



RICHARD CORDRAY
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

April 16, 2009

Dear Ohioan,

On May 25, 1979, a 6-year-old boy from New York named Etan Patz leaves to catch a school bus. After turning around to wave to his mother, he is never seen again. This is every parent's nightmare.

Every year, the U.S. Department of Justice takes time to commemorate the valiant and unselfish acts of the many organizations and individuals who bring our missing children home. On May 25, National Missing Children's Day, we pause to focus our attention on children who have been recovered, as well as the children who are still missing.

This year, May 25 falls on Memorial Day weekend, so Ohio will be commemorating the day on Friday, May 22. We are asking all Ohio schools to participate in helping observe this day. I have included several ideas your school can utilize, or your school may wish to come up with something of their own. We have provided a missing child fact sheet as well as child safety tips you can use to educate your students. All we ask is that you send us copies of any articles, pictures, or information about your event, which will be reported in our annual report.

Our main event this year is *Coins for Kids*. Gage Farmer, a 2nd grader at Madison Rural Elementary School in London, Ohio, came up with this idea. He suggested containers be put in the schools and each child was asked to put one penny (or any designated amount) in the container every day. At the end of the campaign, which would run for approximately two or three weeks, the money should be sent to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to assist its search for missing children. Gage was extremely moved by the fact that there were more than 23,000 children that went missing in Ohio last year. "This makes me feel sad. I would like to help out," he said.

I have attached a few suggestions and we would welcome any additional ideas your school would like to submit. If you have any questions or comments, please call (614) 466-1711. Thank you for your time, and we hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Richard Cordray
Ohio Attorney General

Ideas for National Missing Children's Day

- Coins for Kids –Sign up by emailing Vicki Germann at vicki.germann@ohioattorneygeneral.gov . Determine the dates this project would run. We would like for it to conclude on May 22. You can have a contest for the children to decorate a jar or can, and the winner could receive a small prize. The kids are asked to put a penny (or any designated amount) in the jar each day for the allotted time. Then the donation money is sent directly to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Charles B. Wang International Children's Building, 699 Prince St., Alexandria, Va., 22314-3175.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's (NCMEC) mission is to help prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation; help find missing children; and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and the professionals who serve them. NCMEC was established in 1984 as a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization to provide services nationwide for families and professionals in the prevention of abducted, endangered and sexually exploited children.

- Balloon release – The older children research the missing children in Ohio and each name is put on a card with the date the child went missing. The cards are tied to the balloons and the children release them all at the same time.
- Safety Day – A representative of the Missing Children Clearinghouse, your local Police Department or Fire Department could speak on safety issues.
- A Walk in Remembrance – The children could walk around the school or track after discussing the missing children issues and what they can do to be safe.
- Bubbles of Hope -- have a bubble blowing day to remind the students of Ohio's missing children.
- Take 25- Take 25 minutes to heighten awareness about children's safety issues. You can visit www.take25.org for child safety information.

- ❖ Web sites of interest related to missing children:

- Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse
www.mcc.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
www.missingkids.com
- Association of Missing and Exploited Children Organizations
www.amecoinc.org

KNOW THE RULES...

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

for children

1. Always **CHECK FIRST** with your parents, guardians, or the trusted adult in charge before you go anywhere or do anything. Be sure to **CHECK IN** regularly with your parents, guardians, or a trusted adult when you're not with them.
2. Always **TAKE A FRIEND** with you when playing or going anywhere. It's safer and more fun.
3. Don't be tricked by people who offer you special treats or gifts. Never accept anything from anyone without your parents' or guardians' permission.
4. Stay **SAFER** when you're home alone by keeping the door locked; not opening the door for or talking to anyone who stops by unless the person is a trusted family friend or relative, you feel comfortable being alone with that person, and the visit has been preapproved by your parents or guardians; and never telling anyone who calls that you're home by yourself. Have a neighbor or trusted adult you are able to call if you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused or there's an emergency.
5. Never go into a public restroom by yourself.
6. Never go alone to malls, movies, video arcades, or parks. Take a friend with you, and always **CHECK FIRST** with your parents or guardians to make sure it's okay.
7. Don't panic if you feel lost. Identify the safest place to go or person to ask for help in reuniting you with your parents or guardians. Safe helpers could be a uniformed law-enforcement or security officer, store salesperson with a nametag, person with a nametag who is working at the information booth, or mother with children. Never search for your parents or guardians on your own, and never go with anyone who is trying to reunite you with them.
8. Be careful when you play. Stay away from pools, canals, and other bodies of water unless you are with a trusted adult. Don't play near busy streets or deserted areas, and never take shortcuts unless you have your parents' or guardians' permission.
9. Don't wear clothes or carry items with your name on the outside, and don't be confused just because a person you don't know calls out your name.
10. Don't get into a vehicle or go near a vehicle with anyone in it unless you are with your parents, guardians, or a trusted adult. Never take a ride from anyone without **CHECKING FIRST** with your parents or guardians.
11. Be careful playing or riding your bicycle as it gets dark. Sometimes it is difficult for people driving to see you. Wear reflectors and protective clothing if your parents or guardians say you may play outside after dark.
12. Don't be afraid to say **NO** and **GET AWAY** from any situation making you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused. **TRUST YOUR FEELINGS**, and be sure to **TELL** a trusted adult if anything happens to make you feel this way.

1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678)

www.missingkids.com

OJJDP Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Justice • U.S. Department of Health

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
MISSING &
EXPLOITED
CHILDREN**

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Have a safe and fun summer!

Knowing My Rules for Safety

1. I **CHECK FIRST** with my parents, guardians, or other trusted adults before going anywhere, doing anything, helping anyone, accepting anything, getting into a vehicle, or leaving with anyone.

2. I **TAKE A FRIEND** with me when going places or playing outside.

3. I **TELL** someone **NO** if they try to touch me or do things in ways that make me feel sad, scared, or confused, because it's **OK** for me to stand up for myself.

4. I **TELL** my parents, guardians, or other trusted adults if anything happens to me.

Sometimes there are people who trick or hurt others. No one has the right to do that to you. So use these rules, and remember you are **STRONG**, are **SMART**, and have the right to be **SAFE**. Always

- **CHECK FIRST**
- **TAKE A FRIEND**
- **TELL PEOPLE "NO" WHEN THEY TRY TO CAUSE YOU HARM**
- **TELL AN ADULT YOU TRUST IF ANYTHING HAPPENS**



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