



For Immediate Release

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MISSINGKIDS.CA OFFERS NEW HOPE FOR PARENTS OF MISSING CHILDREN

Innovative online search tools bring modern approach to traditional search methods

OTTAWA, ON: The *Canadian Centre for Child Protection* wants families of missing children to know that they don't have to search alone. On the eve of International Missing Children's Day, the Canadian Centre is launching *MissingKids.ca* – Canada's national missing children resource centre.

MissingKids.ca compliments the important work of law enforcement by offering families additional resources to help find their missing children. The service provides a central place for families to register their missing child to request support from a trained caseworker, as well as critical educational information to help prevent children from going missing.

"Today's launch of *MissingKids.ca* signals an important step forward in the effort to find children who have tragically gone missing," said the Hon. Rob Nicholson, M.P. for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. "Our Government is committed to doing our part and will continue to work with our partners to keep our nation's children - our most valuable treasures - safe and free from harm."

Using new technologies, MissingKids.ca uses innovative online search tools that bring a modern approach to the traditional way of searching for lost or missing children. From the online registration process to the use of social media and wireless technologies, the service helps parents understand and leverage these helpful tools to locate their missing children. The Canadian public can also sign up to receive missing child alerts so individuals may become a part of the search for the nation's missing children.

"We live in a different world today than the one we lived in just five short years ago. New technology and social media tools have not only profoundly changed the way we live and interact with one another, but they have created new opportunities in the search for missing children," said Lianna McDonald, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. "MissingKids.ca will provide a national voice on missing children issues and a coordinated approach in the search for missing children. It will capitalize on new technology and coordinate prompt, efficient dissemination of public alerts."

This past March marked the 20th anniversary of the disappearance of Michael Dunahee, who was four years old when he disappeared from a Victoria, BC sports field on March 24, 1991. His mom Crystal said the MissingKids.ca program will bring new hope to searching families.

"Twenty years is a long time to be searching, but with MissingKids.ca – we have renewed hope of receiving new information to help us find Michael," said Crystal Dunahee. "Any time families can access new resources to assist them in locating their child gives them reason to be hopeful and optimistic."

The establishment of MissingKids.ca capitalizes on the support and knowledge of the private and public sector. “Without the contributions of our partners, the creation of this new resource would not have been possible,” said McDonald. “We are indebted to the Government of Canada, CIBC, CWTA, Google and Lifetouch for helping us search for Canada’s missing children.”

Similar to the Canadian Centre’s relationship with the country’s Child Exploitation Units through its Cybertip.ca program, MissingKids.ca will also work in partnership with Canada’s law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders in the search for missing children. “The safety and security of Canadian families is a top priority of law enforcement everywhere, and when a child goes missing there is nothing more important than their safe return. MissingKids.ca will be a valuable resource to families and a strong support to law enforcement in the search for missing children,” said RCMP Superintendent John Bilinski, Officer-in-charge of the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre (NCECC).

MissingKids.ca will also help communities know what to do should a child go missing. The site provides a downloadable community response plan which provides a step-by-step guide to help coordinate search efforts. “We fully support this important and necessary program. All Canadians should care about missing children and all Canadians can take action,” said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-Chut Atleo. Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Ron Evans added, “Too often our children are going missing and communities desperately need access to key services to bring them home. We are proud of our partnership in the development of MissingKids.ca.”

MissingKids.ca is proud to work in collaboration with Enfant-Retour Québec to provide missing children’s services to residents of Québec. Enfant-Retour will partner to provide case management services to searching parents/guardians from this province and will work in collaboration with MissingKids.ca caseworkers on other cases across Canada when needed. “Enfant-Retour Québec is proud to partner with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection in this unprecedented initiative,” said Pina Arcamone, Director General, Enfant-Retour Québec. “A missing child is everyone’s responsibility and it is so crucial to work in partnership. By sharing our expertise, knowledge and excellent resources, we will greatly enhance our chances of recovering missing children and at the same time support the families throughout their unimaginable nightmare.”

MissingKids.ca is made possible thanks in part to the support of the Government of Canada, and the generous support of our MissingKids.ca Founding Partners: CIBC, the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, Google and Lifetouch.

About the Canadian Centre for Child Protection:

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a charitable organization dedicated to the personal safety of all children. Our goal is to reduce child victimization by providing programs and services to Canadians. We do this through public awareness activities, our personal safety education program (kidsintheknow.ca), our national tipline to report online sexual abuse of children (Cybertip.ca <http://protectchildren.ca/app/en/outgoing?url=http://www.cybertip.ca>), our program to help organizations prevent child sexual abuse (commit2kids.ca), and our new national missing children resource centre (MissingKids.ca).

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