



Children Missing From Care

Reporting Missing Children to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children®

Case Worker Guide to Reporting Missing Children



How to Report a Child Missing from Care



1-800-THE-LOST®



[CMFC.MissingKids.org](https://www.CMFC.MissingKids.org)

When making a missing child report to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), please be aware that certain information is required for NCMEC to take an effective report. Additional information is requested and helpful to each missing child's case. Please review the below items to help you better prepare for reporting a missing child to NCMEC.

Missing Young Adults (MYA)

Although no longer considered a child under U.S. federal law, NCMEC can assist with cases of missing young adults between the ages of 18 – 20 years old and accept a report under two circumstances:

1. From the legal guardian if the young adult remains under the ongoing guardianship of a state or county welfare agency. Policies and state laws concerning the extension of foster care beyond the age of 18 vary from state to state. A few key considerations before making a report to NCMEC are as follows:
 - » Is the youth consenting to be in extended foster care or any other voluntary service the department is able to offer the youth beyond the age of 18? Has the youth come back to foster care after turning 18 and requested services voluntarily? If so, the youth would not qualify for NCMEC resources.
 - » Is there a court order in place specifying legal guardianship of the State to make legal decisions on behalf of the young adult (i.e. due to mental health needs, differing abilities, etc.? If so, the youth would qualify for NCMEC resources and should be reported.
2. NCMEC will also assist with missing young adult cases reported by a law enforcement official.

The following information is essential when reporting a missing child or MYA to NCMEC:

- Caller information, including full contact information Child's full name
- Child's date of birth, gender, height, weight date child went missing
- City and state from where child went missing
- Law enforcement information including agency name, telephone and missing persons police report number
- Case Worker information including name, agency name, relationship to child (guardianship status), full contact information (telephone number(s) and email address). If you are a service provider, provide the legal guardian information, whether it's a bio family member or an assigned case worker from the agency that maintains guardianship over the child.

Other Helpful Information Requested:

Missing Child or MYA

- Alias, Nickname School attended
- Specific missing location
- Group home information (if applicable) Contact information (e.g. last known home address, email address, cell phone)
- Child descriptive information (e.g. hair, eyes, scars, marks, tattoos, clothing, jewelry)
- Child endangerments (e.g. run away before, medical condition, mental health condition, special needs, life threatening condition, on medication, suicidal, self-harm, pregnant, drug/alcohol use, carrying weapon, gang involvement, online enticement/luring)
- Child internet activity – online activity, user names
- Circumstances surrounding missing event

Companion or Other Person with Information

- Name, Alias, Nickname
- Relationship to the child
- DOB, gender
- Descriptive information (e.g. hair, eyes, scars, marks, tattoos, clothing, jewelry)
- Last known information (e.g. address, telephone phone number(s), email, Driver's license)
- Any known warrant information Endangerments (e.g. run away before, medical condition, mental health condition, special needs, life threatening condition, on medication, suicidal, self-harm, pregnant, drug/alcohol use, carrying weapon, gang involvement, online enticement/luring)
- Internet activity – online activity, user names
- Circumstances surrounding missing event

Additional Information

- Is there any concern of exploitation or trafficking of the child?
- Does child have any unexplained items (examples: money, hotel keys, prepaid credit cards, additional phones), access to high cost items (hair or nails done, jewelry or clothing)?
- Does child have a history of sexual or physical abuse, stripping, pornography, or sex trafficking
- Are there any known pimps; older, controlling boyfriends/girlfriends; or gang affiliations?
- Is there any indication that child has traded sex in exchange for place to sleep, drugs, or money, food, something of value, or been traded by anyone? including family members
- Known direction of travel Places they may frequent
- Did they take any belongings with them?

Case Worker Information

- Supervisor contact Information (telephone number(s) and email address)

Law Enforcement Information

- Date/time reported
- Assigned Officer (if known)
- Unit/Area/Precinct
- Email address, fax number

Vehicle Information

- Make, model, year, color, VIN, Tag
- Owner of vehicle



[NCMEC.org/CMFC](https://www.ncmec.org/cmfc)

Scan to view NCMEC resource guides.