



CHILD ABDUCTION RESPONSE TEAMS PLAY PIVOTAL ROLE AT 2008 NATIONAL AMBER ALERT CONFERENCE

Members of Child Abduction Response Teams (CART) will be the newest partners to participate at the 2008 National AMBER Alert Conference, held October 14-16 in Orange County, California. Some presentations will be geared towards CART but the focus will remain the same: the safe recovery of missing and abducted children.



ing the AMBER Alert network."

The conference will bring together CART members, AMBER Alert Coordinators, broadcasters, Missing Persons Clearinghouse Coordinators, Tribal, law enforcement and transportation leaders and representatives from Canada; Mexico; United Kingdom; Greece; France; Belgium and the Netherlands.

"When a child is abducted, time is of the essence. CART programs are critical resources for law enforcement and others who work to find abducted children," said Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey L. Sedgwick. "Bringing CART members together with our AMBER Alert partners is a logical next step in strengthening the AMBER Alert network."

"Our hope is to capture the momentum of CART and take it to another level," says Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Program Director for Fox Valley Technical College. "We will be developing best practices for AMBER Alert Coordinators to work with CART."

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CARD-CART FBI AND STATES WORK TO BRING CHILD ABDUCTION TEAMS TOGETHER

An abducted child does not care about jurisdiction issues. Federal, state, local and Tribal law enforcement officers are also making sure no issue gets in the way of finding a missing child. Representatives from state Child Abduction Response Teams (CART) and the FBI Child Abduction Rapid Deployment (CARD) teams have met twice since 2006 at two regional training conferences to coordinate working together.

The FBI CARD Team deploys 4 to 6 experienced agents to provide investigative, technical and resource assistance after a child is

abducted. A CART usually involves representatives from federal, state, local, and Tribal enforcement agencies and responds when a child is missing or abducted.

Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Program Director for Fox Valley Technical College, attended the three-day training session in April, 2006 held in Phoenix. "There were questions about whether there was any duplication between a CARD and a CART," says Keith. "The statistics, research and outcomes consistently show the more resources you can bring during the first hours after an abduction the more likely you will

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Utah CART in action, September 13, 2008

ON THE FRONT LINES: Colorado

AMBER ALERT WORKS EVEN WHEN THINGS GO WRONG



Kristina Bomba, Colorado AMBER Alert Coordinator

It was 3:30 a.m. and Colorado AMBER Alert Coordinator Kristina Bomba was asleep when she received a call from dispatchers. The Alamosa County Sheriff's Office wanted to issue an AMBER Alert. At 2 a.m., August 28, authorities said 28-year-old Justin Lamar Lampkins allegedly kidnapped his five-month-old daughter Avaya May after cutting the throat and ear of the baby's mother. "Don't move or I will kill you," Lampkins allegedly told the child's mother.

"AMBER Alerts do not always come at the most convenient time," said Bomba. To make matters worse, the Democratic National Convention was being held in Denver at the time, and law enforcement and the media were stretched to the limit. Bomba sent out the AMBER Alert at 4:24 a.m. from her home computer.

"We sent out the AMBER Alert and we had indications that the initial notification was not working," said Bomba. She called the Emergency Alert System station, Traffic Operation Center and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and relayed the information by phone and e-mail.

Colorado's initial system sends out AMBER Alert notifications to computers, law enforcement car computers, fax machines and a text to law enforcement teletype. Bomba then used her back-up list serve to send the AMBER Alert out by e-mail at 4:40 a.m.

"I was not too panicked because we had a back-up system," said Bomba.

At 6 a.m. a police officer who had heard the AMBER Alert spotted the suspect's vehicle. The child was recovered safely and the suspect was arrested. The cancellation of the

AMBER Alert was delayed until 6:44 a.m. so authorities could first notify the child's mother.

"I think it is great whenever we can get the child recovered safely and as quickly as we did," said Bomba. Still the AMBER Alert Coordinator had to figure what went wrong with the initial notification. The system has been fixed but Bomba worked with others to create additional back-up plans.



Alamosa County Sheriff's Sergeant Harry Alejo sent this e-mail to Bomba after the alert. "I would like to thank the AMBER Alert organization for the assistance I received," wrote Alejo. "The response that went

out and the calls in to assist me in my investigations were unbelievable. In the small town of Alamosa and as the only investigator on the department, I was thankful and did not feel that I was alone when I was looking for the vehicle and baby."

"We were worried the suspect was going to leave the state," added Alamosa County Sheriff Dave Stong. "The AMBER Alert gave us lots of eyes-and-ears looking for this child."

"It could have been horrible had we not had a back up," said Bomba. She has been involved with Colorado's AMBER Alert Plan since it was set up in April 2002. Bomba has been working since then to improve and refine the plan so the AMBER Alerts work even if something fails.

"I feel pretty comfortable with the process of issuing AMBER alerts," said Bomba.

The child has been reunited with her mother and the suspect is now facing kidnapping, burglary and assault charges. ☺



Justin Lamar Lampkins, alleged kidnapper

The conference will include training tracks that will be divided by discipline and region. Some sessions will be devoted to Southern and Northern bordered states and participants working to bring AMBER Alerts to Indian Country. Family members of child abduction victims will also participate in roundtable discussions.

Broadcasters and other AMBER Alert partners will also receive training coordinated through Newsplex, the scenario-based training facility at Columbia, S.C. "We hope to reinforce the progress all participants have made and stimulate everyone's thinking about how new technologies create new possibilities for alerting the public at those critical times when an unseen child is depending on us," said Charles Bierbauer, University of South Carolina Dean and former CNN White House Correspondent. "The simple and gratifying truth about AMBER Alerts is that they work. They save lives."

AMBER Alert partners will also consider how to maintain and expand their child abduction response plans

during a time when state budgets are shrinking. "I hope to learn how states work around a budget crisis and move forward instead of taking a step backward," said Florida AMBER Alert Coordinator Donna Hodges. She is also looking forward to learning more about new technology, the updated Emergency Alert System and strides to bring AMBER Alerts into Indian Country.

Conference participants will also weigh the pros and cons of using limited-criteria notices such as Silver Alerts and Officer Down Alerts versus the Endangered Person Advisory, an emergency notice for all cases that do not meet the criteria of an AMBER Alert. Another session will ask this provocative question: What if AMBER Alert existed when Amber Hagerman was abducted?



Ron Laney at the 2007 National AMBER Alert Conference

CONFERENCE REFLECTION FROM RON LANEY

At the first AMBER Alert National Conference in 2003 in Dallas, 287 representatives from law enforcement, transportation, and media/broadcast came together to increase awareness, improve cooperation, establish protocols, share information, and create a seamless national AMBER Alert network. Since that time, I have seen the tremendous work that has been done around the

country and within individual states and communities to meet these goals. Through increased collaboration, training, and understanding, the AMBER Alert network is solid and effective. We have come a long way in five short years. But there is still more that can be done and challenges to be met. Together, we must continue to find ways to improve our understanding of the roles and responsibilities of every agency and organization involved in the AMBER Alert program. We must be open-minded when communicating with each other about how we can work together more effectively. We must step out of our own comfort zone and realize that this is a collaborative effort - that we are all in this together - and that the ultimate goal is to keep children safe. And we must never forget, that it is only by working together that we can and do make a difference. This national conference provides us all the opportunity to address these challenges and to continue to move in the positive direction that we have been heading.

Ron Laney, Associate Administrator, Child Protection Division, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.

GILA RIVER BLAZING TRAIL FOR AMBER ALERTS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The Gila River Indian Community is getting ready to make sure the Tribe's AMBER Alert plan is up and running by December. Tribal leaders are busy making sure they have a plan in place and the technology and resources to make it all work.

"Gila River is definitely one of our shining stars," said Betsy Brown, senior project coordinator for FirstPic, Inc., a government consulting agency that is helping to bring AMBER Alerts into Indian Country. "They have attended 100 percent of the meetings, they have met all the guidelines, and they have buy-in from Tribal leaders, which is what has made them so successful."

The Gila River Tribe is one of ten pilot Indian Nations working with FirstPic, Inc., Fox Valley Technical College and the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) to implement AMBER Alert plans.

Mark Hill, Communications Engineer for the Gila River Police Department, told the Gila River Indian News that a grant for the pilot has helped provide the ability to quickly issue AMBER Alerts. "My goal is to have an AMBER Alert able to be issued within five minutes. Hopefully, before they get off the community," said Hill. "This is compared to the current system that can take up to an hour."

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL GOES TO BAT FOR AMBER ALERTS

The Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs will be highlighting the Wireless AMBER Alerts Initiative in some of the 2008 Official Major League Baseball Programs, as a way of informing the public that they can sign up to receive free AMBER Alerts on their cell phones.

The advertising will be published in the World Series, and the American and National League Championship Series programs. The full-page advertisement depicts a parked white van with the words written on the side of the van that reads, "Nothing on this van tells you an abducted child is inside. Something on your cell phone could."

The ad will also let the public know that they can receive AMBER Alerts by signing up at www.wirelessamberalerts.com.

AMBER Fact:

The following AMBER Alert system tests were recently conducted:

Utah - August 26

Alaska - September 11

Ontario - September 16

OHIO CONSIDERS "JOYCE ALERT"

Ohio is considering a "Joyce Alert" to notify law enforcement, body shops and the media after a hit-and-run accident. The inspiration for the alert is Joyce Yoakam who was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver while she was collecting her mail on August 31, 2007.

PROFILE: Phil Keith

MAN OUT OF TIME

Phil Keith nervously checks his watch and walks out of a large room packed full of people. He takes a short break from the National AMBER Alert Conference to take a call on another conference scheduled a few weeks later. Meanwhile, his Blackberry is buzzing with questions, requests and schedule changes.

The former Knoxville Police Chief has been moving like a man out of time, ever since he became the AMBER Alert Program Director for Fox Valley Technical College. The Department of Justice asked him to handle all training for its AMBER Alert Initiative, at the same time, he is overseeing training for AMBER in Indian Country, Sex Offender Registries and Forensics for Unidentified Missing Persons.



Phil Keith, Program Director
AMBER Alert Training &
Technical Assistance Program

IT STARTED IN TENNESSEE

Keith learned children were fragile when he became the father of two girls - the youngest was born premature. But he says his real awakening occurred six months after he started as a Knoxville patrol officer in 1970. He answered a domestic disturbance call and found a man who had severely beaten his girlfriend and raped and beaten her 11-year-old daughter. "He hit her so many times, she looked like she was in a fight with Mike Tyson," he said. "I'll never forget it. The situation hit me like a ton of bricks."

Keith soon became involved in child advocacy programs and began working with kids who had been abused at home. "Not every runaway is running to something. The vast majority of runaways are physically and sexually abused. They are running away from something and no one is taking responsibility."

When he became the police chief, he started a program called "Safety City," a \$4 million miniature city built with donations where thousands of kids can learn how to stay safe. He also secured \$300 million in public safety grants, won some very prestigious awards and even made sure

everyone was safe at the World's Fair before he retired in 2004. But something still gnaws at him about his watch as police chief: three stereotypical child kidnappings - two that were never solved. "It drives me absolutely crazy."

ASSIGNMENT AMBER ALERT

Retirement has only accelerated Keith's schedule. The

Department of Justice wants to train an unprecedented number of people about missing and abducted children. The numbers from the last two and a half years are impressive:

- 125 training sessions totaling 128,526 hours of training
- 4,997 participants from every state and representatives from Canada and Mexico
- 7 national and regional conferences and 3 national roundtable discussions on missing, endangered and abducted children
- The training of more than 160 Child Abduction Response Teams (CART) in 43 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas.

After each training session, Keith meets with staff members and asks whether the training is prompting people to take action. "Did you get a sense that people are ready

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MEET YOUR AMBER ALERT LIAISONS

AMBER Alert Liaisons are the glue that hold all of the AMBER Alert partners together. The liaison is the key contact to find out what is happening and what resources are available when a child is missing or abducted. Each liaison explained why the AMBER Alert means so much to them and what is the most important next step for the program.

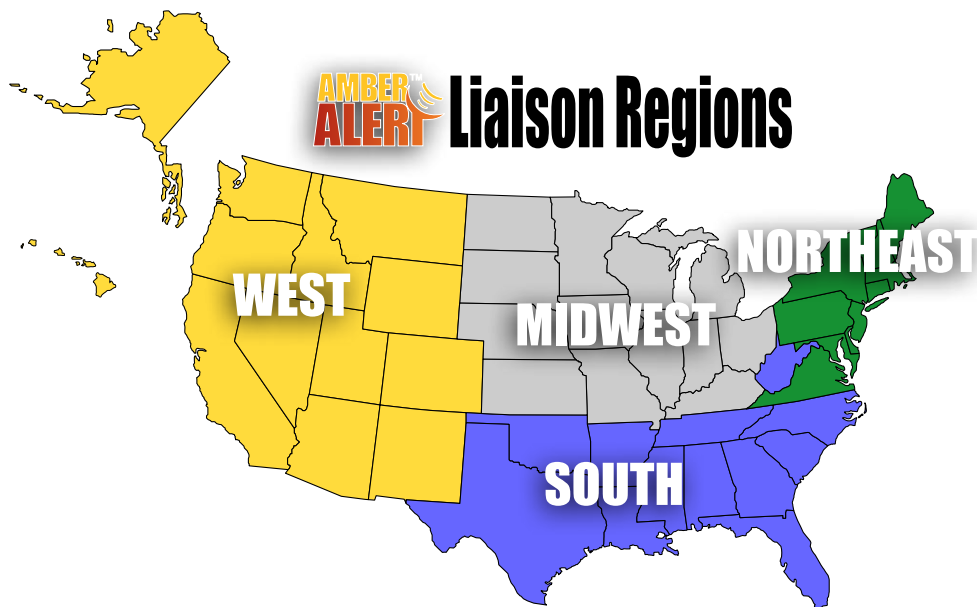
Northeast: Bonnie Lane. Contact: lane@fvtc.edu or 217-836-3897

States & District: Connecticut; Delaware; Maine; Maryland; Massachusetts; New Hampshire; New Jersey;

States & Territories: Alabama: Arkansas: Florida: Georgia: Louisiana: Mississippi: North Carolina: Oklahoma: South Carolina: Tennessee: Texas and West Virginia, the U. S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico

Past Career: Florida Department of Law Enforcement Special Agent & Regional CART Coordinator

AMBER Alert Adulation: It works. I investigated an abduction where the CART and AMBER Alert saved the child's life. A driver noticed the AMBER Alert Department of Transportation sign and a trooper pulled the



New York: Pennsylvania: Rhode Island: Vermont: Virginia and Washington D.C.

Past Career: Illinois State Police Assistant Communication Services Bureau Chief

AMBER Alert Adulation: The collective passion and commitment the AMBER Alert Coordinators and Missing Persons Clearinghouse Coordinators share. I have a very deep understanding of and respect for the countless hours and tireless efforts dedicated to the work of child protection that these men and women put forth.

South: Floy Turner. Contact: turnerf@fvtc.edu or 706-455-2985

suspect over. The abductor then committed suicide in front of the child. Documents indicated the suspect planned a murder/suicide.

Midwest: Terri Peaks. Contact: peaks@fvtc.edu or 614-582-2756

States: Illinois: Indiana: Iowa: Kansas: Kentucky: Michigan: Minnesota: Missouri: Nebraska: North Dakota: Ohio: South Dakota: and Wisconsin

Past Career: Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse Director

AMBER Alert Adulation: It saves lives! AMBER Alert added and strengthened joint efforts of law enforcement, media, transportation,

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Bonnie Lane, Northeast Liaison



Floy Turner, South Liaison



Terri Peaks, Midwest Liaison



Sue Miller, West Liaison



Jim Walters, Indian Country Liaison

ELIZABETH SMART TELLS KIDNAPPING ORDEAL TO OPRAH

The Oprah Winfrey Show aired the show, Elizabeth Smart: The Story That Captured the Nation, on September 10. Smart discussed the emotional ordeal she experienced when she was abducted from her home and how she is determined to thrive after such a terrifying experience.

During the show, Elizabeth discussed her abduction and how she feels Brian David Mitchell and Wanda Ileen Barzee, the couple who were charged for her kidnapping but were ruled unfit to stand trial, in her opinion, are actually competent. She also mentioned she is determined not to let this horrific incident steal anymore valuable time from her life.

Smart also talked about the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's publication, You're Not Alone: The Journey from Abduction to Empowerment, which was written by Smart and other survivors of child abduction. The publication aims to help other child abduction survivors cope with their own experiences and begin their journeys toward a better future.

Oprah Winfrey held up a copy of the publication and placed a link to the journal on her web site, along with other DOJ resources aimed at helping victims and loved ones move beyond the abduction and to empowerment.



Liaisons, continued from page 5

missing persons clearinghouses, wireless networks, organizations and businesses to quickly get the public involved in finding children. Many people volunteer countless days and nights for the common goal of potentially saving a child's life and ending a family's nightmare.

West: Susan "Sue" Miller. Contact: susanmiller@charter.net or 972-754-9995

States: Alaska: Arizona: California: Colorado: Hawaii: Idaho: Montana: Nevada: New Mexico: Oregon: Washington: Wyoming and Utah,

Past Career: Washington State Patrol Missing Persons Unit Director

AMBER Alert Adulation: It gives the public an opportunity to provide more eyes and assist law enforcement in looking for a missing child.

Indian Country: Jim Walters. Contact: amber.alert.liaison@gmail.com or 214-797-2971

States: Nationwide

Previous career: Placerville, California Police Dept. Crimes and Violence Investigator and Supervisor

AMBER Alert Adulation: The ability to bring the community together with the common goal of returning an endangered, missing or abducted child home safely. ☺

National AMBER Alert Coordinator Message:

It has been a tremendous privilege to be part of the growth and development of the AMBER Alert network during my tenure as National AMBER Alert Coordinator. AMBER Alert has been the reason for many exciting partnerships and a number of public safety innovations. Groups that had never worked together before have formed strong alliances and accomplished some remarkable things.

In the six years since President Bush directed the Attorney General to appoint the first National AMBER Alert Coordinator, we have:

- Developed national criteria for issuing AMBER Alerts;
- Seen statewide AMBER Alert programs created in all 50 states;
- Developed an initiative that enables us to send text message alerts to millions of wireless subscribers;
- Held numerous regional and national trainings on improving our response to abducted children;

- Extended AMBER's reach into Canada, Mexico, and Indian country; and
- Created a powerful secondary distribution network involving groups ranging from trucking carriers to airport security screeners to outdoor advertisers;



The most important achievement of all, however, is the rescue and return to safety of more than 420 abducted children. AMBER Alert has become part of America's public safety landscape, and that success is owed to the AMBER Alert coordinators, broadcasters, law enforcement and transportation officials, and public and

private partners across the country who have worked so hard to make America safe for our children.

I am proud of all that we have accomplished together. Thank you; you do good work, and you don't hear that often enough.

Jeffrey L. Sedgwick, Assistant Attorney General and National AMBER Alert Coordinator ☺

CANADIAN CORNER

CANADA PREPARES FOR NEW PLAN TO DELIVER AMBER ALERTS

A new Canadian organization is hoping to solve the distribution challenge of AMBER Alerts in Canada. The Canadian Association for Public Alerting and Notification (CAPAN), a national not-for-profit agency, aims to serve as a national clearinghouse for all official public alerts and notices.

Doug Allport of Ottawa is the executive director of CAPAN. "Our goal is to overcome the communications challenge of each issuer of alerts having to contact each distributor of them," said Allport. "We aim to be the hub of the alerting community."

Agencies that use CAPAN's services will help fund it. Membership dues for public and private issuers and distributors have been set at a dollar per day.

"Rather than build a system spe-

cific to a single use, and then wish we could use it for another, we are building all hazards capabilities," said Allport.

New Brunswick AMBER Alert Coordinator Todd Chadwick represented law enforcement and AMBER Alert Coordinators during the business planning phase. He has signed on as a Board of Director and is excited to support the initiative.

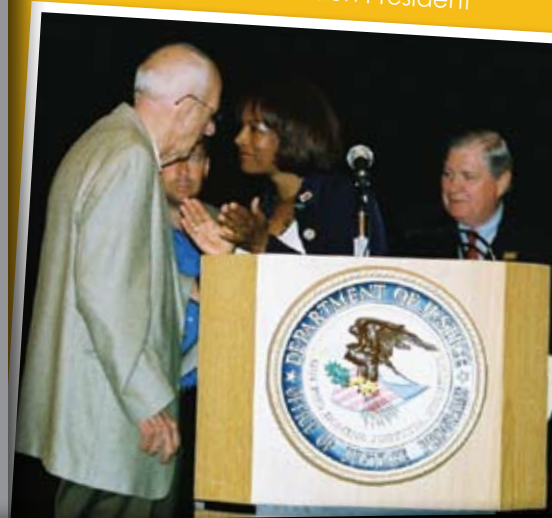
"I heard about this type of notification system in the States and said let's bring it to Canada," said Chadwick. "We are really trying to use new technology to get out AMBER Alerts and other emergency notifications."

Chadwick is working to bring attention to the initiative with his peers in the other provinces. "We are ready to take it to the next level," he said.

MILK MAY HELP IDAHO KIDS STAY SAFE

Police officers in Blackfoot, Idaho are hoping MILK will keep kids safe. Milk stands for Managing Information for Lost Kids. The program puts a child's picture and information on a CD in case the child is ever missing.

Carl Smith, Former Oklahoma Broadcasters Association President



AMBER ALERT PIONEER PASSES AWAY

Former Oklahoma Broadcasters Association President and CEO Carl Smith, the man responsible for creating the nation's first statewide AMBER Alert plan died Sept. 19.

The Department of Justice recognized Smith's efforts at the 2006 National AMBER Alert Conference with the National Achievement Award. Oklahoma's AMBER Alert Plan became the model for numerous state plans across the country

"We will miss Carl, but know his contribution to saving children was significant," said Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Program Director for Fox Valley Technical College.

"AMBER Alerts exist throughout the country primarily because the persistent guy from Oklahoma kept pushing and badgering us until we each established the program in our own states," said Dale Zabriskie, Utah Broadcasters Association President. "Every time an abducted child is recovered safely because of an AMBER Alert, Carl played an important role."

Smith's passing was noted at the meeting for the National Alliance of State Broadcasters Associations.

"It was an honor and a privilege to have had my life graced by the presence of Carl Smith," said Nevada Broadcasters Association

President Bob Fisher. "He was a 'discontinued pattern' - they just don't make them like Carl anymore."

Arizona Broadcasters Association President Art Brooks summed up Smith's death as a "great and sorrowful loss."

Smith began his radio career at KAKC in Tulsa. He was a longtime general manager at KRAV in Tulsa and he and his wife Barbara owned a station in Grove, Oklahoma. Smith is survived by his wife and three children.

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have a successful recovery."

Intelligence Analyst Stephanie Crews-Jones from the FBI's Crimes Against Children Unit was also at the Phoenix training. "As we deploy on more child abduction cases together, we will need to work harder to coordinate and communicate," said Crews-Jones. "Down the road we will see more cooperation and communication."

The FBI hosted another training for CARD team members on June 5 in Knoxville. Donna Uzzell, Director of Criminal Justice Information Services for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, spoke in Knoxville about the role of CART. "I told the FBI that a CART is a tool. It is not a competition with what the FBI is already doing," said Uzzell. "The first couple of hours you need as many people to the scene as possible."

"Fortunately, law enforcement has been more aware of the seriousness of child abduction cases and how quickly we need to respond,"

Phil Keith, continued from page 4

to make something happen?" He says he learns a lot from participants and then tries to find ways to take those ideas to the next level. "I like the chase of getting things going."

NO TIME TO STOP

"We are making a difference," says Keith. "We have a network of thousands of professionals who are second to none." But Keith isn't satis-

said FBI Supervisor/Special Agent Terri Patterson. "We have so many entities pulling together, we need to coordinate those responses and know what each entity brings to the table."

The training sessions also included in-depth training on the AMBER Alert program and a presentation from Team ADAM. Representatives from CARD, CART and Team Adam are exchanging contact information so they can all work together in the future.

"Not only can we work together but we must work together," said Patterson. "Everyone recognizes that. These cases take an emotional toll on investigators who recognize that we need to do whatever it takes to bring a child home safely."

Keith said the FBI CARD should be a supplemental resource to a CART. "We hope we can get as many people as possible to respond to any child in crisis." ☺

fied. He's planning new courses for police recruits and dispatchers, advanced courses for missing and abducted child cases and expanding efforts to bring the AMBER Alert into Indian Country. He hopes one day every law enforcement officer will share his passion for protecting children. "There's never a shortage of kids who need a second chance," he said. ☺

EUROPE MAY SOON HAVE AN AMBER ALERT PLAN

The European Parliament hopes to sign an agreement by December that would create an AMBER Alert system for the 27-nation bloc. The parents of Madeleine McCann,

a British girl who disappeared last year in Portugal, are asking the European Union lawmakers to set up the plan. ☺