CHILD ABDUCTION
FIRST RESPONDING OFFICER CHECKLIST

RESPOND

RESPOND to ANY disappearance of a child as an Abduction Case until further information is developed. CHILD ABDUCTION BY A FAMILY MEMBER must be treated as an urgent missing child investigation. ALWAYS consider the child endangered until proven otherwise.

WITHOUT DELAY BROADCAST SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION TO: All police communication channels, other patrol officers, other law enforcement agencies, and consider AMBER ALERT.

GATHER DATA RELEVANT TO THE INITIAL RESPONSE:
- Interview reporting party & witnesses
- Ensure child is missing
- Description of child
- Circumstances of disappearance
- Description of alleged perpetrator (if known)
- Description of vehicle
- Initial determination of abduction type
- Risk assessment (see risk assessment checklist)

YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY
- Establish and secure the crime scene
- Additional personnel and supervision
  - NOTIFY
- Additional personnel and supervision
- Highway Patrol

ENTER INFORMATION INTO
The Department of Justice Missing Person System (MUPS/NCIC)

GATHER ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIVE DATA
- Photograph & other identifying data
- Re: child (and abductor-suspect, if known)
- Detailed family history
- Locations of other family members
- School, health and other info re: child
- Possible destinations

PRIOR TO LEAVING THE SCENE ADVISE FAMILY
- How to access victim witness services
- Can offer DNA if child is missing 30 days

IF APPROPRIATE, NOTIFY THE:
- District Attorney’s Family Child Abduction Unit
- Local office of the FBI
- Media
- Amber Alert
- National Center For Missing & Exploited Children
- Missing children nonprofit organizations

CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

DOJ Missing & Unidentified Persons Unit.......................... (916) 227-3290
DOJ Missing Children Hotline............. (800) 222-FIND (3463)
California Highway Patrol or nearest CHP Communications (800) TELL-CHP (835-5247)
FBI
- Los Angeles ......................... (310) 996-5000
- Sacramento ......................... (916) 481-9110
- San Diego ......................... (858) 565-1255
- San Francisco ...................... (415) 553-7400
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children................... (800) 843-5678

Missing Children Organizations:

District Attorney’s Child Abduction Unit

Sponsored by
The California Child Abduction Task Force
and
The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
Children’s Section
(916) 323-7449

This checklist is a suggested guide, but is not all-inclusive. Local jurisdictions may have protocols with varying requirements.
## Child Abduction & Risk of Danger to Child Assessment Checklist

**ALWAYS consider the child endangered until proven otherwise.**

### Abductor-Suspect Information

- Prior threats to abduct child
- Prior abductions and/or prior concealments
- Has strong family ties in other states or countries
- Unwed parents
- Criminal history
- Has a weapon/access to a weapon
- Has/is threatening suicide
- Child taken without any personal items
- Recently been fired from employment
- Recently quit employment
- Made verbal threats to harm custodian/child
- Major deviation from normal behavior pattern
- Prior incidence of violence
- History of Domestic Violence/Child Abuse
- Chronic alcoholism/drug use
- Currently Under the Influence
- Mental illness
- Registered sex offender
- History of Stalking
- History of violent criminal acts
- Custody battle/recent divorce or separation
- Potential of International Abduction
- Has passport & support system outside U.S.
- Child has current passport
- Signs of pre-abduction plans to leave the U.S.
- Cumulative recent “stressors” and/or loss of “control” over personal life or other individuals

### Mother Abductor-Suspect Information

(Additional factors common to female caretaker abductors)

- Allegations of child abuse by male custodian/father
- Allegations are supported by mother’s family
- Child under age six
- Recent court hearing/decision regarding custody

### Child(ren) Information

- Is within at-risk age group
- Is preschool age or younger
- Knows own address and telephone number
- Knows how to dial 911
- No or limited English-speaking ability
- Acute Serious Health Concern
- Chronic Serious Health Concern
- Requires Medication
- Developmentally Delayed
- Physical Disability
- Child is Drug Dependent
- Potential violence or sexual abuse of victim

## Cultural Considerations

- Potential “Honor Killing”
- Potential unwilling victim of “Marriage Abduction”
- Child seen as rightful property of abducting party
- Potential maiming such as, female circumcision
- Mixed culture marriage relationship
- Parents are members of a religious cult, militia, or other extremist group

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