

Checklist for Searching Parents: When You Think Your Child Has Run Away

Keep this checklist in a secure location.

If you believe your child has run away and have concerns that they may be at imminent risk, you should immediately report your child missing to the police.

When determining whether your child may be at imminent risk, consider the following¹:

- Is your child under the age of 12?
- Is your child at risk of being harmed (e.g., are they suicidal, has someone presented a threat of violence towards them, are they involved with a dangerous person)?
- Does your child have any special needs that place them at a higher risk of being harmed?
- Is your child completely and unusually absent from their daily activities and routines?
- Is your child completely out of contact with all of their friends, including their usual online activity and cell phone use?
- Has your child developed any new relationships (including online relationships)?
- Has your child been sexually exploited in the past by adults or peers?

¹ This list is not exhaustive. It is important to also consider the circumstances of your family and your child, and contact the police immediately if you believe your child may be at imminent risk.

If your child has made a suicide attempt in the past, or talked about suicide, it is extremely important that you share this with the police when you call to report your child missing. It is also important to advise the police of any concerns about drug or alcohol use by your child.

When you speak with police, be prepared to provide a photograph, description of your child, and any information you have about when and where they were last seen and who they were last known to be with. Obtain from police:

- Incident/reference number for your report: _____
- Name and/or badge number of the officer taking the report: _____
- Phone number to call for follow-up: _____

A MissingKids.ca caseworker is available 24/7 to assist you via our toll free line 1-866-KID-TIPS (543-8477). Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Alternate formats may be available upon request.

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Intended for information purposes only. Not intended as legal advice. Assess all information in light of your own circumstances, the age and maturity level of your child and any other relevant factors.

This checklist can be used to document information about your child. It is meant as a guideline; you do not need to fill in all the fields. Some questions may have already been asked by police; however, pieces of this checklist may prompt you to consider other information to share with police.

Information to Gather about Your Child

1. Obtain a recent photograph² and a description of your child.

Recent photograph

Eye colour: _____

Hair colour: _____

Height: _____

Weight/build: _____

Clothing last seen wearing: _____

Other physical characteristics (glasses, piercings, tattoos, scars, marks, braces, etc.):

² If possible, select a photo that does not have filters on it. If you do not have a recent photo of your child, MissingKids.ca may be able to obtain their most recent school photograph from Lifetouch (if your child was photographed by Lifetouch in the current school year).

2. To the best of your knowledge:

Where was your child last seen?

Who were they last in contact with?

When was your last communication (in person, phone, text, social media etc.) with them?

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3. Write down your child’s contact information and information about any social media and online gaming they use.

Child’s Contact Information:

Cell phone number: _____ Service provider: _____

Email address: _____ Password (if known): _____

Address (if different from your own): _____

Review phone bills, caller display logs, and cell phone bills for phone numbers you do not recognize in addition to flagging numbers that have been frequently contacted.

Social Media Profiles:

Facebook® username: _____ Password: _____

Snapchat® username: _____ Password: _____

Instagram® username: _____ Password: _____

YouTube® username: _____ Password: _____

Other: _____ Password: _____

Other: _____ Password: _____

Online Gaming Profiles:

Game: _____ Username: _____ Password: _____

Game: _____ Username: _____ Password: _____

If possible, check any social media or online gaming accounts to see if there has been any recent activity, and note anyone your child has been in contact with recently online.

Check the search history on the computer or device your child uses. The most recent searches conducted by your child may give you some clues as to where they may have gone, and may identify additional social networking sites or websites they visited that you didn’t know about.

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4. Does your child have a vehicle or access to a vehicle?

Make: _____

Model: _____

Year: _____

Colour: _____

License plate number: _____

5. Consider the types of identification your child may have. Is any of it missing?

Passport number: _____

Driver's license: _____

SIN: _____

Possible false identification: _____

Bank information: _____

Other: _____

If you have a joint bank account with your child, check to see whether there's been any activity.

6. Look around the house and your child's room to see if anything is missing (e.g., clothing, special items, make-up). If so, make a list of all the missing items for law enforcement. It is also important to let the police know if nothing missing.

7. Has your child ever mentioned a destination where they would like to go? Is it possible your child has gone there?

8. Has your child mentioned any new acquaintances or activities they have recently become involved in, or have there been any major changes (e.g., a recent move, parents divorcing) that may have caused your child to behave in a way that is out of character for them?

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Contact Other People for Information

1. Reach out to your child in any way possible. If your child has a cell phone, consider texting instead of calling them as it gives them a chance to read your message and take it in.

2. If your child does not live with both or any of their parents, is it possible they have run away to a parent's home? If possible, contact the parent(s).

3. Consider your child's current relationships. Is there another family member or person they are close with who may have information or who may be able to reach out to your child on your behalf?

4. Contact friends, relatives, and other relevant individuals in your child's life to inform them of the situation. Ask them to call the designated number (e.g., police or MissingKids.ca) if they hear or see anything. Keep track of who you have contacted.

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____ Address: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____ Address: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____ Address: _____

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Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

5. Ask friends, relatives, and other relevant individuals in your child's life to provide you with the contact information for other people to contact in search of your child. Follow up with these individuals as well, and keep track of who you have contacted.

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Contact information: _____

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6. If applicable, follow up with your child’s school, employer, and/or places where they volunteer to see if they have seen or heard anything from your child.

School Information:

School: _____	Contact name: _____
Phone number: _____	Address: _____
Email: _____	

Employment Information:

Employer: _____	Contact name: _____
Phone number: _____	Address: _____
Email: _____	

Volunteer Information:

Organization: _____	Contact name: _____
Phone number: _____	Address: _____
Email: _____	

7. Make a list of your child’s favourite places in your community. Speak to your MissingKids.ca caseworker about using MissingKidsALERT to distribute critical information to these places as well as to the public. If there are concerns about publicly displaying your child’s information, remember that your child’s photograph and description do not need to be shared publicly/posted in a public area — it could be posted in a location where only staff can see it.

Name of location: _____	Phone number: _____
Address: _____	Contact person: _____

Name of location: _____	Phone number: _____
Address: _____	Contact person: _____

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Name of location: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Name of location: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Name of location: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Managing the Phones

1. Use the communication log sheet to track everyone who is calling or texting. It is also important to consider who is **not** calling or texting (if there are people who would typically do so).
2. Make sure there is someone available to answer phone calls. It is a good idea to get a family member or good friend to do this. Some people calling the house may not have good intentions, or may be looking to exploit your situation. Before taking action on any information provided to you, contact law enforcement for guidance.
3. Keep a notepad close by to write down any additional information, such as messages from supports, important contact information, thoughts, concerns, etc.

Communications Log

Use this template to help you keep track of who you have spoken with or keep a notebook nearby to document your conversations.

Contact Name:	Time:	Method of Contact:	Notes/Information:

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