



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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Help Us Picture Them Home during the month of May for National Missing Children's Day, May 25

Honolulu, Hawaii - On May 25, 1979, a mother sent her 6-year old son off to school in New York. Etan Patz kissed his mother goodbye and started walking to the bus stop, just two short blocks away. His mother watched as he made his way, then rushed home to care for another child who was sick. Etan never made it to the bus stop, nor did he ever return home again.

In 1983, in honor of Etan Patz, former President Ronald Reagan proclaimed May 25th as National Missing Children's Day to bring attention to the plight of missing children and their families and to renew our efforts nationwide to reunite children and their loved ones.

On May 25, 2004, Governor Linda Lingle will proclaim May 25th to be Missing Children's Day in the State of Hawaii, and will urge citizens to join the efforts to increase awareness of the plight of missing children in our state and across the nation.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, during the last year an estimated 750,000 children were reported missing nationwide. National Missing Children's Day reminds this country not to forget the children who are still missing, not to falter in the effort to reunite them with their families, and to rejoice for those who have made it home.

As we reflect on the 22nd anniversary of Missing Children's Day, let us remember the children and their families whom we work to protect. Let us remember the valiant efforts of the dedicated professional men and women and all those in law enforcement who work steadfastly to bring these cases to successful conclusions. And let us, above all, remember that our work is not over until all children are reunited with their families and every child is safe.

Pictures Work - Even after almost two decades, some people are unsure whether they can actually play a role in recognizing a missing child from a poster and helping to reunite that child with his or her family. Picture Them Home is a campaign to raise awareness about the power of pictures and their importance in the search for missing children. One child in six featured in the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's photo distribution program is recovered as a direct result of someone in the general public recognizing the child in the picture and notifying authorities. Pictures work, and if more people took the time to look at them, more families would be reunited.

How can you help? It is simple and takes very little time. First, whenever you see a poster of a missing child -- whether it comes in your mail or is posted at your local store or on the Internet -- really look at the picture. Make an effort never to be complacent about studying these pictures. One day, you might bring a child home. Second, be sure to keep current, high-quality pictures of your own children, regardless of their ages, and update them at least annually. A recent poll of law enforcement professionals found that they consider pictures to be the single most important tool in the search for missing children.

Picture them home for National Missing Children's Day, because pictures bring back more than memories.

In commemoration of Missing Children's Day, the Department of the Attorney General Missing Child Center-Hawaii and the Friends of the Missing Child Center will sponsor free ID Kits at the Family Fun Fair at Ward Warehouse, on Saturday, June 19, 2004, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.

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