



Teen Abductions Are Most Common

Written by Lori Cichielo (Missouri CHIP)

No parent wants to believe that the unimaginable could happen to them, though Missourians endured the alarming abduction of 13 year-old Ben Ownby on January 8, 2007, as well as the miraculous outcome of recovering not one, but two missing teenagers - one after five days - the other, Shawn Hornbeck, after four-and-a-half years.

Celebrating this kind of positive outcome has been beyond joyous for everyone directly or indirectly involved. However, it also confirms that we aren't doing enough to bolster the recovery of our missing teens.

Nearly 2,000 children are reported missing or abducted in the United States each day. Contrary to what most people believe, young children *are not* the most common victims of abduction. Reports indicate that **teenagers are the most frequent victims** of both non-family abductions and stereotypical kidnappings - **81% were children 12 or older.**¹ When a child under 12 years old goes missing there, is no second guessing whether or not foul play is the culprit. This is not the case for teens or even tweens (savvy 8 - 12 year-olds) for that matter. Considerations due to independence, rebellion and other age appropriate factors are measured before a teen is actually deemed missing. Time is ticking. When an Amber Alert is finally issued, more time is required to get that teen's vital information out to authorities and the public.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) provided to our MasoniCHIP spokesperson, Dr. David Harte, Forensic Dentist, the counts of active missing children on a single day at one specific time of day. The results are staggering and are provided to illustrate just how susceptible our teens are - girls and boys. **WE URGE YOU TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR TEEN.**

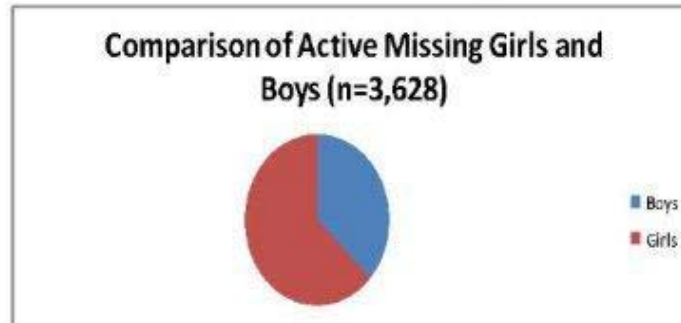
While the specific numbers reported are valid only for the unspecified date and time, the numbers can also be used as relative examples of our daily active case numbers. The NCMEC does not receive all calls when a child goes missing. For that reason, the numbers of children reported missing to us are fewer than the numbers quoted in the national study conducted by the Department of Justice. NCMEC also has slightly different definitions for missing children categories than the department of Justice study.²

¹ The National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMAART).

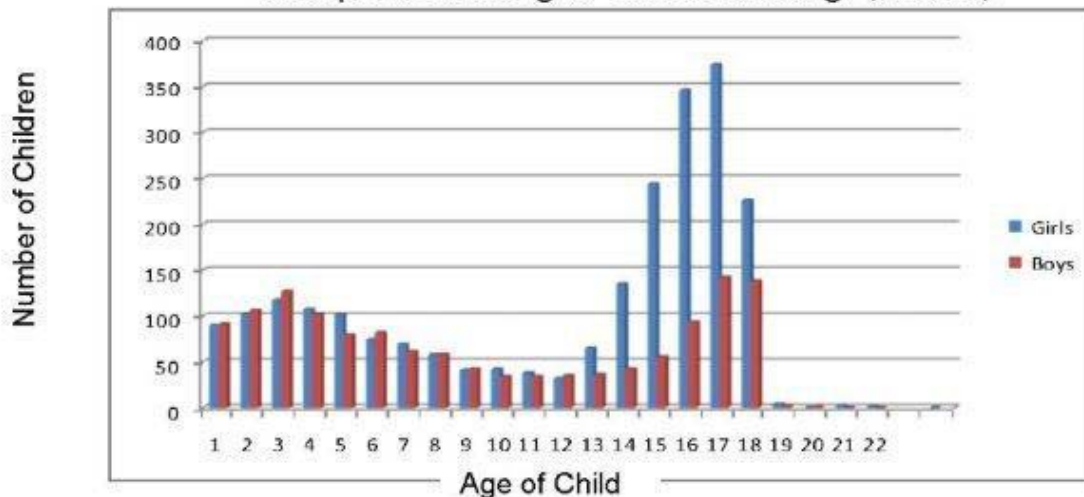
² Information Collected for Dr. David Harte for the National MasoniCHIP Conference.

Active Missing Children—Case Types and Sex of Children (n=3,628)

Case Type	Count of Girls	Percentage	Count of Boys	Percentage
Endangered Runaway	1054	46%	357	26%
Family Abduction	716	32%	713	52%
Lost Injured Missing	334	15%	208	15%
Non Family Abduction	164	7%	82	6%
Number of Children	2268	100%	1360	100%



Comparison of Ages When Missing (n=3,628)



Active missing children in the U.S. Data in the tables were queried from NCMEC database on an unspecified day. Total children whose sex was known totaled 3,628. Provided by Dr. David Harte.