circumstances:** A person who is missing with insufficient information to enable placing the record in any other probable category

AGE	NON-SUSPICIOUS	LOST	KIDNAPPED	FAMILY ABDUCTION	SUSPICIOUS	UNKNOWN	TOTALS
ONE	36	0	1	1	16	0	54
TWO	3	0	0	1	5	0	9
THREE	7	0	2	1	3	0	13
FOUR	10	0	0	3	3	0	16
FIVE	6	1	0	3	5	0	15
SIX	7	0	0	2	5	0	14
SEVEN	12	2	2	2	4	0	22
EIGHT	9	0	3	1	5	0	18
NINE	24	0	1	2	9	0	36
TEN	35	1	4	0	4	10	54
ELEVEN	91	0	0	2	3	21	117
TWELVE	359	0	0	0	10	78	447
THIRTEEN	889	2	1	5	11	214	1,122
FOURTEEN	1,890	1	1	5	43	416	2,356
FIFTEEN	2,805	0	1	1	83	831	3,721
SIXTEEN	2,722	0	2	2	92	791	3,609
SEVENTEEN	1,725	3	0	0	54	528	2,310
TOTAL	10,630	10	18	31	355	2,889	13,933



# Activity Report 2008

Most children 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	3,230	4,429
AT RESIDENCE OUTSIDE	98	101
AT FRIEND/RELATIVE INSIDE	49	73
AT FRIEND/RELATIVE OUTSIDE	20	35
PUBLIC PLACE INSIDE	38	63
PUBLIC PLACE OUTSIDE	91	138
INSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING	93	159
OUTSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING	84	117
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	10	29
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES	59	77
TRAVELING TO/FROM ON FOOT	75	108
TRAVELING TO/FROM IN VEHICLE	31	47
TRAVELING BY BICYCLE	4	0
IN CUSTODY OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION	196	175
LOCAL AREA TRIP	5	3
VACATION	5	9
UNKNOWN	1,911	2,346
OTHER	15	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,014</b>	<b>7,919</b>



## Day Count of Missing Children 2008

Friday is the day that children are most often reported to have been last seen. Sunday is the day that children are least often reported missing.

DAY	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
SUN	668	863	1,531
MON	874	1,105	1,979
TUES	889	1,138	2,027
WED	854	1,064	1,918
THURS	844	1,119	1,963
FRI	1,144	1,562	2,706
SAT	741	1,068	1,809
TOTAL	6,014	7,919	13,933

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## Age, Race and Sex of Missing Children 2008

	WHITE	BLACK	NATIVE AMERICAN	ASIAN	UNKNOWN	TOTALS
<b>ONE YEAR OLD</b>						
Males	22	5	0	0	0	27
Females	22	5	0	0	0	27
<b>TWO YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	4	0	0	0	0	4
Females	4	1	0	0	0	5
<b>THREE YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	3	0	0	0	0	3
Females	5	5	0	0	0	10
<b>FOUR YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	5	0	0	2	0	7
Females	8	1	0	0	0	9
<b>FIVE YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	6	1	0	0	0	7
Females	5	1	0	2	0	8
<b>SIX YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	4	3	0	1	1	9
Females	5	0	0	0	0	5
<b>SEVEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	6	7	0	0	0	13
Females	8	1	0	0	0	9
<b>EIGHT YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	6	0	0	0	0	6
Females	4	8	0	0	0	12
<b>NINE YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	19	0	1	0	1	21
Females	10	5	0	0	0	15
<b>TEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	24	6	0	0	0	30
Females	22	2	0	0	0	24
<b>ELEVEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	62	12	1	0	0	75
Females	29	11	0	0	2	42
<b>TWELVE YEARS OLD</b>						

Males	171	41	2	1	8	223
Females	194	24	2	2	2	224
<b>THIRTEEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	416	96	6	4	8	530
Females	490	76	9	7	10	592
<b>FOURTEEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	718	125	6	11	29	889
Females	1,209	218	9	21	10	1,467
<b>FIFTEEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	1,225	199	13	13	32	1,482
Females	1,875	270	12	26	56	2,239
<b>SIXTEEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	1,292	252	13	15	41	1,613
Females	1,678	245	22	15	36	1,996
<b>SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD</b>						
Males	901	140	12	8	14	1,075
Females	1,046	142	13	10	24	1,235
<b>TOTALS</b>						
<b>Males</b>	<b>4,884</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>6,014</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>6,614</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>7,919</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>11,498</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>13,933</b>



## Time Last Seen Count 2008

TIME	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
<b>MIDNIGHT</b>	109	198	<b>307</b>
<b>1:00AM</b>	60	111	<b>171</b>
<b>2:00AM</b>	33	69	<b>102</b>
<b>3:00AM</b>	20	49	<b>69</b>
<b>4:00AM</b>	22	34	<b>56</b>
<b>5:00AM</b>	45	53	<b>98</b>
<b>6:00AM</b>	246	308	<b>554</b>
<b>7:00AM</b>	388	645	<b>1,033</b>
<b>8:00AM</b>	478	647	<b>1,125</b>
<b>9:00AM</b>	214	233	<b>447</b>
<b>10:00AM</b>	206	248	<b>454</b>
<b>11:00AM</b>	195	240	<b>435</b>
<b>NOON</b>	364	400	<b>764</b>
<b>1:00PM</b>	250	296	<b>546</b>
<b>2:00PM</b>	273	334	<b>607</b>
<b>3:00PM</b>	393	477	<b>870</b>
<b>4:00PM</b>	411	473	<b>884</b>
<b>5:00PM</b>	350	504	<b>854</b>
<b>6:00PM</b>	383	485	<b>868</b>
<b>7:00PM</b>	390	468	<b>858</b>
<b>8:00PM</b>	358	475	<b>833</b>
<b>9:00PM</b>	330	459	<b>789</b>
<b>10:00PM</b>	267	431	<b>698</b>
<b>11:00PM</b>	229	282	<b>511</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,014</b>	<b>7,919</b>	<b>13,933</b>



## Circumstance of Recovery 2008

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS
<i>Returned voluntarily</i>	3,075	4,167	<b>7,242</b>
<i>Contact with law enforcement</i>	2,285	2,889	<b>5,174</b>
<i>Contacted by other than law enforcement</i>	103	148	<b>251</b>
<i>Deceased</i>	1	0	<b>1</b>
<i>Unknown</i>	56	75	<b>131</b>
<i>Emancipated</i>	14	14	<b>28</b>
<i>Record was test or had erroneous data</i>	425	578	<b>1,003</b>
<i>Total Recovered</i>	<b>5,959</b>	<b>7,871</b>	<b>13,830</b>

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