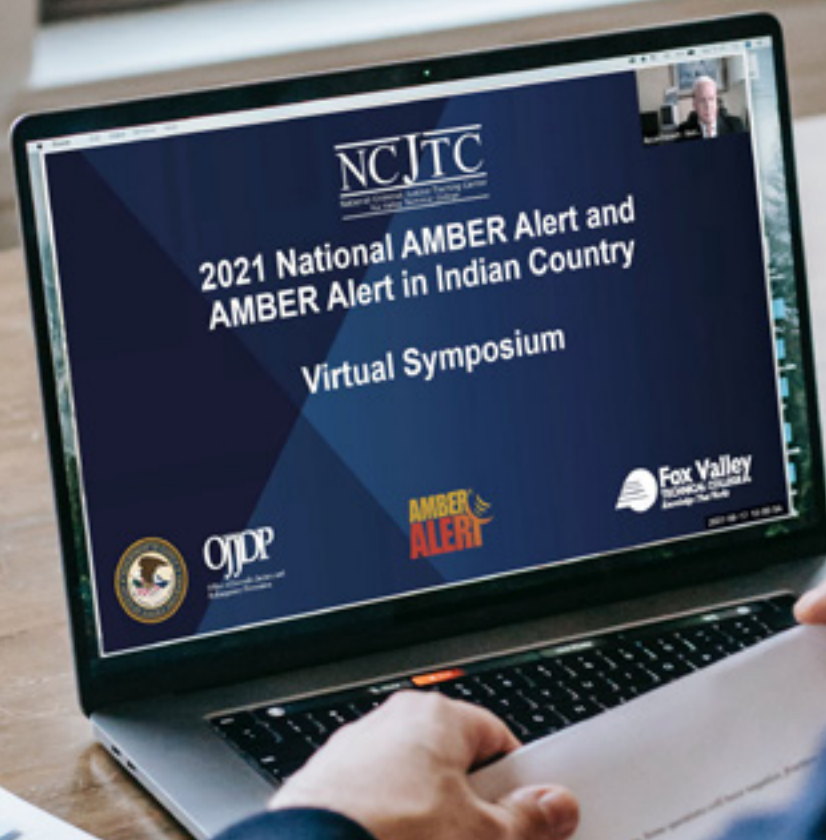


THE AMBER ADVOCATE

2021 NATIONAL AMBER ALERT & AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY SYMPOSIUM



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Your story ideas and pictures are welcome.

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National AMBER Alert and AMBER Alert in Indian Country Virtual Symposium

August 17 - 19, 2021



First combined AMBER Alert and AMBER Alert in Indian Country Symposium unites AMBER Alert Partners across U.S.

Participants collaborate and learn from leaders, experts and family members of abducted children through a live, virtual symposium

Nacole Svendgard's 15-year-old daughter Jessica was excelling in school. She was named first violin in the orchestra and played on the varsity and junior varsity soccer team in Auburn, Washington. Jessica was outgoing, vibrant and lit up the room when she walked in.

Nacole was beyond shocked in 2010 when she came home and found a 5-page letter from Jessica saying she loved her family but was running away and not to worry. The mother of three spoke on the first day of the 2021 National AMBER Alert and AMBER in Indian Country virtual symposium held August 17-19, 2021.

More than 170 participants from 46 states and territories took part in the virtual event to learn, network and identify areas to help strengthen efforts to find missing and abducted children. They included AMBER Alert coordinators,

Missing Persons Clearinghouse Managers, Child Abduction Response Team (CART) leaders and other federal, state and Tribal partners.

Jessica's Story

Nacole learned her daughter was being sex trafficked, raped, beaten and struggling to survive while her pimp was selling her on the online publication Backpage to strangers in Seattle. Nacole reported what happened to law enforcement. She finally got a call from Jessica, but she only said "I can't come home."

"I knew trafficking existed," said Nacole. "I was one of those parents who thought it happened in the Philippines or another third-world country. It didn't happen in my community and it definitely didn't happen to my child."

After 10 days of hunting for their daughter, Jessica approached a police officer and said

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she had run away and wanted to come home. Nacole explained that following her daughter's recovery, rather than a clear after-care plan being in place, law enforcement and the community took a hands-off approach at that point and they assumed the teen was safe because she was now home.

Jessica didn't want to talk to her family about what happened when she was gone. She went back to school, attended church and continued her violin lessons. However, three months later she ran again; lured away after the pimp contacted her on a hidden cellphone.

That's when Nacole began her efforts to learn more about the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and her state's Missing Persons Clearinghouse. She sought resources available to families of sex trafficking victims. In explaining this part of the journey in her daughter's experience, she emphasized the critical importance of those who are involved with endangered, missing and abducted child cases pursuing comprehensive training to learn how to assist victims of exploitation and trafficking, as they rarely say they want help due to

the deception, fear, violence, and trauma bonding by which they are entrapped.

Eventually Jessica came home again and the family began therapy and met with other survivors for support. Jessica and her parents generously and bravely participated in the sex trafficking documentaries "**I Am Jane Doe**" and "**The Long Night.**" Jessica's trafficker and one of the "johns" were convicted and sentenced to prison.

"I was 15. I should have experienced a childhood during my teenage years. I should be going to football games," said Jessica to a network reporter. "Now I'm a proud survivor, a mother, a daughter, a sister. I am all of these things and I want to be known for who I am, and not just what's happened to me."

Jessica and her family became advocates for other sex trafficking victims, helped pass legislation and pursued lawsuits that put an end to Backpage. The family was invited to the White House in April 2018 for the signing of changes to the **Communications Decency Act**.

National Perspective

Chryl Jones, Acting Administrator for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Protection (OJJDP), provided symposium participants with the perspective of the Department of Justice AMBER Alert Program. She noted that more than 1,000 children have been recovered safely because of AMBER Alerts.

"That number represents a lot of smiles that you've returned to the faces of people who couldn't fathom ever smiling again when their child went missing or was abducted," said Jones. "Your job is not easy, but it is a worthwhile one. Thank you for your



Chryl Jones, Acting Administrator, OJJDP

dedication to ensuring the safety and well-being of our nation's children. You are the heroes they deserve."

Janell Rasmussen, the newly appointed AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program Administrator (AATTAP), thanked everyone for participating in the first virtual symposium.

"I know firsthand the passion, hard work and dedication that you all put forward in your work to find missing and abducted children," said Rasmussen. "This work is tireless, it is demanding, it takes a toll on you mentally, physically, and on your heart in ways you never knew possible, but it is also rewarding. You make a true difference in the lives of children, for their families, and for the future of the AMBER Alert program."

Jayme Closs Case Study

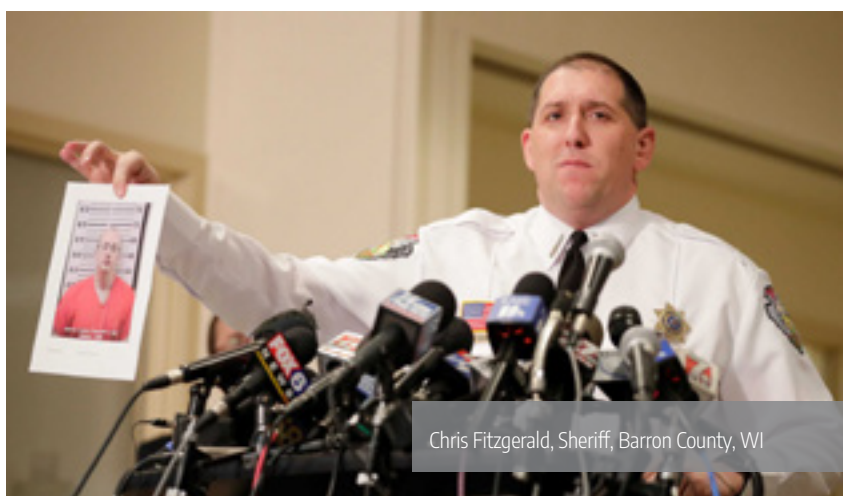
Barron County, Wisconsin, Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald offered a detailed look into the abduction of Jayme Closs on October 5, 2018. The case received national attention when Jake Patterson took the 13-year-old girl after fatally shooting her parents and then keeping her hidden in his home for 88 days until she escaped on January 10, 2019.

Fitzgerald stressed the importance of developing a plan and close relationships with other law enforcement agencies, the media, and community groups - before you face a complicated and high-profile case like this one.

"Because you never know when this day is going to happen," said Fitzgerald. "I never thought in my career I would touch anything like this, but this happened here--and it happens everywhere."

The Sheriff said so many people wanted to volunteer to help at first that he had to learn to say no to protect the investigation and his limited resources. He emphasized how important it was to provide plenty of food for everyone working on the case and to have a photographer to document major milestones and the community response. Amidst the length and complexity of the case, he earnestly shared how rewarding it was to find Jayme alive.

"Jayme is doing great now," said Fitzgerald. "I just think you never give up hope, no matter how negative it is or how frustrated you are."



Chris Fitzgerald, Sheriff, Barron County, WI

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2021 NATIONAL AMBER ALERT & AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY SYMPOSIUM

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Honoring an AMBER Alert Leader

AATTAP Administrator Janell Rasmussen presented a special award to Mark Simpson. Simpson was a detective for the Arlington, Texas, Police Department and the lead investigator in the abduction and murder of nine-year-old Amber Hagerman on January 13, 1996. He helped create

the first AMBER Alert Plan and has been sharing his knowledge on AMBER Alerts and child abduction investigations through AATTAP course curricula, training events and contributions to the development of multiple resources for more than two decades before retiring this year.

"Mark was always willing to help any AMBER Alert coordinator in any way. His work, his genuine kindness, his passion, are just some of the things that make Mark the legend he is with this program. I cannot imagine the AMBER Alert program without Mark Simpson," Rasmussen shared. "His work is legendary, and his commitment to this program has been unwavering. How better to recognize Mark today than to honor him in partnership with the coordinators who continue this work across this country and beyond?"

Phil Keith, the first AATTAP Administrator, praised Simpson for his knowledge, integrity and humility. "Integrity is incredibly important when it comes to training; making sure you have individuals who are qualified or experienced, and have a passion to help others gain the insights and abilities to be as

successful as the instructors," Keith said. He noted how Mark's tenure and training outcomes epitomized his knowledge and integrity.

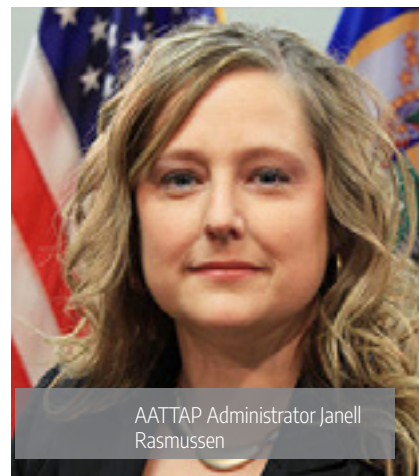
Jim Walters, his predecessor, also praised Simpson for his willingness to train others. "I've never worked with anybody who has a greater knowledge of how to handle or manage an investigation, and at the same time having the empathy and care for the people we serve," said Walters.

Simpson said he was humbled by the award and that training others about missing and abducted children has been a highlight of his career. "There is no greater group of people than those who are absolutely committed to finding children and bringing those responsible for the crimes they committed to justice," said Simpson.

Session Presentations

In addition to the USDOJ-OJJDP welcoming message, family perspective presentations from Nacole Svengard (luring and trafficking) and Pamela Foster (Abductions in Indian Country and AMBER Alert needs), and the case study presentation from Sheriff Fitzgerald, symposium participants enjoyed engaging with informative presentations on a variety of topics delivered by subject matter experts in their respective fields. Topics included:

- Secondary Trauma and Traumatic Stress
- Community Response to High-Risk



- Missing Victims
- Crucial Digital Follow-Up and Recovery in Missing, Runaway and Endangered Child Cases
- Long-Term Missing and Unresolved Abduction Homicides
- Developing an AMBER Alert Plan for Tribal Communities
- Child Abductions: Current Trends in Technology
- Search and Canvass in Missing and Abducted Child Cases
- Legal Issues in Missing and Abducted Child Cases
- Technological and Specific Resources Needed to Support Tribal AMBER Alerts
- Updates from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
- AATTAP-AIIC Resources for the Field

Networking: Breakout Sessions for Collaboration Across States and Roles

One of the most important components of the symposium took place through regional breakout sessions where participants across states and disciplines could meet (or reconnect) with one another and discuss best practices and challenges through a facilitated series of topical questions, including:

- Case Studies: Relevance in training and recommendations for new case study development
- Technology advancements such as WEA's hyperlink integration and geo-fencing
- Child Abduction Response Team (CART) training and resource needs
- High-risk victims and special needs populations: Understanding, identification and effective response
- Best practices for and challenges with multi-state AMBER Alerts
- Internet/Social Media luring into sexual exploitation and trafficking: identification

- and effective response with runaway youth
- Effective administration of AMBER Alerts in light of the emergence of multiple public alerts (such as Silver, Blue, Green, etc.)
- Best practices for and challenges with multi-state AMBER Alerts
- Challenges in providing training during the pandemic

In addition to breakout sessions, the 2021 symposium's virtual delivery platform, Whova, provided tools and features designed to promote introductions and information/idea sharing, along with session and overall event feedback.

AATTAP-AIIC and NCMEC Resources

In addition to the symposium, AATTAP-AIIC provides a wealth of additional training and resources. AATTAP Project Coordinator Bonnie Ferenbach invited participants to regularly check [The AMBER Advocate](#) and [AMBER Alert in Indian Country](#) websites for the latest news updates, downloadable resources, and training opportunities, including self-paced eLearning, webinars and live-instructor led courses.

Ferenbach urged AMBER Alert Coordinators, Missing Persons Clearinghouse Managers and Child Abduction Response Team (CART) leaders to use the secure AMBER Alert Portal located within the AMBER Advocate website; where they will find contact information for colleagues in other states, a partners discussion board, a resource library built upon the AMBER Alert plans and related child protection resources developed by the states, and more.

"You can share with other partners in a secure way, and can share templates, forms and documents that will help other partners so no one has to reinvent the wheel," said Ferenbach.

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AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Heartache and hope at the first virtual AMBER Alert in Indian Country Symposium

Nearly 10,000 Native Americans—more than 7,000 under the age of 18—went missing in 2020. Those statistics from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) were shared at the first virtual AMBER Alert Indian Country Symposium—which was held in conjunction with the National AMBER Alert Symposium on August 17-19, 2021.

Tribal AMBER Alert partners in attendance at this year's event learned powerful lessons on the accelerated efforts to find missing and abducted children from American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Beyond the startling statistics, these cases represent real people and show that in 2020, homicide ranked as the #3 cause of death for Native American males, and #6 for Native American females. In that same year, 46% of homicides were preceded by an argument, 18% after a physical fight, and 18% involved an intimate partner.

Chris Chaney, Senior Counsel for Law Enforcement and Information Sharing, Office of Tribal Justice, DOJ, shared the findings but warned the overall statistics for Native Americans do not show what is truly happening in each tribal community.

"When you've seen one tribe, you've only seen one tribe," said Chaney.

The U.S. has 574 federally recognized tribes—including 229 Alaska Native villages. California has 108 tribes; the remaining 237 are located throughout 34 states. Only 14 states have no tribes, yet all have Native American residents. The Navajo Nation has more than 300,000 members while the Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians has 8 members.

Chaney shared recent efforts to protect Indigenous communities, including:

- **The Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships**, issued in January 2021, directs "all Executive departments and agencies consult with Indian Tribes and respect Tribal sovereignty as they develop policy on issues that impact Indian communities."
- DOJ invested \$1.5 million to hire **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIP) Coordinators** in 11 states to provide training and support local response efforts.

- The MMIP coordinators created a **Tribal Community Response Plan** to implement culturally appropriate guidelines when investigating cases of missing and murdered American Indians.
- **Operation Lady Justice** began in 2019 to improve the response to murdered Native Americans, particular missing and murdered women and girls.
- **Savanna's Act** clarifies federal, state, Tribal and local law enforcement responses to murdered Indian people.
- The **Not Invisible Act** increases intergovernmental coordination in identifying and combatting violent crime within tribal lands.

According to the Indian Law Resource Center, four in five indigenous women have experienced violence, and Alaska Native women report assault rates 12 times higher than other U.S. citizens. On some reservations, indigenous women are 10 times more likely to be murdered.

In the Face of Tragedy: Fierce Hope, Radical Change

At this year's symposium, AATTAP Administrator Janell Rasmussen welcomed Pamela Foster, "the warrior mother who led the grass roots efforts to establish AMBER Alert in Indian country after her daughter Ashlynne's abduction and death. Foster remains active in engaging Tribal leaders and government officials across the country to implement AMBER Alert plans and was invited to attend the State of the Union address in 2018, where she had the opportunity to speak with lawmakers.

Foster asked them to support legislation that would expand AMBER Alerts on Native American reservations by clarifying that



Pamela Foster, mother of Ashlynne Mike

Indian Tribes are eligible for DOJ grants. She received NCMEC's Champion Award for her advocacy and efforts to encourage Native American communities to adopt AMBER Alert plans. She continues to work tirelessly, encouraging Indian communities to adapt AMBER Alert programs to protect children from predators."

"Today marks five years, three months and 17 days since the loss of my daughter Ashlynne," Foster told participants. "Those heart-wrenching days prompted me to voice my concerns and bring to light the problems that we face in Indian Country. It was the worst way to find out we didn't have an AMBER Alert when we needed it most."

Foster tragically learned firsthand about the limited means available in Indian Country when her daughter was abducted and murdered on the Navajo Reservation. On May 2, 2016, her 11-year-old daughter Ashlynne Mike, and 9-year-old son, Ian Mike, were taken by a predator who tricked them into getting into his van. Ashlynne was raped and beaten to death but Ian was able to get away.

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AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

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After the abduction, Foster learned the Navajo Nation lacked the resources and training to issue an AMBER Alert. Nearly two years after Ashlynn's death, Foster was instrumental in persuading Congress to pass the **Ashlynn Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act**, a law enhancing the training and technical assistance tribes receive, and which paves the way for tribes to access state AMBER Alert plans. "I became Ashlynn's voice," said Foster. "I didn't want another parent to have to experience what we did. Shortly after her funeral I started advocating in her sweet little spirit. And everywhere I went, I carried her spirit with me, and I brought about awareness of child abduction and missing children and what we can do to safeguard our children on the reservation."

In closing, Foster offered a beautiful prayer for her daughter, and thanked the participants for their work and dedication. "I am elated by all the work that's been accomplished since the passage of Ashlynn's Law," Foster expressed. "I thank every one of you who work hard to protect our children. I could not have done this without you."

Resources for Indian Country

Foster worked closely with former AATTAP Administrator Jim Walters to pass the Ashlynn Mike Act and assisted with expanding efforts to help missing and abducted children in Indian Country. Walters spoke at the symposium about the resources needed for tribal AMBER Alert plans.

Walters advocated making sure the plan is able to deliver emergency alerts through as many means as possible like wireless messages, traffic signs, website, email,

television and radio. But he said the system should be simple enough so everyone can use it.

"It needs to be something that in the middle of the night, you don't need a technician or vendor to help with; or something you can get locked out of, or can't use if there's an issue," said Walters.

He added that DOJ provides qualifying tribes with **technology toolkits** to assist in implementation of Tribal AMBER Alert plans. The kits include mobile tablets, scanners, headsets, web cameras, digital cameras and accessories.

Walters also urged tribal leaders to contact NCMEC. "You've got to be ready to reach out to them because they've dealt with these programs, and they already have access to them," he said. "They can tell you what works and what doesn't work. We forget AMBER Alerts are low-frequency high-risk events; they don't happen all the time, so we have to train on these things. Exercise and collaborate with partners before you need them."

Tyesha Wood is a member of the Navajo Nation and the AATTAP Project Coordinator for the AMBER Alert in Indian Country. Before the pandemic, she had been visiting tribes in-person around the country to help set up AMBER Alert and community response plans.

Wood said many Tribal leaders have access to state AMBER Alert coordinators but few had made strong connections with key partners. They also did not know if a response plan was available.

"So, yes, we had AMBER Alerts available to us five to 10 years ago, but when you think

about those tribal nations within the United States, there was a disconnection there,” said Wood. “The Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert Act is about making those connections. We know who to call, we know who’s going to be responding. It’s about getting the information and making the resources available to tribal communities.”

Wood said the program can help get documents and flyers to tribes in English and their native languages. She and her AIIIC colleagues continue to work with tribes on their response plans.

Wood added it is critical for Tribal leaders to have close contacts with all community members, including representatives from transportation, fire departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, Head Start, and others. “Let’s start talking about it now before something bad happens,” she said.

Ernie Weyand, the MMIP Coordinator in Montana, said Tribal leaders told him they did not want to use the national protocol for their community response plans.

“They didn’t think that would be effective,” said Weyand. “In fact, they really called for something that was specific to their community, to their culture and to their needs.”

Weyand said he is continuing to help tribes develop their own community response plans on how each will specifically respond to missing persons.

Tribal Breakout

As with the other regional breakout sessions held during this year’s virtual symposium, Tribal partners met together during a specific session to network, identify what is working, and what areas need

improvement. Topical areas discussed during the Tribal breakout included:

- Participation in their State AMBER Alert Plans
- Obstacles in Requesting and Issuing an AMBER Alert
- Tribal Community Education on AMBER Alert in Indian Country
- AMBER Alert Program Partnership
- Training Needs

This collaboration opportunity was especially important at this time, as most of the participants have not been able to meet with each other regularly due to the pandemic.

Final Thoughts and A Call to Action

AATTAP Administrator Janell Rasmussen concluded the online symposium by sharing her hope that the next national gathering will be in-person. “This is our first time holding the symposium virtually and your attendance was critical in the continued collaboration and improvement of the AMBER Alert program during this pandemic. The fact that children’s lives are put in danger each and every day did not stop with the pandemic, and we must continue to be prepared and respond.”

Rasmussen thanked everyone for being champions for children. “We must continue to be prepared and respond,” she said. “We value your input and suggestions and look for ways to implement initiatives that help to deal with the issues you are facing. You are dedicated and committed to protecting kids, and we appreciate the work that you do each and every day to make this program more successful and protecting children.” 🌈

AMBER ALERT ON THE FRONT LINES:



Found in 60 minutes: Autistic child quickly recovered safely after Connecticut AMBER Alert

Shifting stories, multiple suspects and a missing 4-year-old child with autism: all elements that complicated a case involving an AMBER Alert issued in Connecticut on June 1, 2021. It all began when the mother of the boy asked her brother to babysit.

While babysitting, the uncle said a family friend and known drug addict asked to borrow his car and take the child out but he refused. He called his sister at 11:20 a.m. after he woke up from a nap and told her his car and the child were gone.

The boy's mother called the Middletown Police Department and reported her son had been missing for 23 hours. Middletown officers requested an AMBER Alert at 6:00 p.m. The alert was approved by the Connecticut State Police 20 minutes later and the child abduction alert was issued at 7:52 p.m.

The alert provided details about the alleged abduction to all state troopers, broadcasters

and the public. The alert was also posted on social media, electronic highway signs and a message distributed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC).

At 8:15 p.m., a Be On the Lookout (BOLO) message was disseminated to local law enforcement agencies and the License Plate Reader (LPR) system was activated. The agency also notified the FBI and state police in New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Jersey.

Authorities discovered the missing vehicle was captured on camera heading south on the Berlin turnpike earlier in the afternoon. They also found the suspect's cellphone pinging that evening near Wethersfield, Connecticut. Two different citizens called 911 and reported seeing the suspect's vehicle at a motel in Wethersfield.

Officers found the vehicle but it was empty. A woman at the motel told police she saw two people running into the woods. A K9

officer and police dog began a search and found the suspect and her husband covered in mud.

They also discovered the missing boy crying hysterically. The couple was arrested and the boy was taken to a hospital as a precaution. The case was resolved at 8:52 p.m., exactly one hour after the AMBER Alert was issued.

"The alert provided crucial information to all law enforcement agencies and the child was located in a very timely manner," said Connecticut State Police Lieutenant and State AMBER Alert Coordinator Robert Derry. "This is just another example of the AMBER Alert system working correctly."

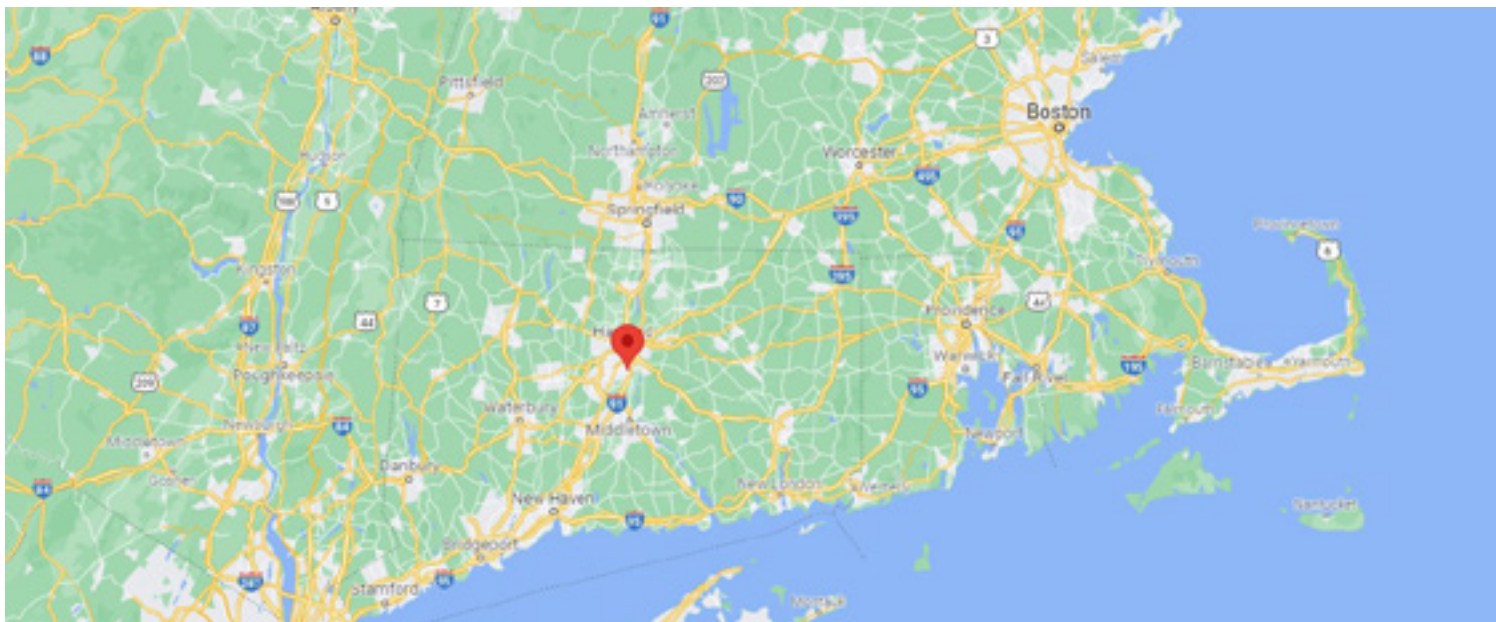
According to the police report, the suspect said she asked to borrow the uncle's car to take the boy out. She said she picked up her husband from an emergency room after he had escaped from a halfway house. The woman said they bought cocaine and started getting high with the boy in the car and in the motel room. The woman claimed

the child's uncle had given her permission to take his car and had asked her to babysit.

The uncle later admitted to police that his brother had taken him to work and that he lied to his sister about the circumstances around her son's disappearance. On June 3, the victim's uncle was arrested and charged with risk of injury to a child.

Lt. Derry has been a trooper with the Connecticut State Police for 27 years. He is the Commanding Officer for the Central District Major Crime Squad as well as the state AMBER Alert Coordinator. The state police agency has 930 troopers and it manages and coordinates Connecticut's AMBER Alert program.

"We are here to serve the public in our communities every day," added Derry. "We all take our roles and responsibilities very seriously. We work very hard to protect the public and to keep everyone safe." 🍷



FACES OF THE AMBER ALERT

Florida Clearinghouse Supervisor Jon Roddenberry has a heart for missing children—especially children with autism



Jon Roddenberry, Florida Clearinghouse Supervisor

Jon Roddenberry has worked for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) for 23 years. He has been the supervisor for the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC) since December of 2019.

Before that Roddenberry worked with the Sex Offender Registry to help locate absconded sex offenders and predators. The FDLE honored Roddenberry and his team in 2017 for

Innovation of the Year for locating high-risk sex offenders in Florida.

The Registry and Clearinghouse work closely together and Roddenberry is grateful for the opportunity to use his experience and skills in helping locate missing persons.

WHAT IS UNIQUE TO YOUR AMBER ALERT/ MISSING PERSONS PROGRAM, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES IT SUCCESSFUL?

In 2000, Florida became the second state in the nation to establish a statewide

AMBER Alert program and in the years since we have always tried to utilize the latest technologies and systems to assist in alerting the public as well as searching and locating missing persons. Additionally, MEPIC has a squad of crime intelligence analysts that has been trained to not only issue alerts but to utilize the latest analytical and investigative systems in order to assist in the location of missing persons.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO FIND MISSING AND ABDUCTED CHILDREN?

I have three daughters and always try to approach my job from the perspective of a parent who has a missing child or loved one.

PLEASE SHARE DETAILS ABOUT YOUR MOST MEMORABLE SUCCESS STORY IN WORKING A MISSING CHILD CASE. HOW DID THE AMBER ALERT SUPPORT THE OUTCOME? WHAT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS LEARNED?

In March 2021, a young male diagnosed as non-verbal autistic wandered off from his home in Jacksonville, Florida. FDLE was contacted by local law enforcement in the area regarding the case and an Enhanced Missing Child Alert was issued by MEPIC. An Enhanced Missing Child Alert is similar to an AMBER Alert but on a smaller scale. It allows MEPIC to issue a targeted Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) to a defined area such as a neighborhood or area within a 5-mile radius of where the child went missing. As a result of the targeted WEA, a citizen who received the alert on their

phone saw the child in the area and the child was recovered safely.

What makes these types of cases unique is that autistic children are more likely to wander from their homes. They are often drawn to water and more likely to drown than the general population. During the request for the alert, local law enforcement reported many nearby bodies of water in the immediate area of where the child went missing. So more than likely, the issuance of the alert and subsequent targeted WEA may have saved the child's life.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN WITH YOUR AMBER ALERT PROGRAM AND OTHER PROGRAMS IN THE FUTURE?

I would like to see the continued use of the latest technologies to assist in notifying the public on AMBER Alerts. I would also like to see more resources on the state and federal level to assist states with funding to help build their Clearinghouses and missing persons programs in their states.

HOW HAS TRAINING HELPED YOU IN AMBER ALERT CASES?

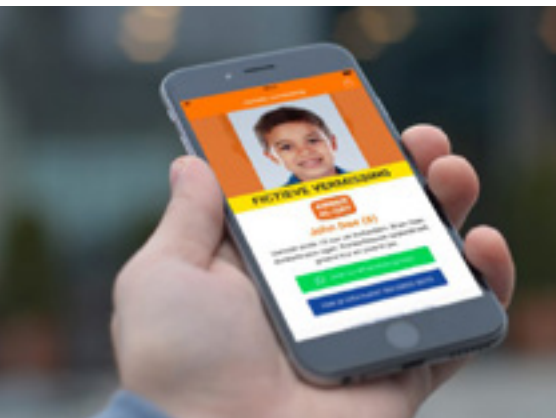
Training is huge. In MEPIC we do mock AMBER Alert calls on a regular basis with our analysts, alert coordinator and supervisors. This training helps ensure that when MEPIC receives a request for an AMBER Alert that everyone is prepared to disseminate the alert if needed in a timely, accurate and efficient manner. FDLE as an agency also provides strong analytical and professional development training to analysts that assist them in effectively doing their jobs.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER AMBER ALERT PARTNERS?

Continue to seek out new technologies to assist with the issuance of alerts. Communicate with other states to inquire what types of alerts they issue and the technology they use to issue the alerts. Provide continual analytical training to your Clearinghouse staff and provide the resources needed for them to effectively do their jobs and assist with locating missing persons. 🌟



AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL



Netherlands will continue using AMBER Alerts

The Dutch National Police agreed to continue using AMBER Alerts after earlier announcing it would use another alerting system. In April 2021, Netherlands was going to switch to using the Burgernet system for child abduction alerts. In September, the Dutch National Police signed an agreement to take over issuing the alerts from AMBER Alert in Europe. Netherlands was an early adopter of AMBER Alerts in 2008 and has pioneered innovative ways to notify the public about abducted children. The Dutch AMBER Alert system has been deployed 1042 times. In 94% of the cases, the child was found alive and well. 🍷



Slovenia hosts 26 countries at conference on missing persons

An international conference in Slovenia offered tips and best practices for finding missing persons in August 2021. The Slovenian police, Police Expert Network on Missing Persons and AMBER Alert Europe organized the conference that included participants from 26 countries. Slovenian Minister of Interior Aleš Hojs said searching and investigating missing person cases is a top priority for Slovenia and the EU—especially for vulnerable populations like children and the elderly. 🍷

Pakistan centralizes child abuse monitoring

Punjab police in Pakistan is launching its own Zainab Alert app to monitor cases involving missing, disappeared or abducted children. The app is being developed because the country has not made significant progress with its AMBER Alert system. The system will still follow the pattern of the AMBER Alert program to notify the public and law enforcement agencies when a child is abducted. 🌸



Canadian police train on emergency alert system after mass shooting

Prince Edward Island (PEI) police in Canada are training to make sure they are prepared to use Alert Ready, Canada's emergency alert system. The system delivers emergency notifications through radio and television bulletins as well as text messages. In the past only Emergency Management Office (EMO) officials could issue alerts but now police will be able to use it. The change comes after an increase of incidents, including the 2020 mass shooting in Nova Scotia. 🌸

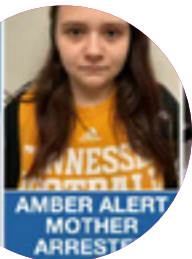


AMBER Alert Europe and European Parliament highlight children's rights

AMBER Alert Europe is joining the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights to put children's rights at the top of the EU agenda. The organizations created a [manifesto](#) to protect children's rights. "No child must be left behind,"

said Frank Hoen, AMBER Alert Europe founder and chairman. "With AMBER Alert Europe, the Intergroup will speak with a louder voice to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, in particular missing children." 🌸

AMBER ALERT BRIEFS



NEW TENNESSEE LAW REQUIRES PARENTS TO NOTIFY POLICE ABOUT MISSING CHILDREN

Tennessee now requires parents to notify police about missing children within 24 hours or face criminal charges. Evelyn's Law went into effect on July 1, 2021, and it stipulates charging parents with a Class A misdemeanor for failing to timely report a missing child. The law is named after Evelyn Boswell, a 15-old-month who was found dead months after she initially went missing. 🍷



U.S. MARSHALS RECOVER 19 MISSING CHILDREN DURING SWEEP IN SOUTHEASTERN STATES

An operation based in New Orleans called "This is The Way Home" rescued or recovered 19 missing and endangered runaways. The U.S. Marshals located or helped return another 20 children during the sweep that ran from March 1 to June 30, 2021, in Louisiana, Florida, Arkansas, Texas and Tennessee. The operation included an AMBER Alert that led to the safe recovery of a missing one-month-old boy from Arkansas. Officers also arrested nine adults on charges including felony carnal knowledge of a juvenile and/or contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile. 🍷



VIRGINIA HAS NEW ALERT FOR MISSING ADULTS WITH AUTISM

A new Virginia law took effect on July 1, 2021, that creates a public alert to help find missing adults with autism. The Jamile Hill Law for Justice covers situations that do not fit the criteria for an AMBER Alert or other alerts. Jamile Hill wandered away in October 2020 and drowned in a swampy area a mile from her home. 🍷



ROCK BAND UPDATES SONG THAT BROUGHT ATTENTION TO MISSING CHILDREN

The rock band Soul Asylum has created a new version of its hit song "Runaway Train." The video for the 1993 tune included images of real-life missing and runaway children. The song and video have been updated with new names and images. "The problem's never gonna go away, although I think there's been progress made," said singer Dave Pirner. "They didn't have an AMBER Alert back when we made the video..." NCMEC said the original video helped reunite 21 missing children with their families. 🍷

FAMILY OF MISSING CHILD WANTS TO EXPAND THE AMBER ALERT CRITERIA IN IOWA

The aunt of a missing child has started an online petition to broaden Iowa's AMBER Alert criteria. Michelle Harrelson has gathered more than 3,000 signatures on Change.org after Xavier Harrelson went missing on May 27, 2021. Authorities said the situation did not qualify for an AMBER Alert. Harrelson plans to approach lawmakers about her proposed changes in January. 🍷



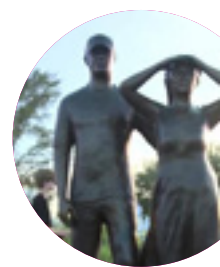
ARKANSAS A.G. HONORS OFFICER FOR REVAMPING STATE'S AMBER ALERT

Retired Arkansas State Police Officer Mark Hollingsworth received the Arkansas Attorney General Star of Excellence Award for overhauling the state's AMBER Alert program. Hollingsworth was honored July 2021 at the annual Never Forgotten – Arkansas Takes Action conference. Hollingsworth changed the internal action plan for the Arkansas AMBER Alert system so it provides more training for local law enforcement officers to handle cases involving children in imminent danger. 🍷



STATUE UNVEILED THAT HONORS TWO MISSING FLORIDA TEENS

A new monument has been created to honor two Florida boys who vanished at sea. A large crowd gathered in July 2021 for the unveiling of the statue recognizing Perry Cohen and Austin Stephanos. The 14-year-olds disappeared in 2015 near Jupiter, Florida. The family of Stephanos hope to create an Austin Alert to help find missing boaters. 🍷



INDIANA CONSIDERS LENNY ALERT FOR MISSING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Community members are hoping to create a Lenny Alert for missing autistic children. The alert would be named for Lenny Hatinda, a non-verbal five-year-old who drowned in a pool a tenth of a mile from his home on July 29, 2021. The alert would notify the public in a targeted area when an autistic child goes missing. 🍷



2021 NATIONAL AMBER ALERT & AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY SYMPOSIUM

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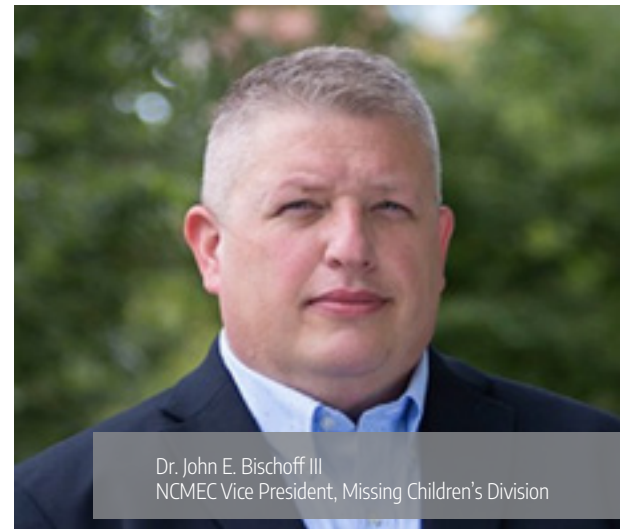
The **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children** (NCMEC) is a vital AATTAP-AIIC partner. As part of this year's updates from NCMEC, Dr. John E. Bischoff III, NCMEC's Vice President of the Missing Children Division, said the organization has expanded efforts to locate children with autism and kids living in tribal communities.

NCMEC is also revamping the missing children posters for the first time since 2012. The new posters are more mobile-friendly and include QR codes that link to a website with more information about each case.

"We want to make it easier for them to find information, easier for them to share the poster faster and keep that image of a missing child out in the community," said Bischoff. "So when they see our poster, they know what to do and they can take action right away."

NCMEC has created new partnerships with the Outdoor Advertising Association

for electronic billboards and automated license plate reader (ALPR) companies. The organization is also expanding efforts to collect biometrics (unique physical characteristics) and DNA samples to help track and identify missing children. 🍌



Dr. John E. Bischoff III
NCMEC Vice President, Missing Children's Division