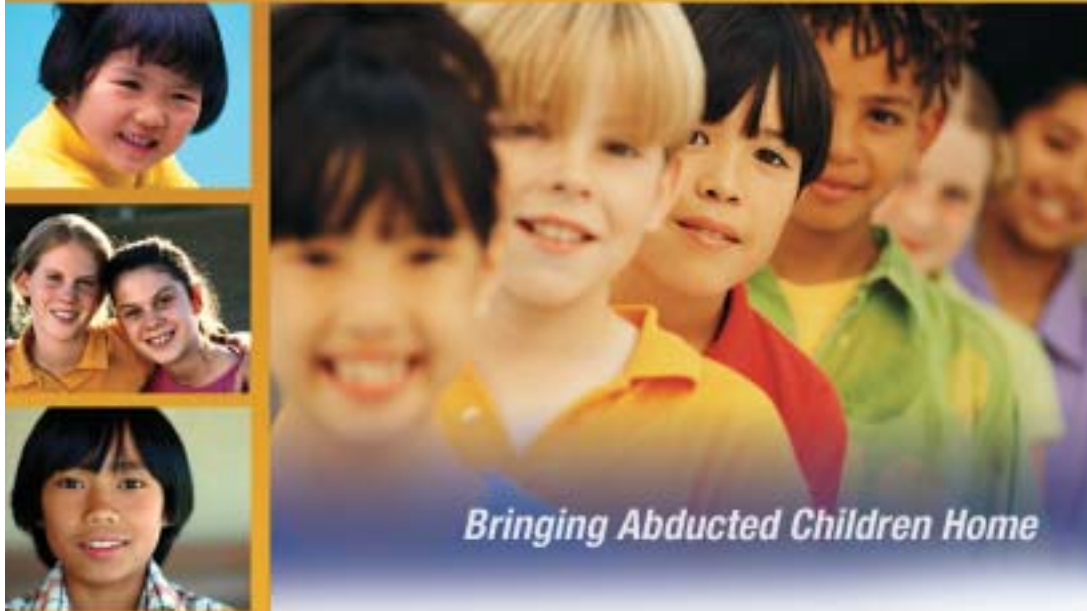


AMBER Alert



Bringing Abducted Children Home

What is AMBER Alert?

AMBER Alert is a voluntary partnership involving law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, and transportation agencies. During an AMBER Alert, an urgent news bulletin is broadcast over the airwaves as well as on highway alert signs to enlist the aid of the public in finding an abducted child and stopping the perpetrator.

AMBER Alert is based on the same concept used to alert the public to a severe weather emergency. During an AMBER Alert, the Emergency Alert System (EAS), formerly called the Emergency Broadcast System, airs a description of an abducted child and suspected abductor. The purpose is to

instantly galvanize the entire community in the search for and safe return of an abducted child.

Why was AMBER Alert created?



AMBER Alert was created in 1996 as a powerful legacy to nine-year-old Amber Hagerman, a bright little girl who was kidnapped while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas. Her brutal murder shocked and outraged the entire community. Residents called radio stations in the Dallas area and suggested they broadcast special alerts over the airwaves so that they could help prevent such incidents in the future.

In response to the community's concern for the safety of local children, the Dallas/Fort Worth Association of Radio Managers teamed up with local law enforcement agencies in northern Texas and developed this innovative early warning system to help find abducted children.

What is the goal of AMBER Alert?

The goal of AMBER Alert is to recover abducted children before they meet physical harm. Statistics show that time itself is the enemy of an abducted child, because most children who are kidnapped and later found murdered die within the first three hours after being taken.

AMBER Alert aims to turn that statistic around. Studies show that when ordinary citizens become the eyes and ears of law enforcement, precious lives can be saved.

If we could have gotten the word out immediately when Morgan disappeared, I'm certain she would be home with me today. With the AMBER Alert plan, time is now on the side of every parent and child.

—Colleen Nick (parent)



**AMBER
ALERT**
America's Missing:
Broadcast Emergency Response

AMBER Alert Saves Lives!

Calhoun, Georgia (January 8, 2003) —A man allegedly murdered three former in-laws and his own 10-month-old daughter, then abducted his two daughters, ages 3 and 4, and his stepdaughter, age 10. He contacted his ex-wife, told her about the killings, and threatened the lives of the girls. An AMBER Alert was issued immediately. A motorist recognized the vehicle from the Alert and contacted police. Authorities arrived quickly at the scene, apprehended the suspect, and safely recovered the three children.

Grants Pass, Oregon (December 1, 2003)—A man loaded his two-year-old daughter into his vehicle, then went back into the house. When he came back, both the vehicle and his daughter were gone. The man contacted authorities and an AMBER Alert was issued. An hour later, a woman spotted the truck and used her mobile phone to dial 911. Police responded immediately to the call and the child was safely recovered.

How does AMBER Alert work?

After law enforcement officials have been notified about the abduction of a child, they must determine if the case meets AMBER Alert's criteria for triggering an Alert.

The U.S. Department of Justice recommends the following criteria for AMBER Alert programs nationwide:

- ◆ Law enforcement officials must have reason to believe that an abduction of a child age 17 or younger has occurred.
- ◆ Law enforcement officials must believe that the abducted child is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death.
- ◆ Enough descriptive information must exist about both the victim and the abductor for an AMBER Alert to assist in the recovery of the child.
- ◆ The child's name and other critical data, including the child abduction (CA) flag, must be entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.

If these criteria are met, Alert information will be put together and faxed to area media outlets, where it will be broadcast to millions of listeners. Radio stations will interrupt their regular programming to announce the Alert, and television and cable stations will run a "crawl" on the screen with a picture of the child and a description of the suspected abductor and vehicle.

Some states are also incorporating the use of electronic highway billboards into their AMBER Alerts. These billboards, typically used to warn drivers about upcoming traffic delays, can alert the public to the plight of an abducted child by displaying pertinent information about the victim, the abductor, and the suspected vehicle that drivers can look for while traveling the roadways.

What should I do in case of an AMBER Alert?

AMBER Alert encourages everyone to be on the lookout for the abducted child and suspect. In the event that you spot a child, adult, or vehicle fitting the AMBER Alert description, call 911 immediately and provide authorities with as much information as possible.

Is the AMBER Alert used for all missing child cases?

AMBER Alerts are issued by a law enforcement agency in cooperation with the media only if the circumstances surrounding a child's disappearance meet local or state AMBER Alert criteria. If a case does not meet the criteria, many other investigative tools will be employed, such as tracking dogs, neighborhood canvasses, evidence collection, and a check of the state sex offender registry. An AMBER Alert is one of the tools in law enforcement's broader child recovery strategy, and even though an AMBER Alert is not issued, the media may be called upon to help with particular cases.

How can I find out more about AMBER Alert in my community?

For more information about the national AMBER Alert plan and to find the name of your state AMBER Alert coordinator, visit the Department of Justice's Web site at www.AMBERALERT.gov.

Note that each state or regional program has its own mechanism for relaying AMBER Alerts to the public. Check with your coordinator to find out more about AMBER Alert in your community.

What can I do in my community to further protect our children?

- ◆ Work with your local law enforcement agency to host a safety seminar at your school, church, community center, civic organization, or neighborhood group.
- ◆ Know who lives in your community: Each state tracks sex offenders. Find out how to know who they are and where they live.

- ◆ Pay more attention to missing children flyers and notices in stores and mail-outs.

- ◆ Keep current information and photos of your own children.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information about the AMBER Alert program, including training, technical assistance, and laws, visit the U.S. Department of Justice Web site at: www.AMBERALERT.gov

To report an emergency situation or to provide information about a missing or exploited child, call 911 to notify your local police, or call
800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)

To report information about child pornography, child molestation, child prostitution, and the online enticement of children, log on to the CyberTipline at: www.cybertipline.com

For more information on missing and exploited children, visit the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) at: www.missingkids.com

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For more information contact: